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## ***Turning to God's Loving Mercy in Holy Week***

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Pope Francis has made it profoundly clear what the Church believes. That all who sincerely seek God's loving mercy, examine their conscience, pray a good act of contrition with the firm hope and intention of opening our hearts and minds to the inspiration and guidance of God's grace will indeed be forgiven.

This leaflet provides a format for you to use in seeking this forgiveness in the day's leading up to the majestic events of the Sacred Triduum.

### **Sign of the Cross**

Speak to God in your own words. Thank him for his love. Seek his guidance as you listen to the scripture reading.

A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans 12: 1–2. 9–18

Offer your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans. Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do. Do not let your love be a pretence, but

sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as much as sisters and brothers should and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care. Bless those who persecute you: never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow. Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor. Do not allow yourself to become self-satisfied. Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone. The word of the Lord.

### **Examination of Conscience**

*Worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God.*

- Has my worship of God been perfunctory or routine?
- Have I neglected prayer and worship or participated reluctantly?
- Have I declined opportunities to deepen my faith and prayer life?

*Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around, let your behaviour change, modelled by a new mind.*

- Have I surrendered my free will and good conscience to the tastes, opinions and behaviour of others?
- Have I compromised my personal integrity in public or in private?

*Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil.*

- Have I acted more out of desire and selfishness than love?
- Have I sought approval of others for my kind and generous deeds?

*Love each other as much as sisters and brothers should and have a profound respect for each other.*

- Have I taken advantage of those closest to me regardless of their own needs and feelings?

*If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care.*

- Have I reached out to those I know to be lonely or sat on my hands?
- Have I been a reluctant or ungenerous host?

*Bless those who persecute you: never curse them, bless them.*

- How do I react to insults, snubs or honest criticism and advice?
- Do I respect the conscience of others or judge them harshly?

*Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow.*

- Do I envy others?
- Am I mean spirited in the presence of the qualities and achievements of others?
- Do I neglect or belittle the sadness of others?
- Am I respectful of the real needs of those with mental illness?

*Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor.*

- How generous am I in the knowledge of others in need?
- Have I teased, belittled or bullied those in need?

*Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.*

- Do I harbour resentments when others seek forgiveness and reconciliation?
- Do I stir up trouble for others?

Spend a few more moments acknowledging the real extent of your own compromises with goodness, truth and the beautiful.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

### **Act of Contrition**

Lord Jesus, you opened the eyes of the blind, healed the sick, forgave the sinful woman, and after Peter's denial confirmed him in your love.

Listen to my prayer: forgive all my sins, renew your love in my heart, help me to live in perfect unity with my fellow Christians that I may proclaim your saving power to all the world.

### **Speak these words to your heart:**

Jesus reveals God to be merciful and forgiving and never denies forgiveness to those who turn to him and so I accept these words as spoken now to me:

**Your faith has claimed your heart,  
go in peace and sin no more.**

THANKS BE TO GOD!