



# INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST *In the Diocese of Plymouth*

I Sunday of Lent

6<sup>th</sup> of March 2022

## Dom Gueranger PRACTICE DURING LENT Part II



*The Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14)*

How great, then, is the illusion of those Christians, who forget their past sins, or compare themselves with others whose lives they take to have been worse than their own; and thus satisfied with themselves, can see no harm or danger in the easy life they intend to pass for the rest of their days! They will tell you, that there can be no need of their thinking of their past sins, for they have made a good Confession! Is not the life they have led since that time a sufficient proof of their solid piety? **And why should any one speak to them about God's Justice and Mortification?** - Accordingly, as soon as Lent approaches, they must get all manner of Dispensations. Abstinence is an inconvenience: Fasting has an effect upon their health, it would interfere with their occupations, it is such a change from their ordinary way of living: besides, there are so

many people who are better than themselves, and yet who never fast or abstain:- and, as the idea never enters their minds of supplying for the penances prescribed by the Church with other penitential exercises, such persons as these, gradually and unsuspectingly, lose the Christian spirit.

**The Church sees this frightful decay of supernatural energy;** but she cherishes what is still left, by making her Lenten observances easier, year after year. With the hope of maintaining that little, and of seeing it strengthen for some better future, she leaves to the Justice of God her children who hearken not to her, when she teaches them how they might, even now, propitiate his anger. Alas! these her children, of whom we are speaking, are quite satisfied that things should be as they are, and never think of judging their own conduct by the examples of Jesus and his Saints, or by the undeviating rules of Christian penance.

It is true, there are exceptions; but how rare they are, especially in our large towns! Groundless prejudices, idle excuses, bad example, - all tend to lead men from the observance of Lent. Is it not sad to hear people giving such a reason as this for their not fasting or abstaining, - because they feel them? Surely, they forget that the very aim of fasting and abstinence is to make these bodies of sin [Rom. vi. 6] suffer and feel. And what will they answer on the Day of Judgment, when our Saviour shall show

them how the very Turks, who were the disciples of a gross and sensual religion, had the courage to practise, every year, the forty days' austerities of their Ramadan?

But their own conduct will be their loudest accuser. These very persons, who persuade themselves that they have not strength enough to bear the abstinence and fasting of Lent, even in their present mitigated form, think nothing of going through incomparably greater fatigues for the sake of temporal gains or worldly enjoyments. Constitutions, which have broken down in the pursuit of pleasures, - which, to say the least, are frivolous, and always dangerous, - would have kept up all their vigour, had the laws of God and his Church, and not the desire to please the world, been the guide of their conduct. But such is the indifference, wherewith this non-observance of Lent is treated, that it never excites the slightest trouble or remorse of conscience; and they who are guilty of it will argue with you, that people who lived in the Middle Ages may perhaps have been able to keep Lent, but that now-a-days it is out of the question: and they can coolly say this in the face of all that the Church has done to adapt her Lenten discipline to the physical and moral weakness of the present generation! **How comes it, that whilst these men have been trained in, or converted to, the Faith of their Fathers, they can forget that the observance of Lent is an essential mark of Catholicity;** and that when the Protestants undertook to Reform her, in the 16th century, one of their chief grievances was that she insisted on her children mortifying themselves by Fasting and Abstinence!

But, it will be asked, - are there, then, no lawful Dispensations? - We answer, that there are; and that they are more needed now than in former ages, owing to the general weakness of our constitutions. Still, there is great danger of our deceiving ourselves. If we have strength to go through great fatigues, when our own self-love is gratified by them, - **how is it we are too weak to observe Abstinence?** If a slight inconvenience deter us from doing this penance, how shall we ever make expiation for our sins, for expiation is essentially painful to nature? The opinion of our physician, that Fasting will weaken us, may be false, or it may be correct; - but is not this mortification of the flesh the very object that the Church aims at, knowing that our soul will profit by the body being brought into subjection? But let us suppose the dispensation to be necessary: that our health would be impaired, and the duties of our state of life neglected, if we were to observe the law of Lent to the letter:- do we, in such case, endeavour, by other works of penance, to supply for those, which our health does not allow us to observe:- Are we grieved and humbled to find ourselves thus unable to join with the rest of the Faithful Children of the Church, in bearing the yoke of Lenten discipline? Do we ask of our Lord to grant us the grace, next year, of sharing in the merits of our fellow-Christians, and of observing those holy practices, which give the soul an assurance of mercy and pardon? If we do, the dispensation will not be detrimental to our spiritual interests; and when the Feast of Easter comes, inviting the Faithful to partake of its grand joys, we may confidently take our place side by side with those who have fasted; for though our bodily weakness has not permitted us to keep pace

with them exteriorly, our heart has been faithful to the spirit of Lent.

**How long a list of proofs** we could still give of the negligence, into which the modern spirit of self-indulgence leads so many among us, in regard of Fasting and Abstinence! Thus, there are Catholics to be found in every part of the world who make their Easter Communion, and profess themselves to be Children of the Catholic Church, who yet have no idea of the obligations of Lent. Their very notion of Fasting and Abstinence is so vague, that they are not aware that these two practices are quite distinct one from the other; and that the dispensation from one does not, in any way, include a dispensation from the other. If they have, lawfully, or unlawfully, obtained exemption from Abstinence, it never so much as enters into their minds, that the obligation of fasting is still binding upon them, during the whole Forty Days; or if they have had granted to them a dispensation from Fasting, they conclude that they may eat any kind of food they wish. Such ignorance as this is the natural result of the indifference wherewith the commandments and traditions of the Church are treated.

**Part III continued next week!**



### **A Novena of Masses for Mothers**

For Mother's Day, give a Spiritual Gift to the women in your life who have nurtured and supported you or your children, nieces or nephews by enrolling them: mothers, grandmothers, aunts, godmothers, teachers, or religious sisters, in the Novena of Masses offered by the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest in the Diocese of Plymouth.

The Novena can be offered for the sanctification and salvation of the living as well as for the repose of the souls of those who have gone before us. The nine consecutive Masses will begin on 27th March.

Please ensure that the pink enrolment envelope is placed in the collection or handed to a priest.

Your offering supports this apostolate of the Institute of Christ the King.

**The Sisters of Lanherne** are grateful to the Providence of God who supplies their needs through the generous support of the faithful.

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Date	Canon Smith	Canon Tanner
	Mass Offered For:	
6	Joyce Barraball RIP <b>Benefactors</b>	Novena Kathleen McQuaid Mgr Wach
7	Private Intention	Novena
8	Theresa Whitford	Novena
9	Michelle Buscombe	Novena
10	Nina	Novena
11	Robert Buscombe and Family	Novena
12	Jake Checkley-Beeton & Son	Novena

Rev. Canon Scott Smith  
Chaplain of Lanherne Convent  
St Mawgan TR8 4ER  
Chaplain's House: 01637 861752  
mobile : 07366 321039  
lanherne@icksp.org.uk

**At Lanherne Convent**

Sundays:  
8.30am Low Mass  
10am Sung Mass  
Monday through Saturday:  
8am Mass  
Thursdays:  
8am and 6.15pm Mass  
Confession: Saturdays at 3pm

Rev. Canon Scott Tanner, Prior  
House of Saint-Richard-Reynolds  
Holy Angels Church, Queensway,  
Torquay TQ2 6BP  
mobile : 07763 277697  
torquay@icksp.org.uk

**At Holy Angels**

Sundays:  
10 -10.25am Confessions  
10.30am Mass  
Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays  
& Fridays:  
5pm Adoration with Confession  
available *(except on the Fridays of Lent  
when instead there are the Stations of the  
Cross)*  
6pm Mass  
Tuesdays & Saturdays:  
8.30am Mass  
Plymouth: Sundays at 3pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays: 11.30am