

*Excerpts from the Spiritual Itinerary - Part 2: Retreat (2nd day)*

# *First Sunday of Lent*

Song:

[Ad te Jesu Christe](#)*I lift up my soul to you, Christ Jesus, my redeemer. All earth's salvation, my hope is in you.*

## **We contemplate Jesus...**

In his first teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus read the text from Isaiah: "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted..." (*Is 61:1; Lk 4:18*) He did not come only to restore sight to the blind, to make the lame walk and to bring the captives out of prison; Jesus knew that there is blindness that is beyond the eyes and the inner prisons that are more binding than a dungeon.

When he said: "Take my yoke upon you, learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (*Mt 11:29*), Jesus was inviting us to come to him without fear of our darkness and disorder, of the ties that shame us or the burdens that trouble our hearts. Jesus possessed that capacity to welcome and to hide, to offer ground, shelter and refuge, like that hole in the rock that the Lord had offered to Moses on the mountain. (*Ex 33:22*)

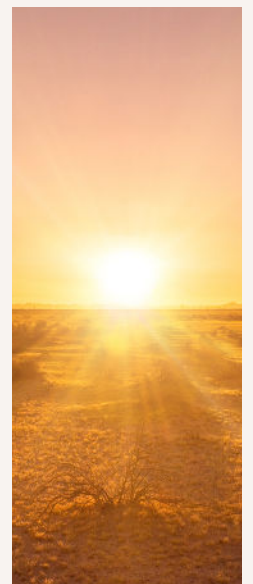
We recognize that we are poor, fragile and with many failures, but we trust that Jesus' undeserved tenderness rebuilds and heals us. We let this possibility of reconciled life fill us with gratitude and we become a "new song." We accept the call to become channels of love, which "forgive all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endure all things." (*1 Cor 13:7*)

## **Perseverance in the wilderness...**

*Excerpt from the Gospel*

"And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, he was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' " *Mark 1:12 - 15*

In just a few sentences, we have everything we need to know about the life and mission of Jesus, described in three stages: in the power of the Holy Spirit, he confronts evil victoriously, then works to reconcile creation (animals are no longer a threat), and finally he proclaims the Good News.



## Prayer of intercession:

### We remember Sophie...

"The Heart of Jesus will make up for all that you lack. For this, you have to divest yourself of your own need for action. Jesus will give you His Spirit and Jesus will work on you as He did on the disciples. One abyss calls another abyss: absolute nothingness attracts the sovereign Good. The Holy Trinity animates nothingness by the Spirit. He gives us the Heart of Jesus to be our life, our Saviour, our merciful love".

She repeats this in one of her best-known prayers: *"Heart of Jesus, I come to you because you are my only refuge, my only and certain hope. You're the remedy for all my miseries, the supplement for all that I lack..."*

"My soul is deeply grieved, even to death... Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you want."  
(Mk 14:34-36).

Together with her, we take up her conviction that Someone makes up for what we lack. What do we want to entrust to her?

Father, we are witnesses to so much bloodshed, so many shattered lives, so many hopes buried under the rubble of violence, so many failed attempts at peace in so many countries. Come to our aid! Bring about reconciliation; cleanse our hearts!

Come Lord, open our hearts and minds so that we may become fit to follow Christ and resist our present-day temptations.

Father, we give you thanks for all those who live in extremely precarious conditions and who continue to wake up every morning believing courageously in life. Put on their path companions capable of genuine friendship and helpers who can enable them to transform their reality.

### "The battle in the desert"



We can place sand on the ground and a map of the world with dry branches on top. Alternate the reading of the Gospel with the situations of sin in the world that each one of the readings brings to mind.

After a time of silence, remember the initiatives of solidarity, justice and reparation that are also present in the world by lighting small candles on the map.

We can also share what helps us to fight our battle, what oases allow us to bring about a surge of life when "the forces of death" surround us?

Song: Taizé - [Señor, que florezca tu justicia](#)