

LENT 2017 – day 3 - Monday 6th March

The good news is that you and I are not limited to our own resources. When we face a problem or a crisis, many of us constantly think the only alternatives we have are in our brain.

We think we are limited to the alternatives of our brain, and that's why we become depressed because all the doors are closed. ***We think if there is no answer in our brain, then there is no answer anywhere.*** Then we also think the only way to see things is how we see it. We don't realize that the solution is when God puts His thoughts into us. Many of us don't expect God to do that and don't believe God can do that. Because of that, we remain frustrated, fearful and caught up in life. That's why a lot of people don't pray - what's the point because they think nothing is going to change.

All it takes God is one insight to change the whole perception of how we see it. He will drop in one little thought and everything changes. When we are frustrated and fighting the whole world, the reason is that we have got trapped in this lie of thinking I am the only one for myself. Many of us don't know how to break out of it.

Here is the method: Clean the spirit, soul and body so you can open yourselves to the revelation of God. But remember that God isn't limited to giving you and I insights. He is God, so He can give you a creative solution that you can't even imagine. It's just there but He can't give it to you because you're not listening, you're not being led or being open to Him.

The answer is simple:

- Relax,
- Know that He is powerful and rich,
- Sit at His feet,
- Wait for Him to change things inside you
- and then He will change things outside you.

Ultimately, the worst enemy we have is ourselves. Our prejudices, our limited thinking and our understanding is our worst enemy. These 40 days, let's be on that journey and allow God to speak deeply into our hearts. It's exciting because not only will He change the way you see things and give you safety, security and inner revelations - but He will also do things outside where breakthroughs will come in the most amazing ways. If you can't see it, how do you know what He is going to do? We will see it by faith. ***He is already creating the breakthroughs.***

We need to be open to what God wants to do in our lives. I'm going to take a verse from the first reading:

Leviticus 19:1-2

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be Holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.'

We have been given a standard: Be holy as your God is holy. For many of us, our standard is either raised or lowered according to the people who relate to us.

- "Why did you use obscene language?" "He used it first." We have been reduced to obscene language by somebody else.
- "Why are you so reactive and angry?" "That's the only way to deal with so-and-so."

Our life standard is either raised or lowered by other people.

The first reading today says our standard is God Himself: Be holy as your God is holy. Just because someone behaves badly, you don't have an excuse. Just because someone else breaks the rules and does it their way, you don't have a justification.

Then how do you deal with it? It is beautifully given in the psalms:

Psalms 19:7

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

From the Old Testament the solution is given: Our standard for holiness is coming from the *word of God* - not from the world around us.

That's why every one of us must have a relationship with the word of God. We Catholics, because of hundreds of years of non-association with the word of God, somehow many people are unfamiliar or don't have a relationship with the word of God. The only word you hear is in the readings of the church and that is also fragmented. For e.g.: The first six verses of psalm 19 are omitted - we start from verse 7. So God knows what He said in the first 6 verses. Because of that we don't have a coherent perception of God's word; and we need to have that. These days are valuable for us. Keep reading the scriptures because that will show you the perfection and holiness of God.

But that's not the only thing the word of God does. **The New Testament says the word of God is a person and that is Jesus.** When you have a link with this word of God, you're also starting a relationship with a person - who is Jesus.

- How can Jesus speak to you?
- How can Jesus give you a revelation and insight?
- How can He show you a perception that you never had before?

You receive it by your relationship with the word of God. It comes in stages. First, you get something called an illumination. The light is put on, and suddenly, from that one word you start receiving a light into your heart. That's the start. If you don't have a relationship with the word of God, that illumination won't come.

I was looking at the writings of St. Theresa of Avila - full of the word of God. Her journey into the mystical experience started by her praying with the word of God. If you try to be a mystic without the word of God, in the end you get lost because you have no path or direction. That's why people become unbalanced after some time.

One of the biggest problems you can have is to take yourself too seriously. There are people who think God has chosen them specially and they take themselves too seriously. If you do that, you're a prime candidate for a major fall by the devil. **We take the word of God seriously - not ourselves.** We are small, little and relaxed and we enjoy God. We are not serious, great, holy people who are bringing God - it is His word. Then we are so relaxed.

You can see the signs of people going off the track. The signs are that they have taken themselves pretty seriously. That's when ego comes into play and tells you, "You're better than everyone else." Of course you won't tell people. To everyone else you say, "I'm really humble," but in your thoughts you think you're better than everyone.

That's why association with the word brings a relationship with the person - Jesus - and then you have illumination. Then you start receiving insights. When you start getting insights, it is more than an illumination. God shows a pathway through it, something you never saw before. It feeds you, makes you secure, loves you and you experience God through the word.

What happens then is you receive the strength and the grace to be holy as God is holy. It doesn't come from your character, nature or strength - it comes from a relationship with the word of God. *The word of God is not only this word, but it is the Eucharist as well.* Together the reflected word, the prayed word and the word become flesh together with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is a coming together of three things: The word of God, the Eucharist and the Word made flesh. This brings intimacy into our lives and it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that brings the power into us. Then you can be holy as God is holy. This is a gift.

A lot of people say, "You must be holy like God is holy." But all of us think that we have to make up our minds, pull up our socks, become determined and grit your teeth and push against the grind. It is all as if we have to generate it. That is all the spirituality people know.

The standard is never lowered, but the strength comes from the word, from an intimacy and from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When you have this time with God and your relationship with God, it becomes easier and easier in the inner response - and you start enjoying the life God has for you. The gospel gives it beautifully in *Matthew 25:31-46*. When you're internally illuminated by the word of God, what happens is, you see God in everybody. That's why He said, "When I was hungry, you gave me to eat." Then He tells the other person, "I was hungry and you didn't feed me." After that inner revelation, how you deal with other people is dependent on your relationship with God.

We were in Kandy day before night and we spoke about and dealt with the concept of the inner journey and how Jesus had to kneel before John the Baptist to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was the Perfect One and He had to kneel before someone imperfect. I said we all have John the Baptist already sent - he is at home. 😊 He or she is now scratching himself or herself at home. Giving an inner response to them is journeying with God.

That's why Jesus said, "Recognize me in them." When you have the word of God living and fully alive inside you and you give inner responses to people - you're creating space and they will never, ever remain the same. They can't. They will also be drawn into the heart of God.

- Many of us want to chastise people and change them,
- we want to teach them a lesson and change them,
- we want to react to them and change them.

Jesus is offering us a unique method: "See me in them." When we hear that, we think we have to pick up some good quality in them. He isn't asking us to find a good quality - He is asking us to find Him in them. When you find Him, their bad qualities are no longer a problem for me.

How on earth do you deal with a person who has no good qualities?

Let the insight of the word of God empower you, let the intimacy with Jesus give you the grace - and it will happen to you.

For many years we have struggled to do our ministry in the church and I believed some change had to take place in people inside the church for us to effectively minister. But as I prayed from July last year, the Lord gave me a revelation. The Lord said, "The real obstacle is you. You don't have enough power to break through the opposition, you don't have enough internal strength to turn the darkness into light." I understood that because I was getting discouraged easier, other people's actions have an effect on me and because of that, our intensity is weakened and the flow of the power of God is obstructed because I am becoming internally blocked.

Little by little the Lord said, "Nothing will change - you will have to change." As I started changing, I

became free internally and deep inside I came to the freedom to realize, whatever anyone can do will never stop the flow of God through our lives. When that happened, doors started opening.

Pray because we have a major breakthrough. On the 18th of this month, we have been invited to the national seminary to talk to the final year students and to present to them the vision of the CRL. In fact, this is the first time we have got this opportunity.

I'm beginning to see that God can always create the breakthroughs - the problem is ours. It's not only my problem, but it is yours as well. Your block is within you and not within other people. He says, "I am sending you John the Baptist - see me in them, give an inner response and I'll give you the breakthrough that is necessary." Instead of that, we are asking for another John the Baptist and saying, "Send me a better one, send me a reasonable one, send me a lovable one." God says, "No, it's My call."

We were in Ampitiya day before night and some brothers who are the final year students came and spoke with me and said, "This is a great opportunity. Please fast and pray so that you can really give a breakthrough to this moment." Those breakthroughs come when the Lord sees that you are ready to handle it. When we are not ready and we are complaining and crying all the time, nothing will happen.