

# Session 2



## Faith & Repentance

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### ① *Opening Prayer* (5 minutes) - Psalm 51:3-9, 12-13, 18-19

The opening prayer is modelled after the *Liturgy of the Hours*, the collection of Psalms recited daily by priests, deacons, religious, and many laity.

Side 1: Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your merciful love;  
according to your great compassion,  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me completely from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

Side 2: My transgressions, truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done.  
So you are just in your sentence,  
without reproach in your judgment.

Side 1: O see, in guilt I was born,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.  
Yes, you delight in sincerity of heart;  
in secret you teach me wisdom.  
Cleans me with hyssop, and I shall be pure;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Side 2: Create a pure heart for me, O God;  
renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence;  
take not your holy spirit from me.

Side 1: For in sacrifice you take no delight;  
burnt offering from me would not please you.  
My sacrifice to God, a broken spirit:  
a broken and humbled heart,  
O God, you will not spurn.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

## ② Video Presentation (20 minutes)

Works quoted and cited:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.” (Ephesians 2:8 – 10 NABRE)

“Did God really say, ‘You shall not eat from any of the trees in the garden’? ... You certainly will not die! God knows well that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1, 4 - 5 NABRE)

“Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. This is what man's first sin consisted of. All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness.” (CCC 397)

“This people draws near with words only and honors me with their lips alone, though their hearts are far from me.” (Isaiah 29:13 NABRE)

“I will sprinkle clean water over you to make you clean; from all your impurities and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances, and keep them.” (Ezekiel 36:26 – 27 NABRE)

“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15 NABRE)

“He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:38 – 39 RSV2CE)

“...the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5 NABRE)

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.” (Romans 10:9 - 10 NABRE)

“Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to My mercy. Oh, how much I am hurt by a soul's distrust! Such a soul professes that I am Holy and Just, but does not believe that I am Mercy and does not trust in My Goodness. Even the devils glorify My Justice but do not believe in My Goodness.” (Divine Mercy in My Soul, 300)

“All temptations united together ought not disturb your interior peace, not even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. You should not become discouraged, but strive to make My love reign in place of your self-love. Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy.” (Divine Mercy in My Soul, 1488)

“The devil knows your name but calls you by your sin, God knows your sin but calls you by your name.” (Unknown Author)

### ③ Small Group Discussion (30—60 minutes)

1. Read the following passages. What do they reveal about our hearts?

- A. **1 Samuel 16:7** God does not see as a mortal, who sees the appearance. The LORD looks into the heart.
  
- B. **Luke 6:45** A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.
  
- C. **Catechism of the Catholic Church 2562—2563** ...Scripture speaks sometimes of the soul or the spirit, but most often of the heart (more than a thousand times). According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. If our heart is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain. ... The heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live; according to the Semitic or Biblical expression, the heart is the place "to which I withdraw." The heart is our hidden center, beyond the grasp of our reason and of others; only the Spirit of God can fathom the human heart and know it fully. The heart is the place of decision, deeper than our psychic drives. It is the place of truth, where we choose life or death. It is the place of encounter, because as image of God we live in relation: it is the place of covenant.
  
- D. **Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes 13** Examining his heart, man finds that he has inclinations toward evil too, and is engulfed by manifold ills which cannot come from his good Creator. Often refusing to acknowledge God as his beginning, man has disrupted also his proper relationship to his own ultimate goal as well as his whole relationship toward himself and others and all created things. Therefore man is split within himself. As a result, all of human life, whether individual or collective, shows itself to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains. But the Lord Himself came to free and strengthen man, renewing him inwardly and casting out that "prince of this world" (John 12:31) who held him in the bondage of sin.

2. Today, it's common to hear advice like, "Follow your heart" or "Trust your heart." Do you think that is good advice, bad advice, or somewhere in-between?

3. Read the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9—14. Why do you think the heart of the tax collector was more pleasing to God than that of the Pharisee? How can you and I be more like the tax collector than the Pharisee?

4. What thoughts, feelings, or attitudes do you think most often keep us from trusting in the goodness and mercy of God?

5. Philippians 4:6–7 says, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." How can trusting God in prayer help you to grow in peace?

#### ④ Closing Prayer of Discernment (5 minutes)

As a group, spend three to five minutes in silent personal discernment. Ask God to prayerfully guide you in answering this question: **What is God calling me to do this week based on what I've heard today?** Afterward, pray together the Lord's Prayer slowly.

**God is calling me to:**

**I will do this on \_\_\_\_\_(date) at \_\_\_\_\_(time)**