

# Jubilaecum



A call to  
conversion!

3

[TO TRANSFORM  
MY LIFE, TO RENEW  
THE MISSION]

Third  
Week

Forty days to leave  
your comfort zone.

Poverty  
Changers

Lent  
2021

Prayer Guide

Pray with St. Paul of the Cross according to the Castellazzo experience



## Gospel Text

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL  
ACCORDING TO JOHN (2:13-25)



Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, *Zeal for your house will consume me*.

At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well.



What  
can you  
do for  
yourself?

# Meditation and text of St. Paul of the Cross

(FROM HIS SPIRITUAL DIARY)

Prayer Guide

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money-changers seated there. We imagine the crowded temple, the sheep vendors, the cries of the merchants, and their deceitful sales, offering pilgrims the animals they needed to sacrifice God; money changers exchanging pagan currencies for the only official currency, at an unjust exchange equivalency, accepted by the priests to pay taxes; the groans and the misery of those who ask for alms at the door.



He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area [...] stop making my Father's house a marketplace [...] His disciples recalled the words of scripture, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The temple, the house of God, the place for encountering his faithful and gratuitous love, for perceiving the glory and the sacredness of God, has been distorted. The God of the covenant, who heard the cry of his people, who wanted to liberate them, is being represented as a merchant from whom forgiveness must be obtained by buying it with sacrifices. The religion of the temple, woven with personal interests and selfishness, has become a business where priests make a good income and where pilgrims

try to "buy" God with their offerings. Is Hosea 6:6 no longer remembered?: *"I want love, not sacrifices; knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings,"* nor Isaiah 1:11? *"I have had enough of whole-burnt ram offerings..."*? What is the temple? A sign of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness or sign of collaboration with Rome? A house of prayer or a store for the tithes and first fruits of the people? A shrine of God's mercy or a place for justification of all kinds of injustices?

How much love and pain Jesus expresses with his prophetic reaction in a bout of anger! Jeremiah had previously denounced the *"lair of thieves that the temple had become"* and had predicted its destruction (7:11) and Zechariah had announced the forceful disappearance of every merchant in the sacred precinct (14:21). The fiery and passionate zeal for the glory of the Father devours Jesus and will ultimately lead to his death.

The "house of the Father", where true worship is offered, is where a more humane, supportive, and fraternal community is found. A hospitable and inviting house where the doors are opened to everyone, no one is excluded or discriminated against, and where we can invoke God as Father and seek to live as brothers and sisters. It is not enough to enter a church or worship space with incense, acclamations, or solemn liturgies; rather we need a community that lives in the Spirit of Jesus and puts into practice the truth of the Gospel.

**What sign can you show us for doing this? [...] "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.** The Jews did not understand these words of Jesus. The body of Jesus, killed by the powerful forces of his time and resurrected by

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# Jubilaem

## Prayer Guide

the Father, would become the place where God manifests himself, the true temple where God is encountered.

**St. Paul of the Cross**, always contemplating *“the example of Jesus who for us deigned to be born poor, to live in poverty, and to die naked on the Cross”* (Rule, 1775), greatly appreciated the value of evangelical poverty. In the beginning he called us Passionists *“the poor of Jesus”* and left us an example of living detached, of using the temporal goods righteously and of being solicitous in the proclamation of the Gospel going to the poorest and most abandoned people, on whose forehead he saw the name of Jesus written.

An example of the above were the days of his retreat in Castellazzo, when he lived in a small, cold room devoid of all ornamentation and comfort, and where he dedicated himself to prayer and fasting, seeking God’s will for him and for the future Congregation he would found. **On November 27, 1720, he wrote in his diary:** *“I remembered how it was said that I would never endure this naked suffering. In that moment I had such joy and a desire for suffering that the cold, the snow, and the ice all seemed sweet to me, and I desired to experience them with great fervor as I said to Jesus: ‘Your pains, my dear God, are the pledges of your love.’ [...] I know I had, as well, a strong impulse to go to Rome for this great marvel of God, and I asked my Sovereign Good if he wished me to write the Rule for the Poor of Jesus. [...] God wished to make use of this great sinner.”*

I reflect on **the Church, the Congregation and the world** with its lights and shadows. If I asked Jesus how He sees what is most visible and most hidden in us, what would he say to me? What should be purified? Where should Jesus be placed at the center? We can all become “sellers” and “money changers” who are only looking for our own interests, unable to love and share selflessly. We may be making our life, including our relationship with God and our mission into a large marketplace where everything is bought and sold.

The “house of the Father” is also our “common house”, our land. Who are the money changers who have turned this common home into a market and are devastating it? How does Jesus feel about this? Do I have a sense of indignation?

HOWEVER, THE “TEMPLE OF GOD” IS ALSO EVERY PERSON INHABITED BY GOD-- MY PERSON, MY BODY. WHAT HAS BECOME DEBILITATED IN ME? WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO ELIMINATE OR RESTORE IN ORDER TO REBUILD MYSELF? JESUS NOT ONLY SPOKE OF “DESTROYING”; HE ALSO TALKED ABOUT “RAISING UP”. I SHARE WITH HIM MY DESIRES AND HOPES, AND I LET HIM ANSWER ME.



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Mentally review your room, home, and workplace and consider three or four items (for example clothes, objects, etc.) that you can do without right now. THINK ABOUT WHO YOU CAN GIVE IT TO. As much as you have, you have a lot of surplus goods! In this way you can clean, care, order, recycle, think, act, etc.

## Prayer Guide

### Prayer

Let us pray for Humanity and our Common Home that is turned into a “market place”, in need of a change through love. We discover and contemplate...:

CREATION *THREATENED*  
THE COSMOS *INVADED*  
THE UNIVERSE *VIOLATED*  
THE PLANET *INJURED*  
THE EARTH *BATTERED*  
WATER *CONTAMINATED*  
CREATURES *CRUCIFIED*  
YOUNG GIRLS *EXPLOITED*  
YOUNG PEOPLE *EXCLUDED*  
ADULTS *MARGINALIZED*  
THE ELDERLY *FORGOTTEN*  
WOMEN *MURDERED*  
MEN *EXTORTED*  
ANIMALS *EXTERMINATED*  
FORESTS *CUT DOWN*  
ECOSYSTEMS *ELIMINATED*  
FREEDOM *CHAINED*

**ONLY LOVE** CAN CHANGE THE HISTORY OF HUMANITY!

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# Lent



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