



LENT Second Week

Leader: “God, our Father, help us to hear your Son. Enlighten us with your word, that we may find the way to your glory.”

God promised Israel a place to call home; He promised them their own land. The transfiguration is a moment of decision to forge on to Jerusalem and ultimately the cross. Lent tests our willingness to die, to rise and ultimately to journey deeply into the heart of the Paschal mystery. It is time to renew our belief in the resurrection.

Song: Select one according to the theme.

Leader: “The effective suppression of trafficking in women and girls for sex trade is a matter of pressing international concern...The use of women in international prostitution and trafficking networks has become a major focus on international organized crime. Women and girls who are victims of his international trade are at an increased risk of further violence, as well as unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections including infection with HIV and AIDS. *Beijing Platform for Action, Chap. I, Resolution 1, Annex 1, #122*”

The Story of Eleven Malaysian Women: Eleven Malaysian women, the youngest 17, were lured, tricked, to come to Canada on “Air Canada”. Upon arrival they were taken to “Quality Inn”. Their passports and return tickets were confiscated. Within 24 hours they were brought to a brothel, a nice apartment, where they were locked up and forced to have sex, sometimes 12 to 15 times a day. They were slaves with no freedom, even to go outside on their own.

The police came, handcuffed and arrested the women. None wanted to testify. They were offered no protection. They were afraid for their own lives and for their families back home. They didn’t understand the language or their own rights.

Silent Reflection: Try to remember one time when you experienced fear? Can you, in any way, identify with those Malaysian women? Try to express what you feel.

Psalm 22 Oh God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me,
From the sound of my groaning?
I cry out by day, but you do not answer;
By night, but find no rest.
In you our ancestors trusted,
And they were not disappointed.

But I am a worm and not human,
Scorned and despised by the people.
Be not far from me in my distress;
There is no one to help...

Reflection: Select or paraphrase some words from the Psalm and recite them prayerfully as if you were one of those Malaysian women.

Reading: Jesus Christ spoke to the on-looking women as he walked toward Calvary. He spoke out as the servant-ruler who gave his life for the salvation of the world and its liberation from all kind of oppression. (Luke 4:18-19)

Although we share in Christ's anointing, we have not spoken up as we should for those who have been silenced because of poverty or gender. Nor have we helped ensure that the voiceless are empowered to speak for themselves.

Government policies are needed today throughout the world to protect ordinary people from the economic dislocations and insecurities produced by the globalization of the economy.

Billions of marginalized and voiceless people –especially women and children- continue to carry crosses of poverty, disease and death while leaders of the nations give their attentions to other concerns.¹

Reflection: Share your insights from the readings. What can you do to bring about some change?

Responsory:	My soul waits for God; in your word I hope.	--My soul...
	For with you there is steadfast love,	--in your...
	Glory to the Father and to the Son...	--My soul...

Mary is standing beside us, and while holding us she tells us:
"Imagine the Magnificat world; picture the heavenly banquet where the children are given good food to eat."

(Pause)

Together: "Hail Mary, full of grace,
Pray for the human race.
To end all fear, war, and greed
The forty thousand to feed
Blessed are you among women
Help us, every woman and man
To become the fruit of thy womb,
An advocate of your children, as
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray we spread defiance.
Now,
Until the children are fed. AMEN²

Final Prayer: O God, we ask forgiveness for our failure to raise our voices as we should and we pray for the anointing of your Spirit to be more faithful advocates. We pray for governments to represent the just demands of ordinary people, especially those who have been silenced because of poverty or gender. Give the presidents the vision to call for an economy at home and abroad that exists to serve people, families, communities. We pray that the cries of the voiceless may be heard and that all the people will declare that the word of God –not the "laws" of economists -shall govern humanity and all of God's creation. In Jesus Name, we pray. Amen.

¹ The Economic Way of the Cross, P.90. The Religious Working Group on the World Bank and IMF.

² Mary, Mother of Sorrows, Mother of Defiance, PP, 69,70. Peter Daino - Orbis Books.