

4th Sunday of Lent Year B

March 11th, 2018

The Richness of God's Mercy and Love

“But the Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting. By devoting more time to prayer, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception, and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well”
(Pope Francis, 2018 Lenten Message).

The fourth Sunday of Lent shows that this year's season of Lent is more than half-way spent. The important question we can ask ourselves is, how far we have gone in making this season fruitful in our relationship with God and one another? We have to remember that all the works we undertake this season are meant to help us to experience the mercy and love of God more deeply and to share the same with one another, if not, they are mere rituals without fruits.

The love and mercy of God which we are invited in a special way to experience in this season of Lent are evident in the readings of today. Our first reading describes the infidelity and sinfulness of God's people despite the call for repentance from God's messengers. Even though God's people were punished because of their disobedience, but the mercy of God was shown to those who truly repented. This endless mercy and love of God continued in the mission of Jesus as St. Paul describes in our second reading, which is grounded in the gospel in which Jesus clearly emphasized, *“for God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him”*.

This central message of the richness and mercy of God calls us not to take it for granted but to appreciate and experience it in our day to day life. Two extremes we have to be mindful of always are pride and despair. Pride makes us live as if we don't need God's mercy, thereby seeing ourselves as being perfect. Despair makes us see our life as being hopeless and helpless, thereby doubting the infinite and definite mercy of God. Let us ask good Lord to give us the humility to overcome our pride and the courage to conquer our despair and fear. Amen.

“This is good and pleasing to God our savior, who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3-4).