

God's aim in my life

Fasting and worship should be within God's aim in my life. Man fell by disobeying God's commandments, and his nature was corrupted. In order to save man, God in His boundless love, sent His Only Begotten Son. God descended to our world, took our nature and was united to us. He walked with us in the way of salvation. He was baptized in the river Jordan, He fasted, was tempted, He worked, He carried the cross, He died, rose from the dead and resurrected us with Him. He ascended to Heaven and became the first fruits of those raised from the dead.

Our salvation cost God more than anyone could imagine. God wanted to save me from sin, and has liberated me from the slavery of satan. Not only this, but He wants me to be His son, but not only a son- a successful and holy son. He gave me His Holy Spirit, and He gave me His Body and Blood.

Every father wants his children to be great and so he sacrifices much for the benefit of their upbringing. God wants us to be his holy children, and be perfect, like Him.

God does not want me to be merely an exemplary or model person, but moreover, He wants me to be His son. He always has mercy on me, and feeds me with His Body and Blood. Having said all this, then if we refuse to give God a chance to fulfill His aim in us, we have disappointed Him and saddened His heart. In such instances, we do not just disobey Him, but as children we upset Him and offend His name.

God knows my weakness, which is why He came and gave Himself, that I may live in Him. God knows my weakness, so He did not send me commandments, but sent me His Son.

In conclusion, God wants me to be a holy son to Him. If Christianity merely requires that a man is polite and well mannered, then Christianity is reduced to a philosophy or a theoretical hypothesis. But Christianity is in fact THE LIFE OF CHRIST IN HIS CHILDREN.

God does not judge us on our many sins, but on our resistance to repent. St Niel of Sinai said God's aim in our life is to betroth us as a pure bride to Him, and which groom does not want his bride to be beautiful and pure?

Ezekiel 16 tells us how God endeavors to beautify me:

I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful... Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine, says the Lord God... Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. You ate pastry of fine flour, honey, and oil. You were exceedingly beautiful, and succeeded to royalty."

What does God want from me?

- He wants me to be His son, follow His path, share His features, have His scent, His image; and possess His power and meekness
- ▪ He wants me to be His Bride, a pure virgin: in thoughts and heart. The thoughts that revolve around Christ-who is the centre of Life for all the world. To have a pure heart consecrated to God.

- ▪ He wants me to be a partaker in the Divine nature, as 2Peter tells us "**by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.**"

He wants me to be pure, but this is not in my nature or capabilities, but it is His nature alone, who sanctified us with His Holy Spirit.

It is required of me to grow in love to the level of the "other cheek" and the "second mile", but this also is not in my ability, but His ability; He who grants me Himself to allow me to perform His deeds.

The Third Week of Lent:

Fasting is the continuation of the act of repentance. Repentance is to rise continuously and fall into the bosom of The Father, where we discover God's Heart, which is boundless in love. Therefore the Church reads to us the story of the prodigal son...

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants. And he arose and came to his father." Luke 15.

We object to God and blame Him and say God has left us, and the reality is that we have gone to the far city, and are living with the pigs. And when we return we discover an eternal fact: That God's love can never be reduced, but on the contrary, we discover more of His love as we delve deeper into it.

How beautiful is the bosom of The Father, and His kisses and his acceptance even of my filth. This is the best encouragement to me throughout my journey in life, even when I fall. Therefore, I walk with confident steps in the way of repentance because my Father waits for me, His kisses encourage me, His blood purifies me and the best robe awaits me.

The aim of repentance is:

1. 1. To reach greater depths in the discovery of God's love, and the breadth of His Heart. I have wasted His money, which He has given me: capabilities, health, money,... and spent it in the world. How will my Father meet me? **"...his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."**
How great is this love?
2. 2. To discover the wealth of my Father's house:-the Church. In it we find the:
 - - best robe: Baptism
 - - the ring: The sign of the continuous unity with the Father, and
 - - the fatted calf: Christ's Body and Blood continuously presented as a sacrifice on the Alter.

What characterises repentance is JOY. Joy is the greatest encouragement on my journey. It is the joy of the repented children of God, who rejoice with their Father, around the heavenly table- the Holy Altar. It's an indescribable and glorious joy. It is the nature of the repented Church, which lives in a perpetual joy. The joy of Christ is the food of the Church in her journey during her fasting, and her spiritual struggle.