



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ©
* Knights of Malta *

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Chancellor's Update

A Pious Lenten Custom

From the earliest times Christians prepared for Easter by penitential acts. One such custom was a ceremony of public penance during which the bishop, his clergy and the penitents recited the seven penitential psalms. After that the bishop sprinkled blessed ashes on the penitents. Eventually the sprinkling of ashes was offered to all the faithful and the recitation of the seven penitential psalms became a pious custom to express sorrow, repentance and amendment in an attempt to resist the seven deadly sins.

Antiphon. Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our parents; neither take Thou vengeance of our sins.

Psalm 6 *Domine, ne in furore*

1. O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy indignation, nor chastise me in Thy wrath.
2. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.
3. And my soul is troubled exceedingly: but Thou, O Lord, how long?
4. Turn to me, O Lord, and deliver my soul: O save me for Thy mercy's sake.
5. For there is no one in death that is mindful of Thee: and who shall confess to Thee in hell?
9. The Lord hath heard my supplication, the Lord hath received my prayer.

Psalm 31 *Beati quorum*

1. Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven: and whose sins are covered.
2. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, and in whose spirit there is no guile.
5. I have acknowledged my sin to Thee, and my injustice I have not concealed.
6. I said, I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord: and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.
13. Many are the scourges of the sinner, but mercy shall encompass him that hopeth in the Lord.
14. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just, and glory all ye right of heart.

Psalm 37 *Domine, ne in furore*

1. Rebuke me not, O Lord, in Thy indignation, nor chastise me in Thy wrath.
3. There is no health in my flesh, because of Thy wrath: there is no peace for my bones, because of my sins.
4. For my iniquities are gone over my head: and as a heavy burden are become heavy upon me.
5. My sores are putrified and corrupted, because of my foolishness.
16. For in Thee, O Lord, have I hoped: Thou wilt hear me, O Lord my God.
18. For I am ready for scourges: and my sorrow is continually before me.
19. For I will declare my iniquity: and I will think for my sin.
22. Forsake me not, O Lord my God: do not Thou depart from me.

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23. Attend unto my help, O Lord, the God of my salvation.

Psalm 50 *Miserere*

1. Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.
2. And according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity.
8. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.
10. Turn away Thy face from my sins: and blot out all my iniquities.
11. Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels.
12. Cast me not away from Thy face: and take not Thy holy Spirit from me.
13. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and strengthen me with a perfect spirit.

Psalm 101 *Domine, exaudi*

1. Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to Thee.
2. Turn not away Thy face from me: in the day when I am in trouble, incline Thy ear to me.
13. But Thou, O Lord, endurest forever: and Thy memorial to all generations.
26. In the beginning, O Lord, Thou foundedst the earth: and the heavens are the works of Thy hands.
27. They shall perish, but Thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment.
28. And as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail.

Psalm 129 *De profundis*

1. Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord! Hear my voice.
2. Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
3. If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand?
4. For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of Thy law, I have waited for Thee, O Lord.
5. My soul hath relied on His word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord.
7. Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him, plentiful redemption.

Psalm 142 *Domine, exaudi*

1. Hear, O Lord, my prayer: give ear to my supplication in Thy truth: hear me in Thy justice.
2. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight no man living shall be justified.
8. Turn not away Thy face from me: lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.
10. Make the way known to me, wherein I should walk: for I have lifted up my soul to Thee.
11. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord, to Thee have I fled: teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

Antiphon. Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our parents; neither take Thou vengeance of our sins.

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