

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians** (*Ephesians 4:22-24*)

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection ~ A new Beginning - Ascend the Mystical Mountain that is Jesus**

**True love never tires - God always gives us the chance of a new beginning.** God is always urging us on to holiness for this is our true self and nature for we come from a holy God. As often as we fall into sin and as often as we ask for forgiveness, we obtain it from our God who is always ready to forgive. *“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past (Isaiah 43:18). All repented past sins are forgiven and forgotten by God. I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for My own sake, and remembers your sins no more (Isaiah 43:25). Through the Sacrament of Confession God can renew our souls as if it had never sinned! “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool (Isaiah 1:18). Do we lack the strength to make a new beginning, entrenched in sin as we are? To this the Lord says: See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland (Isaiah 43:19). Is there anything the Lord cannot do for any child of His who wants to return to Him?”*

**Put on the mind of Christ.** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17).* A mind or conscience that is not properly formed in holy love and eternal truths of our faith is a big stumbling block on the way of holiness. The mind is a favourite target of temptation by the Evil One. For a mind unguarded by charity and holy truth, the Evil One will find it easy to sow seeds of distrust, doubt, suspicion, judgementalism, hatred, falsehood, evil scheming, impure thoughts, and thoughts opposing holy love. Is it extremely difficult to change our way of thinking that is not grounded in holy love and truth? St Paul reminds us: *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).* Through the grace of God our mindset can be brought into holy obedience to Christ, be purified of all deceit and falsehoods and rendered congruent with His eternal truths.

**Put on the heart of Christ.** *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it (Proverbs 4:23).* On the judgement day we will be judged on only one criterion: how we love God above all and how we use the resources at our disposal: time, money, influence, etc. to show God’s unconditional love to others. Holy love is the way back to God from whom we originate. A heart that is not guarded by holy love and humility easily fall into the temptation of unforgiveness, hatred, grudges, prejudices, unholy fears and anxiety, regrets and dwelling on the past or undue worry about the future. Hardened by unrepented sin the heart falls into deeper bondage of sin and closes itself to graces from God. However, God is not deterred. He seeks to give us new hearts that can never get tired of loving, a heart that has close resemblance to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).*

**Build our house on rock and uphold the truth always.** Without faith we can never please God (cf. Hebrews 11:6). Christ teaches us that if we do not put into practice what we believe, we build our faith on sand. Once persecution comes, our faith crumbles like a house made of sand in the face of a mighty storm (cf. Matthew 7:24-27, Luke 6:47-49). If we do not embrace, live and practise the truths of our faith, we will not be any different from the secular world, and will be evangelised by it, unconsciously imbibing its popular values and way of thinking. Accepting a compromise of the truths of our faith in order to cater to popular thinking, opinion and tastes of the day will lead to a dilution of our faith that will not be able to stand the test of time or persecution.

## Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, out of Your wondrous designs and plans You have made me to last for eternity. Yes, I am eternal like You, and my soul is my most precious possession on earth. My soul is Your gift to me so that I can share in Your glory when my time on earth is over. May I never get tired of starting anew whenever I fall from grace. Lord, like St. Peter I say to You: to whom should I go? Who else in the universe loves and understands me as You do? Help me live as You have lived. Help me love as You have loved. Help me pray as You have prayed. Let each new day be a deeper union with my Blessed Saviour who died for me. Let my life be a continual hymn of praise. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. [www.twohearts.hk](http://www.twohearts.hk)