

the triumphant standard of the Cross, to fight against our common enemy, in one general engagement. How can we refuse, dearly beloved brethren, to enter into this sacred warfare, under so renowned and victorious a Leader? Upon what pretext can we decline the wholesome rigours of a contest which is shared with us by the universal Church?

Hence we cry out with the Apostle 'that all should every where do penance,' (Acts xvii. 30.) because, in the language of Eternal Truth himself; 'unless you do Penance you shall all likewise perish.' (Luke xiii.) Penance is necessary for salvation, since we are all sinners. 'For there is no man who sinneth not.' (3 Kings viii. 46.) And 'if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' (1 John i. 8.) Therefore 'delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day.' (Eccl. v. 8.) 'But, forasmuch as the Lord is patient, let us be penitent for this same thing; and with many tears let us implore his pardon.' (Judith viii. 14.) 'For, if we do not penance we shall fall into the hands of the Lord.' (Eccl. ii. 22.) But, if the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die.' (Ezech. xviii. 21.) 'Be penitent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' (Acts iii. 19.)

But this saving Penance cannot be accomplished, unless we make entire satisfaction to God. Now, the Church in her wisdom, enables us to make an efficacious atonement during the holy season of Lent, by fasting, alms-deeds, and prayer. We will thus perform our duties to ourselves, to our neighbour and to God. Fasting will be the holocaust and purification of our bodies, alms-deeds the relief of our neighbour, and prayer the union of our souls with God.

Need we remind you on this occasion, dearly beloved brethren, of the precious advantages of fasting? Both by word and example is its practice enforced in the Old and New Testament. Moses and Elias fasted forty days, and the former was thereby rendered worthy to receive the Written Law of God, whilst the latter obtained the inestimable privilege of conversing with the Lord, face to face. (Deuter. ix. 9, 18. 3 Kings xix. 8.)

Sampson and Samuel were the fruit of their mother's fasting, and by fasting was Sarah delivered from the power of the devil. When the Jews, after their sin, were defeated by the Philistines, they fasted by the direction of the Prophet. (1 Kings v. i. 6.) By fasting and repentance the impious Achab averted the indignation of heaven. (3 Kings xxi. 27.) When a multitude of enemies came to assault the pious Josaphat 'he proclaimed a fast for all Juda.' (2 Paral. xx. 3.) Esdras and Nehemias, Judith and Esther fasted also, and their fasting was acceptable in the sight of God. Daniel fasted, and was favoured with the most sublime revelations, and honoured with the visit of an Angel. (Daniel x.) The wicked city of Niniveh was saved from its threatened destruction by fasting and penance. (John i.) Anna, the prophetess, who deserved to behold and adore the Expectation of Israel, 'departed not from the temple, serving night and day by fastings and prayers.' (Luke ii. 37.) But why need we speak of the saints of the old or the new covenant, of David who 'humbled his soul in fasting,' (Ps. xxxiv. 13,) or of Paul who fasted, 'chastised his body, and brought it into subjection,' (1 Cor. ix. 27, and 2 xi. 27,) when we have the illustrious example of our Lord and Master, the Holy of holies, the Model of sanctity, 'the Way, the Truth and the Life,' who was led by the Spirit of God into the desert, where 'he fasted forty days and forty nights?' (Matt. iv. 1.)

'Looking, therefore, on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, having joy proposed unto him, underwent the Cross.' (Heb. xii. 2.) 'Crucify your flesh with its vices and concupiscences,' (Galat. v. 24,) and 'humble your souls with fasting.' (Ps. xxxiv. 13.) 'Be afflicted, and mourn and weep. Be humble in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you' [James iv. 9, 10]. 'Make to yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. [Ezech. xviii. 32.] 'Rend your hearts, and not your garments; and be ye converted to the Lord your God.' [Joel ii. 13.]

The fast of Lent, as our Holy Mother the Church teaches us, was instituted for the wholesome cure of body and soul (Oratin Sabb. pos. Cineres). Fasting subjects the rebellious flesh to the dominion of reason, exalts and purifies the soul, weakens the sting of concupiscence, fills the heart with chaste