



# Saint Josemaria Escriva

Founder of Opus Dei

[Home](#) - [Saint Josemaria](#) - [Talking to God](#) - Lent: a new conversion

## Lent: a new conversion

2010.2.22

- "The conversion of the Children of God", a homily first given on March 2, 1952, First Sunday of Lent. [Download TEXT \(PDF\)](#)

Lent should suggest to us these basic questions: Am I advancing in my faithfulness to Christ, in my desire for holiness, in a generous apostolate in my daily life, in my ordinary work among my colleagues?

*Christ is Passing by, 58*

### To keep our soul young

We are at the beginning of Lent: a time of penance, purification and conversion. It is not an easy program, but then Christianity is not an easy way of life. It is not enough just to be in the Church, letting the years roll by. In our life, in the life of Christians, our first conversion — that unique moment which each of us remembers, when we clearly understood everything the Lord was asking of us — is certainly very significant. But the later conversions are even more important, and they are increasingly demanding. To facilitate the work of grace in these conversions, we need to keep our soul young; we have to call upon our Lord, know how to listen to him and, having found out what has gone wrong, know how to ask his pardon...

What better way to begin Lent? Let's renew our faith, hope and love. The spirit of penance and the desire for purification come from these virtues. Lent is not only an opportunity for increasing our external practices of self denial. If we thought it were only that, we would miss the deep meaning it has in Christian living, for these external practices are — as I have said — the result of faith, hope and charity. *Christ is Passing By, 57*

### Imitators of God

Let's remind ourselves, this Lent, that the Christian cannot be superficial. While being fully involved in his everyday work, among other men, his equals; busy, under stress, the Christian has to be at the same time totally involved with God, for he is a child of God.

Divine filiation is a joyful truth, a consoling mystery. It fills all our spiritual life, it shows us how to speak to God, to know and to love our Father in heaven. And it makes our interior struggle overflow with hope and gives us the trusting simplicity of little children. More than that: precisely because we are children of God, we can contemplate in love and wonder everything as coming from the hands of our Father, God the Creator. And so we become contemplatives in the middle of the world, loving the world.

In Lent, the liturgy recalls the effect of Adam's sin in the life of man. Adam did not want to be a good son of God; he rebelled. But we also hear the echoing chant of that *felix culpa*: "O happy fault," which the whole Church will joyfully intone at the Easter vigil.

God the Father, in the fullness of time, sent to the world his only-begotten Son, to re-establish peace; so that by his redeeming men from sin, "we might become sons of God," freed from the yoke of sin, capable of sharing in the divine intimacy of the Trinity. And so it has become possible for this new man, this new grafting of the children of God, to free all creation from disorder, restoring all things in Christ, who has reconciled them to God.

It is, then, a time of penance, but, as we have seen, this is not something negative. Lent should be lived in the spirit of filiation, which Christ has communicated to us and which is alive in our soul. Our Lord calls us to come nearer to him, to be like him: "Be imitators of God, as his dearly beloved children," (Eph. 5:1) cooperating humbly but fervently in the divine purpose of mending what is broken, of saving what is lost, of bringing back to order what sinful man has put out of order, of leading to its goal what has gone astray, of re-establishing the divine balance of all creation.

*Christ is Passing By, 65*

### **A new conversion**

I advise you to try sometime to return... to the beginning of your first conversion, which, if it is not becoming like children, is very much like it. In the spiritual life we have to let ourselves be led with complete trust, single-mindedly and without fear. We have to speak with absolute clarity about what we have in our mind and in our soul.

*Furrow, 145*

To be converted you must climb via humility, along the path of self-abasement.

*Furrow, 278*

Never lose heart, for Our Lord is always ready to give you the necessary grace for the new conversion you need, for that ascent in the supernatural field.

*The Forge, 237*

- Listen ["The conversion of the Children of God" \(mp3\)](#), a homily first given on March 2, 1952, First Sunday of Lent (part1)