PUT ON THE MIND AND HEART OF CHRIST

Do not conform yourselves to this age
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may discern what is the will of God,
what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:2

A renewed mind is one that has done two things: it has “put off” any hurt, doubt, fear, rebellion, self-centeredness, lust, bitterness, etc, any corrupt thinking, or any barrier that would quench God’s Spirit and it has “put on” the mind of Christ.

Renewing our minds is not simply “changing” our thoughts, but actually putting off the old negative thoughts as well as putting on God’s thoughts. In other words, we cannot just say to God, “Lord, give me Your thoughts,” and somehow expect Him to automatically give us His mind. We must first put off our own self-centered thinking by confessing, repenting, and then giving it to God. Only then can we put on the mind of Christ. Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ is not short, simple, and immediately clear. It has to be a way of life, not a sound-bite.

PRESENCE OF GOD

We pause and remember that we are always and everywhere in the holy presence of our Loving and Forgiving God. You, O Kind and Merciful God are as close to us as we are to ourselves. With Your Divine Assistance may we cast away all of our sins and make for ourselves a new heart and a new spirit in accordance with Your Will.

Glory and praise to You, our Father and Creator; Jesus the Son and our Savior, and the Spirit Most Holy Who calls us to life, to holiness, to creativity and to love. Amen.

DRAW NEAR O LORD

Draw near, O Lord, graciously hear us,
guilty of sinning before You.
O King exalted, Savior of all nations
See how our grieving lifts our eyes to heaven;
Hear us Redeemer, as we beg forgiveness.
Humbly confessing countless sins committed,
Our hearts are broken laying bare their secrets.
Cleanse us, Redeemer, boundless in compassion.
Draw near, O God, graciously hear us,
guilty of sinning before You.

SCRIPTURE READING: SIRACH 17:20-24

To the Penitent God provides a way back,
He encourages those who are losing hope
and has chosen for them the lot of truth.
return to Him and give up sin,
pray to the Lord and make your offenses few.
Turn again to the Most High and away from your sin,
hate intensely what He loathes,
and know the justice and judgments of God,
stand firm in the way set before you,
in prayer to the Most High God.
The Word of the Lord!
All who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ.

REFLECTION: POPE BENEDICT XVI
They who receive the Lord into their lives and love Him with all their heart are capable of a new beginning. They manage to carry out the Will of God: to create a new form of life inspired by love and destined for eternity. The apostle Paul tells us: “Do you not know that you are temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16) If we are really aware of this reality, and are lives are deeply molded by it, then our witness is clear, eloquent and effective.”

SCRIPTURAL RESPONSE: COLOSSIANS 3:12-17
1. Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience,
2. Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.
1. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.
2. Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called into one body.
1. And be thankful.
2. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another.
1. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
2. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Him.

A PROMISE: EZEKIEL 36:26-27
I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.
I will take the stone heart from your breast and put a heart of flesh in it place.
I will put My Spirit among you so that you will walk in the paths of My law.
Keep My judgments and obey them.

BLESSING
May we see the world with the eyes of God filled with compassion and tenderness.
May we listen with the ears of God to the voices, cries and distress of others.
May we feel with the heart and mercy of God.
May we always speak the Word of God in our words and actions.
May the Good God use us as His instruments to bring Him to our world.
Blessing upon us in the name of the Triune God:
The Father and Source of All Being;
The Son, the Eternal Word and our Savior;