Romans 12:1–2 - A Living Sacrifice

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Today’s passage deals with topic of living sacrifice. Before Paul describes our new life in Christ as merciful, he describes it as worshipful. Before you think that the Christian life has everything to do with being merciful to people, realize that it has everything to do with being worshipful toward God. God helps us in every day today life. Take your, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

Paul's concern here is to lift our eyes above current circumstances - the opposition of living in a fallen society, the difficulties of everyday life, the smallness of our churches and so on - to see where we're headed, and where we are taking the rest of the creation. So our overall goal in this study is to come out of it with more understanding of the awesome thing that we're a part of, with our eyes lifted above today's problems, and with a greater awareness of our heavenly home.

The Christian life is not easy. Fighting sin is not easy. Enduring persecution is not easy. Coping with day-to-day life in a fallen world, with corruptible bodies, has its difficulties.

The traditional divisions of prayers are into adoration or praise, thanksgiving, confession and petition or supplication that’s relevant in spirituality as it’s the relationship with God. For this very reason confession is an important element in a full act of worship, and its place as a Prayer of Approach, is early in the service followed by the opening act of praise.

Our confession prayer in Holy Qurbana is making our body as a sacrifice. St. John Chrysostom identified the necessity of living in a state of grace to insure the perfection of our personal living sacrifice: *"How is the body to become a sacrifice? Let the eye look on no evil thing, and it has already become a sacrifice. Let the tongue say nothing filthy, and it has become an offering. Let your hand do nothing evil, and it has become a whole burnt offering. But even this is not enough, for we must have good works also. The hand must do alms, the mouth must bless those who curse it, and the ears must find time to listen to the reading of Scripture. Sacrifice allows of no unclean thing. It is the first fruits of all other actions."*

If we confess our sins God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In full assurance of faith, let us confess our sins.

Gracious God, this season of Holy Lent calls us home to you. As we have wandered in our spiritual lives we now hear your invitation to return to you. As such, Lent challenges us to look within ourselves and examine the priorities in our lives, as well as the ways in which those priorities have influenced our choices.