



**INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO**  
**GUAYAMA CAMPUS**  
**Religious Life Office**

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**To: Campus Community**

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**PASTORAL MESSAGE: WHAT IS OUR GETHSEMANE?**

May God bless you today and always. In this message I would like to reflect on one of the most intense events in Jesus's life, Gethsemane. Gethsemane means place of the olive press, since the method used to extract the oil from the olives was by means of a press that crushed the olives. Hence, in an olive tree orchard Jesus experienced the most intense passion in preparation for his death. Jesus's prayer in the Garden or Mount of Olives had a certain parallel with the one he had in the desert before beginning his ministry. In both he expressed human anguish and frailty (comments from the *Catholic Bible for the Young*, 2005).

It is not easy to feel sad and anguished, as Jesus felt knowing that the final outcome was about to happen. Each person lives in a Gethsemane. No one, no matter how much empathy he or she has, seems to know about the complicated situations that everyone goes through. The experiences of pain and crisis are only known by those who are living through them in their own flesh. For this reason, Jesus in his moment of intense passion exclaimed, "Father, if possible, take this cup away from me, but do not make take my will into account but only yours."

Dr. John C. Maxwell, a prominent motivator and speaker on leadership topics, makes an interesting analysis of the reference text (Luke 22: 39-46). According to Maxwell, Gethsemane is the place:

- Where the spiritual battles take place (40-44).
- Where loneliness is felt (v.41)
- Where honesty and transparency are expressed (vv.41,42).
- Where submission is necessary (v.42).
- Where strength/power is received (v.43).

What are your struggles and difficulties? We all have our Gethsemane. It only remains for us to say that the God of life allows us to grow even in the midst of situations and circumstances that we encounter in our daily lives.

**May God bless you and may His grace fill your lives with peace and prosperity. Amen.**