



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised Be Jesus Christ! As we begin Week 1 of Lent, I share with you below, excerpts of Pope Francis' Lenten Letter to the Church. He speaks of Lent being a journey, commitment and offers two proposals for us. I encourage your prayerful reading of the Pope's words to us.

I also call your attention to our upcoming Parish Mission, next week. A Parish Mission is basically, a parish retreat and what a wonderful opportunity it is during Lent. Be sure to mark your calendars to attend the conferences, make a good confession and spend some time in Adoration.

As our Lord spends His time in the desert for us, let us continue to remember in prayer all those in need especially those for whom life is difficult in the current time. May our prayer, our fasting and our almsgiving, be a benefit for all.

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with Him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend "a high mountain" in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline — asceticism — as God's holy people.

Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the Cross. We need to set out on the journey, an uphill path that, like a mountain trek, requires effort, sacrifice and concentration. It is in togetherness that we follow Jesus. Together too, as a pilgrim Church in time, we experience the Liturgical Year and Lent within it, walking alongside those whom the Lord has placed among us as fellow travelers.

During any strenuous mountain trek, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed on the path; yet the panorama that opens up at the end amazes us and rewards us by its grandeur.

The first proposal, then, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to Him as He speaks to us. And how does He speak to us? First, in the Word of God, which the Church offers us in the Liturgy. May that Word not fall on deaf ears; if we cannot always attend Mass, let us study its daily biblical readings, even with the help of the Internet.

The second proposal for this Lent: do not take refuge in a religiosity made up of extraordinary events and dramatic experiences, out of fear of facing reality and its daily struggles, its hardships and contradictions. The light that Jesus shows the disciples is an anticipation of Easter glory, and that must be the goal of our own journey, as we follow "Him alone." Lent leads to Easter: the "retreat" is not an end in itself, but a means of preparing us to experience the Lord's Passion and Cross with faith, hope and love, and thus to arrive at the resurrection.

236

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