



Dear Staff:

As we enter into the season of Lent, I am again full of hope as we prepare to celebrate the greatest feast in the Catholic Church - the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In reflecting on the next 40 days, I am reminded again that this is the season of grace, of anticipation of new life and of new beginnings as we draw closer to Jesus. Our Lenten journey will move us to Easter, ready to celebrate His death and resurrection and rejoicing in what it means for each of us.

Last week, in his Lenten message Pope Benedict focused his reflections especially on the value and meaning of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. His message is relevant in light of current financial struggles within our communities. Many families are suffering a multitude of losses as a result of the downturn in our economy. As we respond to the call to pay closer attention to God's word, may we find ways to reach out to those less fortunate.

May I invite you to enter into the season with a desire to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ, and let us make our prayer and our almsgiving true signs of the Gospel of love in our world. Christ calls us to this challenge; let us respond to Him with generous hearts.

Pope Benedict's closing comments reflect the need for Christian unity and support. I too, offer his words for your reflection, "May every family and Christian community use well this time of Lent, in order to cast aside all that distracts the spirit and grow in whatever nourishes the soul, moving it to love of God and neighbour". (Pope Benedict XVI)

In the true spirit of this special time, let us see these 40 days as days of conversion and preparation for Easter.

God Bless You.

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