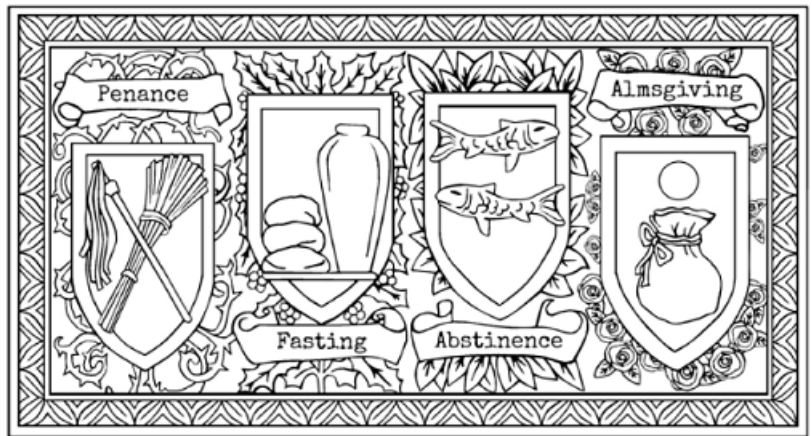


## A LENTEN MESSAGE 2024

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,  
his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness. (Lam 3:22-23)*



My Dear Family, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The observance of the Holy Season of Lent reflects the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert before He began his public ministry of teaching and healing. His ministry culminates in His Passion, Death and Resurrection a life freely given for our salvation. Lent calls us to renew our commitment to ourselves, to the people we encounter in our day to day lives and to our God. Lent is a time to take "ownership" of faith. It is a season for conversion by individuals and communities.

The Season of Lent gives us all the tools we need to do better, in our world and our lives. The pillars of Lent prayer, fasting and charitable works help us to confront temptation, repent of our sins, be reconciled to God, and begin again. But the spiritual resources of Lent are effective only if we use them well. It is so important to embrace the season of Lent like never before. Our faith community must enter the Season of Lent with real determination.

Attend Holy Mass each Sunday, and during the week, if possible. Read the Word of God. Pray often in church, in school and at home. Take seriously the call of the Church to fast and abstain, not just from food, but from other unhealthy attachments as well. Go to Confession. Support the charitable works of the Church, and engage in good deeds of charity, kindness and forgiveness. For those preparing to be welcomed into the Church at Easter, through the Sacraments of Initiation Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion it is a time of intense prayer and reflection.

Living as a Christian is a response to a deliberate choice. It calls for a decision to place our faith in Christ. Faith is not inherited. It is a gift offered to us, but accepting the gift is a personal decision. Lent is a very special time when Christians renew their faith choice. It is the season when we reflect on the meaning and consequences of our baptism. We consider what baptismal commitment calls for in the decisions of daily life. This season of grace calls us to honestly look at how well our faith affects our decisions in life.

May this time of renewal and conversion be a time of encountering the power of God's Spirit drawing us to a deeper and more abundant relationship with God. May this Lenten Season be a special time for all of us as we prepare to celebrate Easter with renewed faith, enthusiasm and commitment. May this be a time when we respond to the grace of God calling us once again to turn away from sin and be ever more faithful to God's call in our lives.

My blessed Family, Brothers and Sisters, I believe deeply that if we engage the Season of Lent in a serious way, the darkness and violence of the world, the decadence of society, and the anxiety of our souls will give way to the goodness and light of Christ. In the 40 days to come, let us walk with Christ through his suffering and death and then rise to the new life, the peaceful and hopeful life, of Easter Day!

Blessings in Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

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