

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

LENT IS TO RECREATE OURSELVES IN THE MERCY AND THE LOVE OF GOD



My brothers and sisters in Christ, it is with a spirit of joy and repentance that I want to invite you to enter this Holy Season of Lent and to recreate ourselves into the mercy and love of our loving Father. We have forty days to prepare for the great Easter celebration. It's time to choose the better part by doing our check-up spiritually. It's about rejecting everything and all the junk and choosing the one true treasure. **Lent is a time of conversion, a time to return to God and give Him back His place in our lives.** The same way our physical body, our devices, our cars need maintenance and update. Likewise, it is true for our soul and our faith. Like any relationship of love and friendship, it needs maintenance.

The readings this first Sunday of lent reveal to us a God who makes a covenant with humanity; this is this message that we heard in the 1st reading. As a sign of this covenant, God gives Noah the sign of the rainbow. To live Lent is to live under this arch which will take us until Easter. Our God will always be there to accompany us, to take us by the hand and

walk with us. It helps us to discern what is positive in our lives, even if we experience situations of betrayal. He will never close His arms to us. We can always count on His love.

The Gospel of Saint Mark reminds us that Jesus came for the salvation of all men. If He is led into the desert, it is not to build a rescue ark; it is to prepare for the battles that await Him in the heart of this world. **For forty days He was tempted by Satan.** The Gospel tells us that He lived among wild beasts. **Saint Mark adds that “the Angels served Him”.** In a few words, the Gospel gives us the victory of Jesus over Satan.

Experiencing Lent is following Jesus through the desert. It is there, in silence, that we can listen to the voice of God. In the noise and confusion, this is not possible: we only hear superficial voices. We hear the voice of God by listening to His Word. Our Pope Francis places great emphasis on the need to read the Gospel every day. **This is where we find the words of Eternal Life.** When we read them, it is Jesus who is there, it is He who speaks to us. It is with Him that we can be victorious over all the forces of evil. Let us pray for each other in our Lenten journey so that we can focus, renew, and **refresh ourselves in Jesus who brings us new life through His death and His resurrection.**

First Sunday of Lent; February 18, 2024

Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugene Pierre Ph.D., Pastor, VF