

# WORD FROM THE PASTOR

## AN ITINERARY OF OUR OWN: LORD, WITH YOU WE WILL GO INTO THE DESERT



Since last Wednesday, we have entered the time of Lent. This period that lasts forty days prepares us for the great feast of Easter. It will be an opportunity for us to rediscover the true priorities of our Christian life. We recognize that very often, we have turned away from the Lord and that He is not always our priority. We have too often organized our lives outside of Him. So, He is there to tell us and reminds us again: **“Return to Me with all your heart!”** Lent is precisely this privileged time that is given to us to return to the Lord; it is urgent to put Him back at the center of our lives. The book of Deuteronomy (1st reading) shows us how God took the initiative to save His people. We remember that the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt. God heard their voice and led them to a land of freedom.

**Lent is this long road to liberation.** When we turn away from God, we can only fall on paths of perdition. But the Lord does not abandon us. He never ceases to come to seek and save those who were lost. He makes us rediscover our human dignity. Throughout the Bible, we find this call to welcome the Liberating God. It is in this spirit that we are invited to live this time of Lent.

In the second Reading, Saint Paul invites us to recognize Christ as Lord. This means that we want Him to be the Master of our lives. We welcome Him so that He can take charge. This is the price we pay to be saved. **Our God is a Liberating God; He wants the salvation of all men regardless of their religion.**

In the Gospel, we find the story of Jesus’ temptations in the desert. The tempter introduces himself to Him by first flattering Him: **“If you are the Son of God...”** **When he approaches us, he uses the same technique by flattering our pride, our desire for freedom and independence: “Do what pleases you; in this way you will be able to regain your dignity and your freedom. In fact, this temptation leads us to a dead end that turns us away from the Love of God.**

Today, Jesus teaches us that being a Son of God means letting ourselves be led by God without imposing our means on Him, it means trusting Him completely without wanting to impose guarantees on Him, without hoping for marvelous wonders that would turn us away from our struggles and our commitments. To each temptation, Jesus responds with a word from the Bible: **“It is written: Man does not live by bread alone... It is before God that you shall bow down and to Him alone that you shall serve... You shall not put the Lord your God to the test...”**

This is how Jesus was victorious over the tempter. **During this Lent, He wants to associate us all with His victory. He teaches us to be entirely turned towards God and to nourish ourselves with His Word every day.** Lent is there to remind us that we are engaged in a fight against the forces of evil. But in this fight, we are not alone. The Lord is there, and we can always count on Him. We can also turn to Mary, our Mother in heaven. Once again, my brothers and sisters, the Lord is there; He gives us the true bread of life which comes to

renew our heart; He nourishes FAITH, makes HOPE grow and gives us the STRENGTH TO LOVE.

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