



My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have now entered the Sacred and Holy Season of Lent. During this time, the Church invites us to walk with Christ in the wilderness for 40 days and nights as we prepare for the Solemn celebration of Easter.

This year we have faced some troubling times. We began the year with devastating bush fires, floods, various tragic events in various communities and on a global scale we are watching an unknown disease spread. When these events occur we are brought to a standstill and our natural response is to watch, prepare and act. These moments makes each one of us reassess life and plan for self-protection and preservation. During Lent, the Church asks us to do the same (watch, prepare, act and reassess) as we use these 40 days to do penance, almsgiving and fasting which interrupts our usual comforts in life which allows an outpouring of self so we may rediscover in prayer the saving love of Jesus Christ.

In addition, the diocese will mark the beginning of Lent with the national pilgrimage of the relics of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus and her parents Saints Louis and Zelig Martin in Forbes and Parkes. Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, who is a beloved saint of the Church is known for her charism of the 'Little way'. Her little way teaches us that in all that we do, no matter how big or small, we are to do it for the glory of God and offer it up as small sacrifices to Christ. By doing this, Saint Therese teaches us that we can become Holy through the small things in this life and always remembering that in everything we do or say, we must do it for God above all things.

Therefore, as we enter Lent, let us watch, prepare and act using the little way of St Therese of the Child Jesus and offer up all our joys, sorrows, worries and tasks to Jesus Christ as we unite them with his suffering, passion and death. Through this we can be transformed and renewed as we enter into Easter. Let us not waste this opportunity for renewal of hearts and minds, rather let us grasp it and ask the Lord to make our hearts renewed. Take time over the next 40 days to pray, fast and to give so that we may become more like Jesus to one another as we journey with him to the cross and be glorified with him in the resurrection.

May Mary our Good and Holy Mother guide our hearts along the way and as she walked alongside her son to the cross, may she too walk alongside us.

May God Bless you all during this Sacred and Holy Season

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