



## Archbishop's Message for Lent 2023

The great family of Christians will soon begin its annual Lenten pilgrimage. Forty days are offered to us to follow Jesus our Lord, to be instructed, to be transformed from within, and to find new life. Are you interested?

The experience is offered to all sinners. We do not need to be perfect to follow Jesus as his disciples. We simply need a sincere desire for a better life and a complete surrender to the path he will lay out before us. It may seem daunting or make us question ourselves. Are we ready to put all our trust in Jesus?

This is the essential first step for all those who seek happiness, a better life, or a renewed sense of hope. We must be converted to Christ Jesus. Whoever says conversion, intentionally chooses the path that leads only to Christ. We must therefore choose not to take other paths. We must be ready to sacrifice, to let go of something we love in order to embrace something better, even if at first glance we may feel doubt or an unwillingness. We must accept that the path proposed will be narrow, unpopular, sometimes arduous, and demanding, but it will fill us with a new life. Darkness will give way to light and to the truth that will set us free. A deep peace will inhabit our hearts even during difficult times.

Following Jesus requires attentive listening to his word which will sometimes be inspiring and will lead us to wonder and to the supernatural; sometimes it will be difficult to hear because it will take us out of our comfort zone, challenge us to detachment, to charity, and to forgiveness. Let us have the courage to persevere with his words so that they may transform us from within and lead us to greater trust and faithfulness in our Creator.

The disciple of Christ who lives a profound conversion not only chooses to listen to him, but he commits to configuring himself to Him and to live in Him in order to act in Him. When we are filled with his divine Love, Jesus heals wounded hearts, sows hope, and strengthens our faith. We gradually become worthy children of the Father and are renewed in his image. From that moment on, a burning fire within us compels us to witness our faith, to build Church together, and to launch out on a mission to build the Kingdom of God.

So, this Lent, do you feel like following Jesus? Know that he invites you to do so!

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