



CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
UNITED STATES, PHILIPPINES, AND TIMOR-LESTE
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

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Dear Friends,

Lent, is a great liturgical season in our Catholic faith. It is a season that invites us to enter into the passion and death of Christ. Each year, the Lenten Season is set before us as a special time of prayer, penance, sacrifice, and good works of mercy in preparation of the celebration of Easter which is Christ's victory over death.

It is a promising season for us for deepening our spiritual life as we listen attentively and ponder more deeply the word of God in our prayer. The distribution of ashes which marks the beginning of the Season of Lent reminds us of our own humanity and calls us to repentance. The ashes that we receive are a reminder of our own transgressions and call us to a radical conversion and trust in God's unconditional love and mercy.

This year, as we begin to observe this season of repentance and prayer, I would like us to reflect on this scripture text from the Gospel of Mark 1:15:

***"This is the time of fulfillment.
The kingdom of God is at hand.
Repent, and believe in the gospel."***

In the Gospel of Saint Mark, the focus of St. Mark's theology is Jesus' theology of the Kingdom of God. In the Old Testament the concept of the Kingdom of God from its beginning was a constant part of God's revelation to Israel which was also at the center of Jesus' teaching and his whole public life, manifested in his words, his actions, and his own person. "While Jesus taught about the kingdom of God in parables, his life was really the parable par excellence of the kingdom" (The New Jerome Biblical Commentary 597). We are invited to respond to build the kingdom of God in communion with God, with one another, and with God's creation. In building God's kingdom we are also

challenged to liberate ourselves from the bondage of sin and evil in all its forms for "the kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness" (Redemptoris Missio #15). The Season of Lent urgently calls us for an inner conversion and to experience God's infinite merciful love for us. Jesus constantly calls us to return to God and transform our human relationships by serving



*St. John of the Cross Church,
Lacombe, LA.*

one another in love, forgiveness, and mercy.

During this Season of Lent let us ask for God's grace to grant us wisdom and a listening heart, that we may learn to listen from within and allow ourselves to be transformed by God.

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, may we be renewed in our desire to live as Disciples of Christ trusting in God's faithfulness and love for us. May we be inspired daily to be authentic in our prayer life as expressed through our acts of charity with our brothers and sisters who are in immense need of our love and compassion, even in the midst of uncertainty.

On behalf of the Sisters of Mount Carmel, may you always know God's immense love for you and for your family as we celebrate God's gift of hope and new life.



Gratefully in Carmel,

Sr. Maria Sheila Undang, O. Carm

Sister Maria Sheila Undang, O. Carm.
Development Director



Congregation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Please include the following intentions in the prayers and Masses of the sisters.

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