

Dear Friends, we have just begun the Holy Season of Lent on 1st March, Ash Wednesday. This season reminds us of our duty to review our Christian life and make it conformed to the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus started His public Ministry by fast and prayer. The spiritual strength that he gained due to His union with the Father enabled him to overcome the temptations. This should inspire us to spend these 40 days of Lent fruitfully by fast, penance, prayer, alms giving, charity, and meditating on the Gospels specially the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Let us keep up the practices of Way of the Cross, attending daily Mass, adoration, retreat, pilgrimages and service to our neighbour. This would be a fitting preparation for the celebration of Easter.

The parish priest and the faithful are requested to plan several spiritual activities fitting to the Lenten Season. We have a good custom to hold the annual retreat during the season. The Masses for the sick are being held in the houses of the sick. In some parishes the house blessings are also conducted. All the spiritual exercises will help the faithful to deepen their spiritual and prayer life. When there is slackness towards the Sacraments and family prayer, I request the pastors to give more attention to this group of people. Our Holy Father Pope Francis asks us to pay special attention to such persons. His words will touch and anoint them.

Lenten Observances

The Regional Catholic Bishops call for all Catholics 14 years and older to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the Fridays of Lent. Catholics who are 18 to 59 years old are expected to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting refers to the quantity of food eaten. Traditionally, fasting calls for refraining from eating between meals and consuming only one full meal per day.

The following suggestions are proposed by the Episcopal Conference:

1. Attending Mass
2. Making at least a 15 minute-visit to the Blessed Sacrament
3. Reading the Bible for 15 minutes
4. Meditation on the Passion of the Lord for 15 minutes
5. Making the Way of the Cross
6. Missing Breakfast or any one meal
7. Making strictly vegetarian meals (avoiding fish and egg as well)
8. Giving 10% of one's daily earnings in Charity

BCCRS – Lenten Program – “Fast & Pray” – 2017

(40 Days round-the-clock Prayer at the Bridgettine Convent, Bengaluru)

Bangalore Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, in association with the Proclamation and Evangelization Commission of the Archdiocese of Bangalore, is organizing the sixth annual Prayer and Intercession, running 24 hours of 40 Days of Lent. In the past years, we have had the participation from religious organizations under CRI, Seminarians, School Children, Nurses from various hospitals, Youth and Laity from all language groups.

This year the theme is “Lord, bless the WORLD, our NATION and the CHURCH”. The faithful, religious sisters, brothers and priests are encouraged to participate in this Lenten Intercessory Programme and to become the Prayer Warriors.

The New Kannada Missal

The long awaited Roman Missal in Kannada is at last ready. By a Decree dated 25th of October 2016, the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, Rome, has given its *recognitio* to the Missal prepared by the Karnataka Regional Commission for Liturgy. The Missal was officially released by His Grace the Most Rev. Bernard Moras, Archbishop of Bangalore and President of KRCBC on Monday, 27th of February in Mysore, at the end of the Mass of the episcopal ordination of the new Bishop of Mysore. Copies of this Missal, printed at the Brilliant Press, will be made available to all the ten dioceses (Latin Rite) of Karnataka at the earliest as per their order. *It has been decided that the new Missal will be officially introduced throughout the region of Karnataka from April 16, 2017, Solemnity of Easter.*

Reflection: Einstein was once travelling from Princeton on a train when the conductor came down the aisle, punching the tickets of every passenger. When he came to Einstein, Einstein reached in his vest pocket. He couldn't find his ticket, so he reached in his trouser pockets. It wasn't there.

He looked in his briefcase but couldn't find it. Then he looked in the seat beside him. He still couldn't find it. The conductor said, "Dr. Einstein, I know who you are. We all know who you are. I'm sure you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it."

Einstein nodded appreciatively. The conductor continued down the aisle punching tickets. As he was ready to move to the next car, he turned around and saw the great physicist down on his hands and knees looking under his seat for his ticket. The conductor rushed back and said, "Dr. Einstein, Dr. Einstein, don't worry, I know who you are; no problem. You don't need a ticket. I'm sure you bought one." Einstein looked at him and said, "Young man, I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going."

May each of us may live our lives so well that when our life's ticket is punched we don't have to worry about where we are going! If we are not aware of the destination, how can we know our destiny? Our true Christian life calls us not only to know who we are, but also to be fully aware where we're going. *Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil - it has no point.* May this holy season of Lent help all of us know who we are, and motivate us to amend our lives, mend our ways and end our bad habits. May our troubles be less, our blessings more, and may nothing but happiness, come through our door.

Wishing all of you a Holy Season of Lent and invoking God's blessings,

+ Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore