



Simla Chandigarh Diocese

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Lenten Pastoral Letter – 2025: A Lenten Journey: Walking Together in Hope

Dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers,

Friends, let's pause. Breathe deeply. In this quiet stillness, in the hush before dawn, Lent calls us inward. Forget the rush—this is not a race but a gentle walk with God. He whispers, "Return to me with all your heart" (Joel 2:12-13). The Season of Lent which begins on 5th March 2025 is not about grand gestures but a personal encounter—a time to discover the hidden garden of our hearts where God wants to renew us.

We journey through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving—not as burdens but as doors to transformation:

- Fasting is not just about skipping meals; it's about creating silence in our noisy lives so we can hear God's gentle voice. "Your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:16-18). It is about turning down the world's distractions so we can hear the melody of our souls.

- Abstinence helps us reclaim freedom. It's about honoring God with our bodies, time, and energy. "Honor God with your bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). By decluttering our lives, we make space for what truly matters.

- Penance is like spring cleaning for the soul. "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate" (Joel 2:13). It is letting go of resentment, guilt, and anything that keeps us from God's grace. "The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Through these practices, we prepare for Easter's joy. "The light shines in the darkness" (John 1:5). Like planting seeds in winter, we trust that new life will come. Whatever weighs us down, let it go—allow God's light to shine. Transformation happens in real moments, in daily choices.

But we do not walk this road alone. Lent is a shared pilgrimage. Are we truly moving forward together? Pope Francis reminds us that we are a people journeying as one. This is synodality—walking together. Are we listening, supporting, and making room for others? Are we building bridges in our families, workplaces, and communities? Are we ensuring that no one is left behind?

Hold on to Christ's unwavering hope. He has conquered death, and even in the darkest night, the sun will rise. Trust in God's forgiveness and let hope shape our actions. Work for justice, unity, and care for our planet. Let everyone feel included in God's loving embrace.

This Lent, let us walk together as pilgrims of hope, guided by Christ's love. May this be a time of deep renewal, conversion, and transformation. May Mary, Mother of Hope, walk with us on this journey. Let us go forward—together.

We continue to pray for the healing and good health of our Pope Francis.

With all prayers in this holy season of Lent and blessings for Easter.

Given on 01st March 2025, the Feast of St. David. This Lenten Pastoral Letter is to be read out or its contents to be explained in Hindi or Punjabi in all Churches on 02.03.2025, 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time or 1st Sunday of Lent.

Yours sincerely in Christ

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