



*Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!*

February 24, 2020

An Invitation in the Lenten Season

It has taken a little longer than usual, but our annual Lenten pilgrimage has arrived once again, beginning with ashes and leading to the new life that Resurrection celebrates and remembers. Bishop Mike and I pray that we will not miss this journey by failing to discover our need for Lent.

The first real Lenten people were not yet Christians, but rather those preparing to become Christians. They wore sackcloth and ashes in all humility and lived the days before Easter as disciples, becoming Christian by God's grace, repenting of their pagan ways, and accepting new life in Jesus the Christ. But that changed when those in the Church community who were already Christians consistently noticed something remarkable at the Easter baptism. They were struck by the radiant faces of those just baptized and they themselves longed once again to experience the thrill of new birth, new strength, and new life. Having become ho-hum in their faith, they decided to do something about it. Christians then began to join the catechumens in their prayerful preparation for Easter baptism. They also put on the sackcloth and ashes that announced their need for conversion, living the days before Easter as repentant sinners. That's how Lent gradually took its form over several hundred years: out of the need to prepare for the joy of Easter.

We invite you to enter this pilgrimage as we intend to do ourselves. Make the time to go to a Lenten mission in your parish. Prepare yourselves for our annual day of recollection. Attend Mass more frequently. Seek out confession. Make your desks stations of prayerful action as you accomplish your daily tasks. Engage in conversations that make our workplaces more united to Christ's mission. Pray for each other. Feed the hungry. Find the freedom and peace that come from knowing our salvation is accomplished.

May our listening in prayer lead us to the conversion of life that the Gospel calls forth, allowing us to truly rejoice when Easter finally and inevitably arrives.

May our journey together be blessed by the guiding, consoling Holy Spirit!

*+ Gustavo  
msps*

+Gustavo