

### Words of Wisdom for Our Lenten Journey

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

It is a sacred time; it is a special time; and it is a time for healing. On Wednesday, we gathered together to commemorate Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent, a season of great magnitude in our liturgical year. During this time, the Church asks us to pray, fast, and give alms—to honor our Lord and mirror his footsteps—so we can reflect, act upon, and strengthen our relationship with him and assuage the “wilderness” within us. In our own Lenten journey, we can create for ourselves a sacred space for introspection and align our hearts to the divine. What better way to begin this 40-day season than to read the words of our blessed popes who certainly inspire us to draw closer to God!

**POPE FRANCIS:** *“During this liturgical season the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend ‘a high mountain’ in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline—asceticism—as God’s holy people. Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross.*

*“Lent is a time to break the chains of our individualism and to rediscover our companions along the journey of each day through encounter and listening, and to learn once more to love them as brothers and sisters.*

*“Lent comes providentially to awaken us, to shake us from our lethargy.*

*“In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could lead to a hardness of heart, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of the boundless love of God and experience his tenderness.”*

**POPE BENEDICT XVI:** *“Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life.”*

**POPE JOHN PAUL II:** *“Christ has gained for us not only new dignity in our life on earth, but above all, the new dignity of the children of God, called to share eternal life with him. Lent invites us to overcome the temptation of seeing the realities of this world as definitive and to recognize that our homeland is in heaven.*

*“These are the precious weeks [of Lent] offered by the Church to all Christians, in order to help them to reflect upon their profound identity as children of the heavenly Father and as brothers and sisters of all human beings.*

*“Lent is the favourable time to offer to the Lord sincere thanks for the wonders he has done for humanity in every age, and especially in the Redemption when he did not spare his own Son.*

*“Lent is a time of truth. Christians, called by the Church to prayer, penance, fasting and self-sacrifice, place themselves before God and recognize themselves; they rediscover themselves.”*

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy