

SEEK THE LORD – MARCH 2025

Each year during the season of Lent, the Church affords us the opportunity to rekindle our relationship with God, both as individuals and as a community of faith. These 40 days are a time set aside to pray more, to embrace a spirit of self-denial and sacrifice, and to work to serve those in need. The spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are not ends in and of themselves. Rather, they are means to further convert our hearts from worldly ways so that they may become more conformed to the very Heart of Christ. The more we allow ourselves to be transformed by God's love, the greater our capacity for loving others becomes in return.

Pope Francis reflects on how God calls us to open our hearts to receive the seeds of grace He offers us during this privileged time. We then should carefully cultivate those seeds so that they bear fruit in our own lives and, just as importantly, in the lives of those He puts in our path. Explaining this dynamic of sowing and reaping, the Holy Father says, "Regular listening to the word of God makes us open and docile to His working (cf. Jas. 1:21) and bears fruit in our lives. This brings us great joy, yet even more, it summons us to become God's co-workers (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9). By making good use of the present time (cf. Eph. 5:16), we too can sow seeds of goodness. This call to sow goodness should not be seen as a burden but a grace, whereby the Creator wishes us to be actively united with His own bountiful goodness" (*Message for Lent 2022*, 1).

The Holy Father goes on to encourage us, as St. Paul did for the Galatians, to "never grow tired of doing good" (Gal. 6:9). Specifically, he says, "Let us not grow tired of praying... Let us not grow tired of uprooting evil from our lives... Let us not grow tired of doing good in active charity towards our neighbors" (2). As we do these things we make more space in our soul for God to act, for Him to take the little we often have to offer and make it bear abundant fruit

for others. And we should never doubt the good which God can do with even the smallest things we offer in a spirit of charity!

It is this same attitude of generosity which moves the hearts of so many throughout the Church to give of their own time and gifts for the sake of others. Some do this through their daily work; many others, though, build up the Kingdom by volunteering or supporting the various non-profit ministries which seek to serve those who find themselves physically, spiritually or emotionally in need.

There is so much work which the Lord invites us to be a part of in order that His Gospel of salvation may reach as many souls as possible. Right here in our own archdiocese there are many examples of such ministries radiating the light which Christ came to shine into the darkness of this world. During these weeks of special grace, may all of us receive everything that the Lord has prepared to give us. Going forth into the world, let us sow these seeds which He will undoubtedly cause to bear much fruit for the good of all!