



My brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today, we begin a 40-day journey into the desert but we do not do it alone. As the Israelites were led out of slavery and sin from Egypt into the desert they had the Lord leading them. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night (Exodus 13:21)." Just like the Israelites, we are led into this desert by the Lord so that we can purify and prepare ourselves to celebrate as a people that have been redeemed at Easter.

Lent is "a time to hear the Word of God, to convert, to prepare for and remember Baptism, to be reconciled with God and one's neighbor, and of more frequent recourse to the 'arms of Christian penance': prayer, fasting and good works (cf. Mt 6, 1-6. 16-18)." (Directory of Popular Piety). There are three areas that we need to focus on during Lent: prayer, fasting, and good works (almsgiving). Unfortunately, the focus seems only to be on fasting and a countdown timer to when I can enjoy or have that particular thing again. May I challenge you to pick one thing to do in each of these areas and to recommit yourself to the Lord. I would rather that you add one thing that helps your prayer life or service to the Lord and do it well rather than just give up one thing.

If you are looking for ideas on what to do during Lent here are some. Please review the schedule on the back of this letter to see all the events that are happening. Another idea is to consider attending daily Mass at least once during the week if you do not already do so. You could also find that devotion you use to pray all the time and start praying it every day during Lent. This is season might also be the time to finally pickup that spiritual book you have always wanted to read and make it a goal to read it instead of watching TV or going online.

My prayer for each of you is that this might be a grace filled time for you. This will be my first celebrating Lent in the parish as a priest. My entire Lent last year was spent healing and recovering from breaking my left leg while trying to snow ski. I look forward to making this journey with you. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in your Lenten journey.

Through the Alliance of the Two Hearts,

Fr. Matthew

Lent Schedule for St. Elizabeth and St. Jules

Monday

- 4:45pm – Adoration at St. Jules Church
- 5:00pm – Sacrament of Reconciliation
- 6:00pm – Mass at St. Jules Church
- 6:30pm – Singing of the Divine Mercy Chaplet

Tuesday

- 6:30am – Mass at the Sister's Convent next to St. Elizabeth
- 7:00am – Exposition/Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- 5:00pm – Evening Prayer and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Thursday

- 6:30pm – *Altaration* Program at the St. Elizabeth Community Center
 - No cost
 - Join in at any point

Friday

- 7:40am – Mass at St. Elizabeth with the school
- 8:15am – Stations of the Cross with the school
- 6:00pm – Stations of the Cross at St. Elizabeth Church

Saturday

- 3:00pm – Confession at St. Elizabeth Church
- 4:00pm – Mass at St. Elizabeth Church

Sunday

- 8:30am – Mass at St. Jules Church
- 10:45am – Mass at St. Elizabeth Church
- 6:00pm – Mass at St. Elizabeth Church

Lenten Penance Services

- Monday, April 3rd at 7:00pm at St. Philomena (Labadieville)
- Tuesday, April 4th at 7:00pm at St. Joseph the Worker (Pierre Part)
- Wednesday, April 5th at 7:00pm at St. James (St. James)