



## **An Energetic Lent**

Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi  
Archbishop of Milwaukee

As we begin Lent, the Church encourages us to focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Jesus clearly spoke of the importance of these practices in Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:1-18). I encourage all of us as faithful stewards and intentional disciples of Jesus to reflect on how we can engage in these Lenten disciplines with a renewed energy and spirit this year.

This year, expand your almsgiving to include acts of charity and kindness. Visit someone who is lonely; donate to your local food pantry or women's shelter.

This year, let your fasting free you to give up the things that prevent you from deepening your relationship with God. Fast from resentment, indifference, isolation and pride.

This year, invite the Lord into your mind and your heart through simple, direct and heartfelt prayer. Participate in the sacrament of Reconciliation; pray together as a family; read something spiritual.

There are so many Lenten resources and materials that can help us pray and reflect on God's calling for us during this special time of the year. The booklet, *Magnificat*, is an excellent guide for praying and reflecting on scripture and what God is asking of us.

Tracy Welliver from Liturgical Publications, Inc. recently presented throughout our archdiocese. Tracy has written a booklet entitled, *Everyday Stewardship: Way of the Cross*. This reflection can be used personally or with others and is an excellent way to reflect on Jesus's journey to the Cross.

Bishop Robert Barron, Matthew Kelly, Catholic Relief Services and numerous publishers provide us with materials that can assist us on our Lenten journeys. A Bible app can also help us reflect on Scripture not only during Lent, but year round. Even our own archdiocesan *John Paul 2 Center for the New Evangelization* has a wonderful and simple tool called the *1% Challenge to Get to Know Jesus*. The 1% challenge is to help you get to know Jesus by taking 1% of your day (15 minutes) to pray with Scripture for 30 days.

There is no shortage of resources to help us pray, fast and give of ourselves during Lent. I encourage you to find one that will guide you and help to bring you closer to God this Lent.