

THE LENTEN PILGRIMAGE

Pope Benedict XVI, Shepherd of Truth

Notable quotations from Pope Benedict XVI and official teachings
of the Roman Catholic Church

“PRIVILEGED TIME”

Lent is a privileged time of interior pilgrimage towards Him Who is the fount of mercy. It is a pilgrimage in which He Himself accompanies us through the desert of our poverty, sustaining us on our way to the intense joy of Easter.

GOD IS THERE FOR US

Even in the “valley of darkness”... (Ps 23:4), while the tempter prompts us to despair or to place a vain hope in the work of our own hands, God is there to guard us and sustain us.

“THE CRY OF THE MULTITUDES”

Yes, even today the Lord hears the cry of the multitudes longing for joy, peace, and love. As in every age, they feel abandoned. Yet, even in the desolation of misery, loneliness, violence and hunger that indiscriminately afflict children, adults and the elderly, God does not permit darkness to prevail.



“THE TERRIBLE CHALLENGE OF POVERTY”

In the face of the terrible challenge of poverty afflicting so much of the world’s population, indifference and self-centered isolation stand in stark contrast to the “gaze” of Christ. Fasting and almsgiving, which, together with prayer, the Church proposes in a special way during the Lenten Season, are suitable means for us to become conformed to this “gaze”.

“MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS”

The example of the saints and the long history of the Church’s missionary activity provide invaluable indications of the most effective ways to support development.

“THE LOGIC OF THE GOSPEL”

Even in this era of global interdependence, it is clear that no economic, social, or political project can replace that gift of self to another through which charity is expressed. Those who act according to the logic of the Gospel live the faith as friendship with God Incarnate and, like Him, bear the burden of the material and spiritual needs of their neighbors.

“THE WORST POVERTY”

As Mother Teresa of Calcutta frequently observed, the worst poverty is not to know Christ. Therefore, we must help others to find God in the merciful face of Christ. Without this perspective, civilization lacks a solid foundation.

“NEW LIFE”

In turning to the Divine Master, in being converted to Him, in experiencing His mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we will discover a “gaze” that searches us profoundly and gives new life... It restores trust to those who do not succumb to scepticism, opening us before them the perspective of eternal beauty... Even when hate seems to prevail, the luminous testimony is never lacking.

(Source: Lenten Message, dated September 29, 2005)

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