



## AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

### A Pastoral Letter to the People of God and the Clergy of the American National Catholic Church Lent 2025

*"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean.  
Take your wrongdoing out of my sight.  
Cease to do evil. Learn to do good, search for justice,  
help the oppressed, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow.  
Come now, let us talk this over, says the Lord.  
Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;  
though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."*

—Isaiah 1:16–18

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In the Name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. At the end of this Second Week of Lent, I wanted to write to you my sincerest hopes for a grace-filled Lenten journey as we travel with Jesus to Jerusalem, to His Passion and death and to rejoice with Him at the Resurrection.

As we enter this holy season of Lent, the Church invites us into a time of *metanoia*—a profound change of heart, mind, and life. In this sacred space of forty days, we are asked to return to the Lord with fasting, prayer, and acts of love. But even more deeply, we are called to justice—to a conversion that transforms not only our individual lives, but our relationships, our communities, and the very structures of the world around us.

The words of the prophet Isaiah pierce the soul with clarity and hope. They challenge us: *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Cease to do evil. Learn to do good."* And they comfort us: *"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."* Here we see Lent not as a season of shame, but as an invitation from a loving God who desires to reason with us, to draw us back, to renew and restore us.

Isaiah's prophetic voice echoes the demand of the Gospel—a demand not rooted in legalism or fear, but in love and justice. Lent is not simply about giving things up. It is about making room for God's reign. It is about remembering the poor, lifting-up the oppressed, caring for the vulnerable, and pleading for those who have no voice. The spirituality of Lent, therefore, is not just personal; it is radically communal. It is a summons to action.

In the American National Catholic Church, we recognize the Gospel's insistent call to be a people of compassion, integrity, and inclusion. The prophet's call to "search for justice, help the oppressed, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow" resonates powerfully with our

mission. Our Eucharistic life cannot be separated from our commitment to justice. Our worship must lead us to service, and our prayer must empower us for solidarity.

This Lent, I invite all our parishes, communities, and individual faithful to deepen our Lenten journey by embracing a spirituality that is rooted in both contemplation and justice. Let our fasting create space for the hungry. Let our prayer expand our hearts for the suffering. Let our almsgiving become a sign of our solidarity with the poor.

Let us also remember that we do not undertake this journey alone. The Lord walks with us. The same God who calls us to repentance is the One who promises renewal: *"Come now, let us talk this over... though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."* In Christ, there is no condemnation, only the invitation to be made new.

We are companions on this journey, and this Lent, I invite you to deepen your spiritual experience by praying with us through our [ANCC Lenten Retreat](#) reflections provided by our clergy and seminarians. Listen as the ANCC invites us to reflect on the Gospels of Lent with our [American National Catholic Women Speak](#), and to engage the dimensions of our faith with the ANCC's Podcast, [Renewing the Spirit](#).

To the clergy of our Church, I urge you to preach boldly the prophetic Gospel of Lent. Offer the sacrament of reconciliation as a place not of fear, but of healing. Let our liturgies in this season reflect the depth of God's mercy and the breadth of God's justice.

To all the People of God, I pray that this Lent may be for you a time of grace, transformation, and profound encounter with Christ. May our Lenten practices form us more fully into the likeness of Jesus, who gave himself for the life of the world.

And may we emerge from these forty days as a Church renewed in mission, reconciled in heart, and recommitted to justice.

With every blessing for the journey ahead,



Most Rev. George R. Lucey, FCM  
Presiding Bishop