



Diocese of Port Pirie Chancery

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Pastoral Letter to the Christian Faithful of the Diocese of Port Pirie

The Season of Lent 2011

Dear Sisters and Brothers

In this Season we journey from the ashes of the first day to the light that breaks forth on the last Sunday; death to life, matter consumed to creation made new again. There can be ashes in our mouths or hearts, some put there by loss or hard times upon us, and some we put in those places ourselves, because of how we have acted or what we have said about others.

The Light towards whom we travel, now in this Season as also in life itself is the One who makes all things new. "See, I do a new thing...". See, I have destroyed death forever. So it is a season of hope. He who can destroy death can surely clean out my ashes.

It is far better in Lent to do more rather than give up something. Here are three things to do more this Lent.

One. Start again the practice of prayer in the family, even if the family is just two, or even down to one now. Make it a simple start: prayer before a meal. If you have lapsed in this practice, start to say Grace again together, even (or especially) when visitors are present. If you are already in this practice, then at one meal read the Gospel for the next Sunday, as a sort of preparation. Ask the priest and principal to print the references for the next Sunday in the parish and school bulletin.

Two. Take two of the Scripture phrases from Ash Wednesday and sit down with them for five minutes twice in the week. Quieten down, read them and mull them over in your heart, and then speak to the Lord and then be quiet so He can reply in those depths. The first phrase is, "Come back to me with all your heart". Where is my heart these days? The second is from St Paul, "we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us.." What an awesome, life-changing endorsement we are given by the One made us and who therefore knows us best!

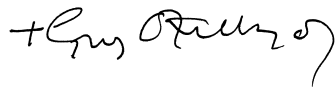
There is a difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus. Prayer time like that above helps the cross-over.

Three. Give more to Project Compassion this year than you did last year. We can't be followers of Christ without taking steps to care for our neighbour, especially one in need.

Don't feel restricted to these three (an extra Mass a week to pray for your priests and the needs of the diocese?) but don't outpace yourself. Life journeys like Lent take time.

And say one for me, as I will for you all.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '+Gregory O'Kelly SJ'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+Gregory O'Kelly SJ
Bishop of the Diocese of Port Pirie

10th March 2011