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# **CBCP Lenten Message 2021**

"To be reconfigured to Christ concretely means to do deeds of mercy and compassion"

02/18/2021

With our celebration of Ash Wednesday we begin the holy season of Lent. Every year we have this sacred time to prepare our hearts and minds to enter worthily into the annual liturgical recalling of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus our Savior. This is the heart of our salvation history – the passion, death and

resurrection of Jesus to gain for us eternal life.

One of the underlying liturgical themes during Lent is in fact the reexamination or revisit of our baptismal gift, that is, our being configured into Christ in baptism.

Thus, my hope and prayer during these very trying times because of the pandemic and its multifaceted negative consequences affecting all of us, is that we come to a deeper appreciation of our being configured to Christ. To be reconfigured to Christ concretely means to do deeds of mercy and compassion, simply carrying our own cross and helping and inspiring others to carry theirs. During Lent we are inspired and reminded to carry our cross with confidence and with hope that we will triumph in the end. In this way, during Lent we treasure again our baptismal dignity, and if we

experience that, we are well disposed to meet the risen Lord in our celebration of the Paschal Triduum. Together with our prayers, our fasting, and our participation in the solemn liturgical celebrations, we also exert earnest effort at doing works of charity and solidarity with those who are most suffering among us in these difficult days of the pandemic.

Our Holy Father, in his Message for Lent 2021, even said, that in the simplest way, we can do this: “In Lent, may we be increasingly concerned with speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn”. In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be “willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of

encouragement, to listen amid general indifference”. (no. 2, par. 3)

This Lent, when we prepare ourselves to celebrate meaningfully the Paschal Mystery – the Death and Resurrection of Jesus – may this very mystery become the pattern of our lives. We are not afraid to carry our cross because we are confident of our own resurrection, because Jesus has risen from the dead. (Mt. 28:6)

+ Romulo G. Valles, D.D.

Archbishop of Davao

CBCP President

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