



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Lent 2026

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This year, the Gospel for the three Sundays prior to Lent are from the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. They are part of what is known as the Sermon on the Mount. The first Sunday, we were presented with the Beatitudes, the second Sunday, we were reminded that we are to be salt and light, and finally, this Sunday, Jesus reminds us that He came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it in love.

These scripture passages provide a reliable guide to help navigate the Season of Lent. They help us to see how we can use these forty days as a time of both personal and spiritual renewal.

The Beatitudes offer the proper disposition that we should have regarding the world. It is so easy to become too worldly as we are immersed in an ever-increasing secular environment. Jesus reminds us that His values are rooted in being poor in spirit, meek, merciful, humble, and moral. Greatness is found in being the least rather than the most powerful. This way of life certainly runs counter to the culture we live in today. Jesus is the Way.

Jesus also reminds us that we are salt and light; however, we can lose our saltiness and put our light under a bushel basket. Due to sin in our lives, our enthusiasm is diminished and we can become dim. We can forget our baptismal calling to witness to Christ and to the truth that we are salt and light. Jesus is the Truth.

We live the Beatitudes and strive to be salt and light because of love and not because of obligation. We look to Jesus who fulfills the law in His loving sacrifice. We follow his example by ensuring that our lives are inspired by our love of God and neighbour. Jesus is the Life.

Traditionally, Lent provides three pillars that help us to enter the mystery of God's life-giving love.

Prayer is a means of drawing us out of the secular and into the sacred. Amid our everyday activities, we unite ourselves with Jesus. The more we pray, the more configured we are to Him. Living the Beatitudes on a daily basis then becomes more natural to us.

Fasting is simply saying no to self and yes to God. We deny ourselves and become less distracted by our desires so that we can focus more on being salt and light. We work at developing passion for our faith and enlightening others with the joy of the Gospel.

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Almsgiving focuses on being generous and sharing with those in need. Our motivation should always be love. It is a voluntary act of sacrificial love that models the example of Christ who said in the Gospel of Matthew, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

It is my hope and prayer that throughout the forty days of Lent, the Beatitudes, salt and light and the mystery of love, will be our inspiration. May we all grow in our desire to love Jesus Christ who not only fulfills the Law but is also our ultimate fulfillment. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

Yours sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.
Bishop of St. Catharines