



Diocese of Makeni

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Diocesan Curia
P. O. Box 1, Makeni,
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3rd March, 2025.

**To the Clergy, Religious
And Faithful People of God
Diocese of Makeni**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lenten Pastoral Letter 2025

Now, now, it is the Lord who speaks, come back to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning. (Joel 2:12).

Every year the Season of Lent holds the promise of many graces and blessings for us as God's People. In fact, observing Lent and all its many prescriptions during this Jubilee Year of Hope is as crucial as it has ever been. There are many reasons for us to "fast, weep, mourn;" and "return to the Lord with all our heart."

This season of Lent finds our nation still grappling with entrenched *corruption, bribery, ethnicity, lawlessness, injustice, violence, disrespect for and abuse of the environment, as evidenced by the wanton filth in many of our cities and towns.* As I wrote in my pastoral Lenten Letter last year, "they are sins we permit, tolerate, entertain or abet without objection, even if we are not directly involved in them." Even the traditional moral values related to marriage, family life, and human sexuality are being challenged and undermined every day with impunity. Reports of drug abuse and crime are steadily on the rise in some of our cities, towns and villages while the youth continue to lose hope in our structures as they face a very bleak future. Our people are on edge, desperately struggling to make ends meet due to the challenging economic hardship in our land. While surveying this depressing litany of societal and communal woes, I cannot help but think that God must be very disappointed with us, his beloved children.

At the same time, we should not forget that the real moral challenge, the ultimate struggle for grace and peace, takes place in our own hearts and souls. Thus, while we are pessimistic about the bleak landscape that engulfs us, we also need to look within ourselves and honestly recognize our own personal sins, temptations, addictions and excesses. *The neglect of God, the anger, arrogance, apathy, selfishness, dishonesty, the nursing of grudges, the use of foul/vulgar language, engaging in examination malpractices, the lethargic attitude towards work and studies, irresponsibility, drug and alcohol abuse, envy, gossip, immorality and prejudice* that we find in the darkest recesses of our souls are also gravely sinful. If left unchecked they grow like weeds and destroy the life within us. We must acknowledge with the Psalmist: "My offenses, truly I know them; my sin is always before me." (Ps 51:5)

Yes, I am convinced that the observance of Lent this year is as crucial as it has ever been. As a community and as individuals we need to be purified, restored and renewed by the cleansing power of God's grace.



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The Season of Lent gives us all the necessary tools to be better persons individually, in our families and in our communities. Prayer, fasting and charitable works as pillars of Lent, help us to confront temptation, repent of our sins, be reconciled to God and others, and begin again. But the spiritual resources of Lent are effective only if we use them well. It is for this reason that I summon you all, God's People in the Diocese of Makeni, to embrace the season of Lent like never before. It is a grace-filled moment! And as St. Paul exhorts us: *"Do not receive the grace of God in vain."* (2 Cor 6:1)

I urge our pastoral agents, especially my brothers in the priesthood, to lead the faithful in a serious and complete observance of Lent. Brothers, do your best to reach out to your people, provide them with all the resources the Church gives us to celebrate the Season of Lent worthily. *The devout celebration of Holy Mass, the courageous proclamation of the Word of God, traditional devotions such as the Stations of the Cross, visitation and care for the sick, and increased opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will help you and your parishioners to have fruitful Lenten Season.*

Then, I urge the Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Makeni to enter the Season of Lent with real determination and with a sense of focus. *Attend Holy Mass every Sunday, and during the week, if possible. Read the Word of God. Pray often in church, in school and at home. Take seriously the call of the Church to fast and abstain, not just from food and drink, but from unholy attachments as well. Attend Penitential Services, Lenten Retreats/Recollections. Go to Confession. Support the charitable work of the Church, and engage in good deeds of charity, kindness and forgiveness.*

Our *Diocesan Lenten Pilgrimage* this year, which will take place on *Saturday, April 5, 2025*, is an opportune moment of prayer to seek divine help for ourselves, our families, our Diocese and country, and also to perform acts for penance (within the context of Lent) for the remission of our sins. In that vein, I wish to encourage all parishes within the Diocese to have a Lenten pilgrimage on the above-mentioned date. For the parishes within the same township like Makeni, Lunsar and Lungi, I suggest that you come together and conduct the pilgrimage as a unit.

My brothers and sisters, I believe that if we engage the Lenten Season in a serious way, the darkness of the world, the decadence of society, and the anxieties of our souls will give way to the goodness and light of Christ. In these forty (40) days pilgrimage, let us walk with Christ through his suffering and death and then rise to the new life, the peaceful and hopeful life of Easter Day!

I assure you and your families of my prayers during this Holy Season, and I request for your gracious prayers for me too.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,


Most Rev. Dr. Bob John H. Koroma
(*Bishop of Makeni Diocese*)

