
SPIRITUAL RETREAT

MARCH
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Orden de la Compañía de María Nuestra Señora
PROVINCIA DEL PACÍFICO
| *Order of the Company of Mary Our Lady*

WALKING THE LENTEN JOURNEY...



Every journey of conversion begins when we allow ourselves to be reached by the Word and accept it with docility of spirit. There is, therefore, a link between the gift of the Word of God, the space of hospitality that we offer it and the transformation that it brings about. For this reason, the Lenten journey becomes a propitious occasion to **listen to** the voice of the Lord and to renew the decision to follow Christ, walking with him the road that leads up to Jerusalem, where the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection is fulfilled.

This year, Pope Leo XIV calls our attention, first of all, to the importance of giving space to the Word through **listening**, since the willingness to listen is the first sign with which the desire to enter into a relationship with the other is manifested.

Among the many voices that run through our personal and social lives, the Sacred Scriptures enable us to recognize the voice that cries out from suffering and injustice, so that it does not go unanswered. To enter into this interior disposition of receptivity means to allow ourselves to be instructed today by God to **listen** as He does, to the point of recognizing that "the condition of the poor represents a cry that, in the history of humanity, constantly challenges our lives, our societies, our political and economic systems, and especially the Church"

Lent is a propitious time to intensify the life of the spirit through the holy means that the Church offers us: **fasting, prayer and almsgiving**. At the basis of everything is the Word of God, which in this time invites us to **listen** to and meditate more frequently on the Word. In particular, we focus here on the parable of the rich man and the poor man, Lazarus (cf. **Luke 16:19-31**).

The parable begins by introducing the two main characters, but the poor man is the one who is described in more detail: he is in a desperate situation and does not even have the strength to get up. He is lying at the door of the rich man and eats the crumbs that fall from his table; he has sores all over his body and the dogs come to lick them (cf. vv. 20-21).

The scene is even more dramatic if we consider that the poor man's name is Lazarus: a name full of promises, which literally means "God helps". This is not an anonymous character; he has precise traits and presents himself as someone with a personal history.



While for the rich he is as if he were invisible, for us he is someone known and almost familiar, he has a face; and, as such, it is a gift, a treasure of incalculable value, a loved one, loved by God, even if his concrete condition is that of human waste.

Lent is a propitious time to open the door to anyone in need and to recognize in him or her the face of Christ.

The parable is merciless in showing the contradictions in which the rich man finds himself (cf. v. 19). This character, unlike poor Lazarus, does not have a name, he is described only as "rich". His opulence is manifested in the clothes he wears, of exaggerated luxury.

Therefore, this man's wealth is excessive, and he displayed it habitually every day: "He feasted splendidly every day" (v. 19). In him the corruption of sin is clearly seen, which is realized in three successive moments: the love of money, vanity and pride.

I read the guide in a prayerful atmosphere...

God is not in the clouds.

Revelation happens in real life in the gestures of compassion, in acts of service and in the full humanity of Jesus.



After reading the text, I let the words of Pope Leo XIV ring in my ears

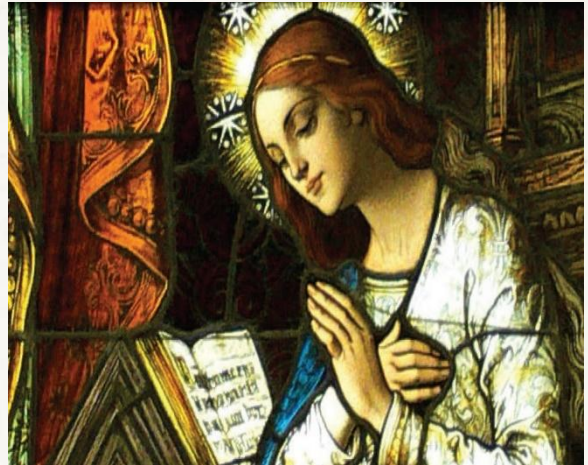
- **Listen to** what the Lord says to your heart:
- **Fasting**, that is, abstaining from using words that affect and hurt our neighbor. To begin to disarm language, renouncing hurtful words, immediate judgment, speaking ill of those who are absent and cannot defend themselves, slander.
- **Together**, Lent highlights the community dimension of listening to the Word and the practice of fasting. Solidarity and sharing with those most in need.

John 4:43-54 The caring person knows how to listen to the word of Jesus and then knows how to obey what he hears. Through this Gospel the Lord invites me to prepare myself to listen to God and to know how to fulfill His will without opposing what He wants from me.

Matthew 1:16.18-21.24a Joseph appears as a just man, that is, the justice with which he presents himself and indicates the goodness of his interior, the docility to walk the ways of God and the acceptance of his commands. Joseph is a teacher of the interior life who listens to the Word and obeys. **What do we ask of St. Joseph today?**



Luke 1:26-38 The annunciation in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola (EE 102-108) is a fundamental contemplation that uses the imagination to situate oneself in the scene of Luke 1:26-38. Ignatius invites us to **"see", "hear" and "consider"** the people (Trinity, angel, Mary) and their words in order to deepen the mystery of the Incarnation and divine humility.



Ignatius of Loyola invites us to see the world as the Most Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit see it, in all its evolution in historical deterioration: wars, hunger, conflicts, divisions, pandemics. A shaken humanity. As we contemplate this scene with the Trinity, we are moved by God's decision to become incarnate in the second person of the Word and to be born in Mary. We are invited by God to contemplate the house of Nazareth at the moment He invites us to contemplate, from the Trinity, the house of Nazareth at the moment of the angel's announcement to Mary, who listens attentively to the Word and says Yes to God's will.

Colloquium: dialogue with the Lord about this call to Mary and the call He makes to me. What is **He inviting me to?**

Call for Peace: The Pope has urged us to disarm the heart, mind and life, transforming pain into consolation and resolutions into good works.

Let us journey **together**, because in this world dominated by evil, those who are left alone grow weary and, even more, because in coming together as brothers and sisters, Christ himself becomes present wherever two or three gather in his name.

On this path I will learn to encounter a God who is present in my history and who leads me to discover him in everything and everyone.

"Dear brothers, let us ask for the grace to live a Lent that makes our ears more attentive to God and to those most in need. Let us ask for the strength of a fast that reaches the tongue as well, so that the words that hurt may diminish and the space for the voice of others may grow. And let us commit ourselves so that our communities become places where the cry of the suffering finds acceptance and listening generates paths of liberation, making us more willing and diligent to contribute to building the civilization of love." **Pope Leo XIV**



BIBLIOGRAPHY. Message of Pope Leo XIV for Lent 2026.

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION...prepared by each community. Song: Walking together. (Youtube)



