

Bishop Fabbro's 2025 Lenten Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lent is a journey of faith and conversion as we prepare for the Easter Triduum. It is a time to let go of what weighs us down; a time to be reconciled with God and others. This year, our Lenten journey will be an important part of our celebration of the Jubilee Year – Pilgrims of Hope. We journey together as pilgrims seeking to encounter Jesus and to return to right relationships with God, with others and with all of creation.

Jesus began his public ministry by identifying himself as the fulfillment of the people's hope for the Jubilee of the "Lord's favour." He opened the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, searched for a specific passage and read:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18-19).

"Today," he said, "this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Jesus signifies that in him, through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, a new era in salvation history is being inaugurated where spiritual and physical liberation is offered to all, especially the marginalized and the oppressed. We see this manifested in his ministry: Jesus' deeds, particularly his healing miracles and acts of compassion, are invitations to seek right relationship with God, self and others.

Many people are carrying heavy burdens, weighed down by the cares of the world — stress, anxiety, health concerns, broken relationships and financial struggles. Many are held captive by the attitudes and actions of others. Sometimes we place heavy burdens on our brothers and sisters. Now is the time to be released and to release others. Jesus invites us to a closer relationship: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28-29). Through the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation, we can grow closer to Jesus and be released from the burdens that weigh us down.

**Lent is indeed the
"favourable time" to return
to what is essential, to divest
ourselves of all that weighs
us down, to be reconciled
with God, and to rekindle
the fire of the Holy Spirit
hidden beneath the ashes of
our frail humanity.**
Pope Francis, 15 February 2025.



In a world marked by division and conflict, where we build walls instead of bridges, the Church is called to be a witness of Jesus' healing ministry, offering reconciliation, promoting forgiveness, building communities that foster justice and peace in all relationships. As members of the Church, we are to be agents of peace, ministers of compassion and mercy. We are to seek reconciliation and build bridges between ourselves and others, so that we may be one.

Jesus' apostles came from different walks of life, had different professions, political leanings and personalities. Yet, with the power of the Holy Spirit, they were able to work together to fulfill the mission of proclaiming the Good News throughout the world. Jesus chose them and sent them out because of their differences, not despite them. It is tempting to focus on what divides us, what makes us different. The gifts that God gives each person are necessary for creating a world of justice and peace.

As we continue our Lenten journey, I invite you to seek reconciliation and to work towards releasing others from what oppresses them. Let us draw closer to Jesus and imitate his love. To that end I invite you to:

1. Celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**. On Wednesday 9 April there will be a Day of Confessions throughout our diocese in all our Families of Parishes. Plan to attend one of these!
2. Consider from what burdens you need to be released. What might you do to release others from the burdens they carry?
3. Break down the walls and build bridges. Pray for and reach out to someone with whom you have had a difficult time.
4. **Turn Debt into Hope**. This year the Development and Peace Share Lent Campaign invites us to:
 - a. Sign the Turn Debt into Hope petition calling on creditors and governments to eliminate the debt of those countries that are experiencing life-crushing debt. These petitions will be available in your parishes on the weekend of March 15-16.
 - b. Support Solidarity Sunday, April 5-6, the 5th Sunday of Lent. Your generosity allows Development and Peace to work with those most in need.

May we seek this Lent to grow as disciples of Jesus, and may we go out into the world and invite others to meet him and experience themselves his merciful love.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB
Bishop of London



Diocese of London: being a mission-oriented Church that forms disciples of Jesus.