

## **1st Reflection February, 2024**

“You, however, when you fast, perfume your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen, not by men, but by your Father who is there in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.” (Mt 6,17)

*“ Sursum corda ! Let's lift our hearts! ”*

Dear missionaries of the Pilgrim Virgin Campaign,  
Dear brothers in the alliance,

Praise Jesus Christ!

Many blessings from the Sanctuary of Candelaria!

From here I write my first reflection-letter as a moderator with Sister María Victoria in the Schoenstatt Pilgrim Virgin campaign in the USA.

It is a great joy to be able to serve in this task. Count on my help and service. We have not yet defined a regular mode of communication, but I am going ahead to send you a greeting for this time of Lent and a brief reflection.

WhatsApp groups , messages or emails . Today, thanks to the advancement of technologies, communication becomes very easy. But let us remember that nothing will replace personal contact and the encounter with the other. Hence, hopefully in this new season of Lent, we will meet more frequently.

On Wednesday the 14th the season of Lent begins with the Feast of Ashes. The Catholic world is invited to join in the celebration of the ashes and attend their parishes and chapels to receive them. It is not a mandatory holiday, but we will do well to receive them that day to begin well these forty days of prayer, penance, fasting and charity. Pope Francis tells us in his Lenten message: “God does not get tired of us. Let us welcome Lent as the strong time in which his Word addresses us again: "I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out of Egypt, from a place of slavery" (Ex 20:2). It is time of conversion, time of freedom. Jesus himself, as we remember each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tested in his freedom. For forty days he will be before us and with us: he is the incarnate Son.”

In these 40 days, we accompany the Lord towards his passion, death and, above all, resurrection. We also accompany the Holy Virgin, who did not lose hope that her son would defeat death. He



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suffered the pain of shame and death, but he knew that he would fulfill it: he would return to life, he would defeat death. And with Him each of us acquires new life.

I encourage you to continue the work of revitalizing your communities and mission for the Blessed Virgin of Schoenstatt in so many places where her visit is expected and very necessary.

Let us ask the Lord that this be a time of conversion, growth in faith and increase in charity. This is a time for greater contribution to our capital of grace in our sanctuaries, hermitages and home sanctuaries. Jesus himself invites us to take up our cross, pains and afflictions and accompany him. But, just as we participate in part of his pain for all suffering humanity, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, we will also do so in his Resurrection.



The time of Lent is a time of mission. The Holy Father invites us in his message. “Search and take risks. At this historical moment the challenges are enormous, the moans are painful—we are living through a third world war in pieces—but we embrace the risk of thinking that we are not in agony, but in birth; not at the end, but at the beginning of a great show. And it takes courage to think this. It is the courage of conversion, of leaving slavery. Faith and charity go hand in hand with this little hope. They teach her to walk and, at the same time, she is the one who drags them forward.”

May these weeks prior to Lent open our hearts for that experience of faith and conversion.

From the Sanctuary, united in alliance

blesses them,

Father Hugo Tagle, Sch  
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