



DIOCESE OF BUEA

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To:

All Clergy,

All Members of the Institutes of Consecrated Life,

All Societies of Apostolic Life,

All Lay Faithful and People of Good will,

Diocese of Buea.

THE BISHOP'S MESSAGE FOR LENT 2024

In his Lenten message for 2024, Pope Francis emphasized on the importance of listening to the cries of the oppressed. The Holy Father invites us to live a Lent marked by prayer, fasting, and communal action. To help us, we must ask ourselves an important question: Where is your brother? (Cf. Gen. 4:9). This call from God to the conscience of man is urgent even today, whether in or out of our diocese.

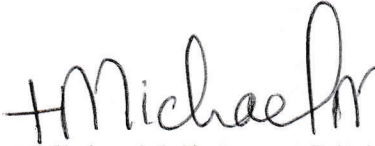
Many in our time aspire to discover that which gives meaning to their lives. But we must acknowledge that we cannot address God, every day, by calling Him Our Father, without realizing that He is also the Father of all men and women, whom we must call “brothers and sisters”. We are called to build a fraternal world. Charity must begin within our families, but it should not end there. If we have good and holy families, we will also have good villages, good and holy communities, and good and holy citizens in our country. True love and fraternity is what we should strive to establish at all levels in our society. Let us reconsider the way we treat our brothers and sisters especially during this Lenten season so that by the the end of it, we may truly become each other's keeper.

Pope Saint John Paul II, in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, notes that: “one common situation, without any doubt, is that Africa is full of problems. In almost all our nations, there is abject poverty, tragic mismanagement of available scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation. The results stare us in the face: misery, wars, despair. In a world controlled by rich and powerful nations, Africa has practically become an irrelevant appendix, often forgotten and neglected” (*Ecclesia in Africa*, n. 40).

In that same document, Africa, including Cameroon, is compared to the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho; he fell among robbers who stripped him, beat him and departed, leaving him half dead (cf. *Lk 10:30-37*). Africa is a Continent where countless human beings - men and women, children and young people - are lying, as it were, on the edge of the road, sick, injured, disabled, marginalized and abandoned. They are in dire need of Good Samaritans who will come to their aid. (Cf. *Ecclesia in Africa, n. 41*).

We need brothers and sisters who will put smiles on the faces of the weak, the sick and marginalized persons in our communities. Let us not close our eyes to the plight and misery of our brothers and sisters. A fraternal action will not only make us to become good Samaritans, but what is more, we would have succeeded to put a smile on the faces of the least of the brothers and sisters of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May we open our hearts this Lenten season to God's merciful love and become channels of that love to others.

Yours in his service,


+**Michael Miabesue Bibi**
Bishop of Buea

