

Once the water is poured organize the participants in groups; one after the other they place their slips of paper into the garbage container and then place their heart stick pins into the sand. The following responses are read in order as this ritual activity takes place.

**Reader:** May we fast from anger  
**All:** And Feast on reconciliation.

**Reader:** May we fast from selfishness  
**All:** And feast on generosity.

**Reader:** May we fast from resentment  
**All:** And feast on gratitude.

**Reader:** May we fast from fear  
**All:** And Feast on courage.

**Reader:** May we fast from self-absorption.  
**All:** And feast on compassion.

**Reader:** May we fast from exploitation  
**All:** And feast on justice.

**Reader:** May we fast from despair  
**All:** And feast on hope.

**Reader:** May we fast from antagonism  
**All:** And feast on unity.

**Reader:** May we fast from foolishness  
**All:** And feast on wisdom.

**Reader:** May we fast from weakness  
**All:** And feast on perseverance.

**Reader:** May we fast from distraction  
**All:** And feast on reverence.

**Reader:** May we fast from recklessness  
**All:** And feast on responsibility.

**Reader:** May we fast from deception  
**All:** And feast on honesty.

### **Reader 4:**

Loving God  
May our Lent be a holy preparation.  
May our preparation be blessed  
And never be finished  
Until we rest completely in you.  
**Amen.**

### **Concluding Prayer**

### **Reader 5:**

God of our Lenten season,  
Bless our community,  
school and classroom.  
Lead us with wisdom and  
perseverance on our Lenten journey.  
Bless us as we clear our paths to your love,  
Fasting from the sands of fear and feasting  
on love within our hearts.  
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

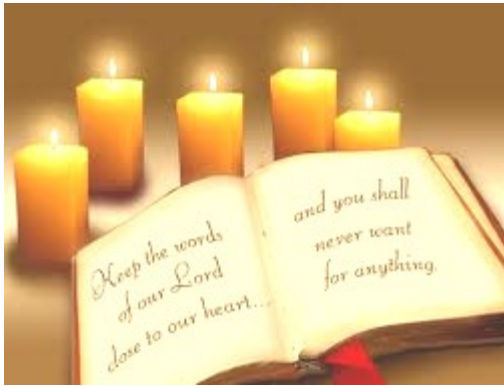


**FEBRUARY 2012**

**Our Lenten Journey 2012**

## ***Becoming healers for Jesus through heart and hand***





### **Preparation:**

Set up a prayer space with a table covered with the Lenten purple cloth. Set on the table a lit candle and bible open to scripture passage: Mark 1:12-15

Also have prepared a container with sand, watering pot, heart cut-out stick pins, slips of paper and a garbage container.

### **Leader: Opening Prayer**

God of the desert,  
Lead us once more along  
the wilderness paths.  
Lead us through the dry places  
in our hearts,  
Where faith has gone stale,  
Where forgiveness is forgotten,  
Where hope has turned to despair,  
Where joy has become fear.  
Through your love Lord,  
May you help our hands,  
water those places with your love,  
to make our desert hearts bloom again,  
and allow our hands to do good works,  
so we can become living gospels,  
living testaments to your ways.

**Amen.**

### **Reader 1:**

Scripture : Mark: 1:12-15

### **Reader 2:**

**Reflection:** (read slowly with conviction, pausing briefly at the italicized words)

**"Those who hurt openly say, "I need help (pause)**

They wait to see whom God sends their way – the person who will lend some shelter, a listening ear, some understanding. When troubles strikes, you need a place to cry, a person to care, the security of intimate friends who stick with you, reminding you that pain doesn't come to stay.

**Your hurt will heal, your heart will mend, your life will go on ... and so will you. (pause)**

Most people look at the person in trouble and think, "Somebody should do something to help." This Lent, try a better response:

**"I'm somebody! I should help!" (pause)**

We can all do something - call, listen, and visit. Not difficult: but oh, the comfort they provide! Jesus is saying, **"Look at the people who are hurting. Let me bring healing...through you."**... (Pause)

When Easter arrives you'll feel refreshed, renewed, and ready to open your helping heart to hurting hearts: gently nudging others to use their inner strength, perseverance and determination to bounce back and get on their feet again, stronger and better."

*From the writings of Fr. Joseph F. Sica, 23rd Publications*

### **Leader:**

#### **Personal Reflection:**

As a response to this reflection write a word, words or a phrase to the following question:

*What can I remove from my life that weighs me down, pushing me away from God and my neighbour? (Place on a slip of paper)*

*How can I become a healer for Jesus through the actions of my heart? (Place response on a heart)*

*Allow a few minutes for this activity.*

### **Reader 3:**

#### **A Litany & Symbolic gesture for Our Lenten Journey**

*After the following is read, the reader pours water over the entire surface of sand*

**God of our faith journey,  
Lead us this Lent into the desert,  
Where we fast on simplicity,  
And to the oasis, where we feast  
On your companionship.**

