

# **Pope Francis: Lent calls us to journey together in hope**

In his Message for Lent 2025, Pope Francis invites the faithful to “journey together in hope,” and to take the opportunity of the upcoming Lenten Season to ask ourselves whether we are truly willing to heed God’s call to change our lives.

The central theme of Pope Francis’ Lenten Message is encapsulated in the phrase “Let us journey together in hope,” which ties into the broader theme of the Jubilee Year -“Pilgrims of Hope.”

The Pope’s reflection focuses on conversion and unfolds in three key dimensions: the importance of journeying, journeying together, and journeying with hope.

## **Our life of faith is a journey of conversion**

Recalling the biblical Exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, the Pope reminds us that our lives too are a journey—one that should be directed toward God.

This journey is not merely a metaphorical one but involves a constant call to conversion, “to leave behind the occasions of sin” and situations that degrade our human dignity.

Pope Francis, therefore, urges the faithful during this Lenten Season to examine their own lives: are they actively progressing on the path of spiritual renewal or are they held back by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of their comfort zone?

Drawing a parallel between the Hebrew people’s “arduous path from slavery to freedom” and the plight of modern migrants and refugees, the Pope invites us to use this period as an opportunity to consider how we relate our own lives with the struggles of those who are forced to flee “situations of misery and violence in search of a better life” and “in this way discover what God is asking of us.” This, he writes, “would be a good ‘examination of conscience’ for all of us wayfarers.”

# **The call to journey together: a summons to synodality**

A fundamental aspect of the Lenten Message is the emphasis on community and synodality—the idea that Christians must walk together rather than in isolation.

Pope Francis reminds us, “The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters.”

“Journeying together,” he writes, “means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (...) without letting anyone be left behind or excluded.”

Again, he challenges the faithful to reflect on whether we are capable of walking together with others in our families, workplaces, and communities, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed. Are we welcoming to others? Do we include those who feel marginalized?

## **The call to journey in hope**

The third fundamental dimension of the Lenten journey is hope, anchored in God’s promise of salvation and eternal life fulfilled in Jesus’ Resurrection, the victory over sin and death.

This hope is not abstract but must be lived concretely. Pope Francis invites us to examine whether we truly trust in God’s mercy. Do we believe in His forgiveness, or do we fall into the trap of self-reliance? And do we concretely experience the hope that inspires in us “a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?”

Referencing Saint Teresa of Avila, the message urges the faithful to remain watchful and patient, understanding that God’s promises will be fulfilled in His time. “This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: ‘Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one.’”

Pope concludes by entrusting this journey of hope to the intercession of the Virgin

Mary, “Mother of Hope,” praying that she may accompany the faithful as we prepare to celebrate the joy of Easter.

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