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BISHOP'S MISSIVE #183
(Released February 14, 2024, A.D.)

Greetings, CBC Family & Friends,

Today, we officially enter the season of Lent. Lent is the 40 days (6 weeks, excluding Sundays) leading up to Resurrection Sunday and is marked on the church calendar as a time of fasting, reflection, and repentance.

It is spiritually healthy for us to acknowledge how and where we have not behaved in God-honoring ways. We do not excuse our sinful behavior. As a matter of fact, we should abhor those times when we have not been the best representative of our faith. Lent is a time to recognize that fact and see our need for Christ and what he did on the cross.

The 40 days of Lent is a celebration that reminds us of the forty years that the ancient Israelites wandered through the wilderness. If you are familiar with biblical history, you know that God delivered them from Egyptian slavery. However, the people's behavior was such that God became "annoyed." Even after He gave them the Promised Land, they were afraid to possess it. Instead of believing in the power of God, they focused on their human limitations.

Their behavior and distrust in God caused them to remain in the wilderness. Although it sounds like punishment, it was really an act of mercy. It was God giving them the opportunity to learn how to trust and depend on Him.

The 40 days of Lent also remind us of the time that Jesus spent in the desert in Matthew 4:1-2. This was to prepare Jesus for ministry and to accomplish the purpose for which he came.

This is what we celebrate when we observe Lent – a time of repentance and a time of preparation. For the next six weeks, our prayer is to ask God to go deep into our souls and remove everything that hinders our relationship with Him. And as we are reflective and repentant, may God grant us clarity of purpose and prepare us to enter this next season of service for the Kingdom and our community.

May God have mercy upon us!

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