



## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

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7 February 2018

### BISHOP'S LENTEN PASTORAL LETTER 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Next Wednesday, the liturgy of Lent calls us to prayer, fasting and good works. From the residue of a beautiful plant, black and grey ash is placed on our foreheads and we are all reminded by our God to turn away from Sin and believe in the Gospel.

Lent signals the period of repentance, beginning with each one of us individually. We are invited to turn away from Sin and believe in the loving forgiveness of our God. For 40 days, the Church invites us to fast regularly, pray regularly and engage in good works.

On the evening of **Friday 16 February, between 5.30 and 6.30 pm in St Joseph's Cathedral**, with a focus in sorrow for child sexual abuse and hope for the healing of victims, I will be praying in silence before the Blessed Sacrament. I invite you, as a Diocesan family, to share with me in an hour of prayer at the Cathedral, from your own home or via the livestream

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZ6KzKz2Y-w>

During this time:

My prayer will be to ask God's forgiveness for all those who have been sinned against by being sexually abused.

My prayer will also be to ask your forgiveness for the hurt that you may have experienced through the sin of sexual abuse within our Church.

And;

My prayer will be for the healing of the Church in the Diocese of Rockhampton.

The Biblical notion of Lament is at the core of these prayers. It is an expression of suffering and hope. Through lament we give voice to our suffering, and in lamenting before God, we acknowledge and dignify the suffering we share. Importantly, we do not simply dwell on these failings, but move towards a focus on Divine providence, to rescue and relieve distressed people onto God, our ultimate joy, shifting us into a mode of hope.

For me personally, the cross of the crucified Jesus is our healing as it is through Jesus and his love for us by dying on a cross, that he alone brings total healing and peace.

I pray for all of you that our Lenten journey will bring us joy and the hope of the Risen Christ at Easter time.

I especially commend to you the good work of Caritas and invite you to participate in the works of assisting our new Churches as they grow.

May Mary, the Mother of the Church and our Diocese, bring her love to each of us these days.

Yours sincerely



Most Rev Michael McCarthy  
**Bishop of Rockhampton**