

TIME TO CLEAN UP!

Gospel of Mark 1:12-15

With Ash Wednesday we have entered the Season of Lent, which prepares us to celebrate the centre of our Christian faith, the Passion, death and Resurrection of our Lord.

On this first Sunday of Lent, the evangelist Mark briefly recounts that, after his baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus is driven by the Spirit into the desert. There he spends time in prayer, and overcomes the devil's temptations.

Jesus begins his public ministry by preaching that the time spoken about by John the Baptist has arrived. Jesus is the one announced by John at the river Jordan. Jesus picks up where John the Baptist left off: "THE TIME IS FULFILLED, AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS COME NEAR."

For many centuries in the history of Israel, the Prophets had received from God the mission to prepare his people to welcome the promised Messiah, who would preach reconciliation with God through forgiveness of their sins.

They had preached that God's promise to restore David's everlasting Kingdom, would be realized by the future Messiah.

Jesus' preaching makes it clear that the time for God's promise to come to pass is NOW, "THE TIME IS FULFILLED". David's everlasting kingdom is GOD'S KINGDOM.

All that Israel lived through during its past history was meant to be ONLY A PREPARATION FOR THE REAL KINGDOM to come.

As He did then, so He continues to do today: Jesus invites everyone to be part of his Kingdom, where peace, joy and love reign.

We can only be part of it, if we make a decision to change our ways and let go of all and any negative behaviour and attitudes that are contrary to God.

That is why Jesus' initial proclamation of the Kingdom also says: "REPENT AND BELIEVE IN THE GOOD NEWS".

God's Kingdom among us is GOOD NEWS. No one else can give us true peace, true joy and true love that our human hearts desire. Only God can do that. Let us believe it!

This liturgical season of LENT, let us take the opportunity to change, to repent of bad habits and acquire new, good habits; let us be more patient, forgiving, loving, helpful, compassionate, kind to one another.

In LENT we give up some pleasures and offer up some sacrifices as a sign of giving up negativity and replace it with positivity.

IT'S TIME FOR SOME INTERIOR, SPIRITUAL CLEAN UP (SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION), AND BECOME A NEW PERSON.

TRY IT, YOU WON'T REGRET IT!

"I have said these things to you, so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).