

## Bishop Tricia's prayer for the beginning of Lent

Holy and Merciful God,

As we step toward this Lenten journey,  
we do not pretend we are stronger than we are.  
You have met your people in deserts before.  
Meet us there too.

Strip away what is false in us  
not to shame us, but to free us.  
Quiet the noise that keeps us distracted  
from the steady pulse of your love.

Teach us to hunger for what truly nourishes.  
Teach us to release what weighs us down.  
Teach us to trust that repentance is not punishment but return.

Knit us together in courage and compassion.  
Let this season be honest.  
Let it be gentle.  
Let it be transformative.

And when Easter light breaks in,  
may we recognize it because we have learned how to wait in the dark.

In the name of Christ,  
who walked the wilderness before us  
and walks it still with us.

Amen.