



As we arrived back after what I hope was an enjoyable and relaxing midterm for all, we had also entered the first week of Lent. Two reflective sacred spaces were created in the school this week to depict the context of Lent i.e. the '*wilderness*'.

One reflective area is off the foyer area as students pass by on the corridor and the other in our prayer room where students will be brought for a little Lenten service over the coming weeks up to the Easter break.

When we think of the word '*wilderness*' we think of bleak, unattractive, inhospitable, basically not a nice place to be. However if we see it as a place where time is permitted to stop and slow down, our perspective on what Lent is about and how we go about the coming days and weeks will change. In a very busy and hectic world, it is becoming more apparent that we in fact need time to **recover**, to remove ourselves from the busyness for a few minutes each day, to give ourselves a little space and time. We need to *gift* ourselves time for ourselves. In the Gospels we are told that Jesus frequently goes away to a quiet place to pray, to escape the crowds, to spend time with God.

Hence the theme of Lent-Week 1 is **recover** and this in turn is depicted in the reflective spaces in our school.

So as you read this piece, where is your quiet place? Where is your little oasis?

I invite you to make a promise to yourself this week to **recover** some time for yourself each day – it doesn't have to be *forty days*! Maybe just 10 – 15 minutes each day.

Tasks for this week:

Firstly you are invited to create a **simple sacred space** in your home. This could be in the corner of your bedroom or sitting room. It should be somewhere that you can go for some quiet time each day. Use some symbols in your space – such as a cross, candles, a bible or some significant symbol for you. You can add to it as the weeks go by;

Recover



The colour for Lent is violet and can be used in your sacred space. You could even create your own mini-desert using some sand and stones. *Be creative yet keep it simple.* Let it be your little oasis, sanctuary.

Secondly, some people like to carry something with them in their pocket during the weeks of Lent, like a **small stone or pebble**. It can be a reminder of the things that weigh you down, or a worry or concern that prevents you from living as freely and as fully as you can. Take your stone out once every day and hold it in your hand. By the end of the five weeks you will know every part of it as well as you know your inner self. Some also carry the stone in their pocket to remind them, whenever they touch it, to look for something to be grateful for, to say *thank you for... you might want to try it.* At night leave your pebble in your sacred space as you leave all the worries & works of that day in God's hands.

Thirdly, in Lent most try to give something up. Perhaps make a commitment to yourself to **consciously** do at least **1** thing each day to help another. Doesn't have to be anything huge.



ARE YOU READY?

As I sign off from the Chaplaincy desk, preparations are busy for our upcoming 1st Year Family Mass in two weeks, our Lourdes application process is in full swing and our Kenya students are busy with their fundraising efforts ahead of their immersion experience next June.

Until next week, I will leave you with the following thought

God bless,

Anne-Marie

Thoughts for the Week:

'Everything in life has its own time. There is time to celebrate and there is time to mourn. This is the time for reflection and transformation. Let us look within and change into what we ought to be.' ~ **Aaron Saul**

