



Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
627 East 187th Street
Bronx, New York 10458
718.295.3770

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JOSÉ FÉLIX ORTEGA

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Living in the Holy Land these past fifteen months, I had the opportunity to visit the desert many times. The Judean desert, the Dead Sea area, the Negev desert, the Wadi Rum in Jordan and the desert in the Sinai Peninsula. I love the desert; there is something in its landscape that attracts me: the colors, the forms, the silence, the erosion...

As we start the liturgical season of Lent, we contemplate Jesus going into the desert and spending forty days there. According to the tradition, he was in the Judean desert, close to Jericho. That area is very rocky, with little to no vegetation during most of the year. But in winter, after a few days of rain, a strange phenomenon happens as some grass grows, and a few flowers blossom. It is quite a spectacle.

In Lent we are spiritually invited to be in the desert, to leave many things behind and spend some time in silence and prayer. But remember, that doesn't mean spiritual dryness. As grass and flowers could blossom in the desert with water, so many things can blossom in our soul with the Living Water of Christ. I pray that this Lenten season we are starting would be for you a moment of spiritual blossoming.

God bless,
Father José Félix