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FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JOSÉ FÉLIX ORTEGA

March 17, 2019

“The spiritual battle of the Christian’s new life is inseparable from the battle of prayer.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 2725). Lent is about changing, and all the changes in life are not easy. When we change jobs, when we move to a different city or apartment... we experience uncertainty and stress. We feel that we are losing something and not getting immediately what we were expecting. That is why it is a battle.

To be a Catholic, to live as a Catholic, in our world today, is not easy. Many of our values and traditions are in a continuous clash with the world and the current culture. It is a battle. But the battle is not only outside, it is also inside of us. During Lent the Church recommends us to increase our prayer, and prayer is a battle. Against whom? Firstly, against the evil one that does all he can to turn us away from God. Secondly, against ourselves. Even when we decided to pray and to give it a try during Lent, we need to fight the distractions, the discouragement, the apparent lack of time for prayer.

The good news is that while fighting, we are already praying. Prayer is not about saying nice words to God, or about repeating some prayers multiple times. Prayer is about accepting that I need God in my life, prayer is staying in relationship to God. If I start to pray and a thousand times I am distracted, but a thousand times I come back to my decision to pray... I just said to God a thousand times that I want Him be part of my life. Is that not a beautiful prayer and act of love? I bet that a couple that says to each other a thousand times that they love each other... are really in love.

But prayer is not only a battle, but it is also a gift of the Holy Spirit, that prays in us. Let’s not be discouraged, and not cease to pray: “Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love!”

God bless,
Father José Félix