

Dear Faithful,

Lent is upon us and with it a call to repent. Christianity teaches us that repentance is the first step and basis of a truly Christian life. Christ's first word when he began to preach was: "Repent!" (Matt. 4:17). But what is repentance? In the rush of our daily life, we have no time to think about it, and we simply assume that all we have to do during Lent is abstain from certain foods, cut down on "entertainment", make some charitable contributions and then consider ourselves "justified" till next year. There must be a reason, however, why the Church has set apart seven weeks as a special time for repentance and why she calls us to a long and sustained spiritual effort. All this certainly must concern the individual, ME, MY life, MY faith, MY commitment to the Gospel.

For understandable reasons, attendance and participation in the special Lenten services in the past has not been at a desirable level. Family responsibilities, distance, etc. have prevented many from attending the scheduled PEACE & REST SERVICES. Encouraged by some suggestions last year and based upon my observation for a need for the Church to reach out, I have planned LENTEN HOME PRAYER MEETINGS, in three select locations. The enclosed calendar provides the necessary information. Please call the home in your area where a Prayer Meeting is scheduled and inform the host about your plan to attend.

The format for the meeting is simple and I hope it will be rewarding and enlightening spiritually. To put us in a true spirit of Lent, it is my suggestion that we abstain from dinner that evening and satisfy ourselves with a bowl of vegetable soup only, which will be prepared by the host for all of us to share. This will be followed by a half-hour discussion on the topic "OBSERVING LENT" and the evening will close with a short prayer service.

I hope you will plan to join us.

Yours in Christ,



Father Arshen Aivazian

