



this  
Lent

bear witness to  
COMPASSION & MERCY

SJMK CL-39

LENT 2026

Dear Sisters, Associates, Staff, and Friends,

Recently I've begun reading a book entitled "***The Tenderness of God: Reclaiming our Humanity***" by Gillian T.W. Ahlgren. The first chapter speaks about "walking together," being a "companion," and embracing the task of "accompaniment." Ahlgren observes that we journey through life as pilgrims on the way. Indeed, this is the theme of our upcoming Chapter of Mats, "Being People of the Way."

Recall the delightful stories of the "***Canterbury Tales***" by Chaucer. Those pilgrims traveled together and entertained each other with storytelling that was also revelatory. We, too, journey through life, and the Lenten season is an important time for experiencing life's journey as pilgrims—together. Let us walk with one another. Such walking together, Ahlgren explains, helps us to grow together toward the God who is known in our midst. Might it also include listening with the heart to each other's stories?

Pope Leo has emphasized the value and importance of the communal dimension of accompaniment, particularly our commitment to accompanying and supporting vulnerable persons (address at the third plenary assembly of the dicastery for Laity Family, and Life, February 6, 2026). Let us remember in this time of turmoil and violence that we are called to accompany those whose lives are marked by uncertainty and fear. Consider how you might incorporate accompaniment of those in need into your Lenten observance.

Our baptismal promises plunged us into living the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Lent is a time to examine how we live that Paschal Mystery every day. Perhaps during these forty days we might spend time in quiet prayer, reflecting on how our lives bear witness to the compassion and mercy of the One who accompanies the vulnerable, the voiceless, and the traumatized in our midst? How can we make a difference? How can this Lent empower us to take up that kind of cross and walk with those who need our love and support and companionship?

Peace and all good things!



S Judith M Kubicki  
Provincial Minister

**ACCOMPANY** the vulnerable, the voiceless, and the traumatized