**Reflection for FIRST WEEK OF LENT, 2015- Sr. Frances Ryan, DC**

**SCRIPTURE:**

**Reflect upon the Readings of Genesis 9: 8-15; Psalm 25: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9; 1Peter 3: 18-22; Gospel: Mark 1: 12-15.**

**One theme in the readings centers on the sacred shared covenant that God promises us in the rainbow. “I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I shall recall the covenant I have made between me and you”.**

**The other theme that comes through the readings is ‘forty days’. Noah (Genesis 6-9) builds the Ark and, as a sign of hope from the devastating flood , sends a dove with an olive branch to God. The journey of the Ark is forty days before the flood waters recede. Jesus also prepares by going into the desert for forty days which becomes a reminder to us of our Lenten preparations for the same time.**

**PRAYER:**

**In our Vincentian vocation of preparing and praying in the marketplace, let us remember the words of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta: ‘When we serve the sick and the needy, we touch the suffering body of Christ. We need the eyes of deep faith to see Christ in the broken body and dirty clothes under which the most beautiful One among us hides.”**

**TRY THIS TODAY:**

**As a Lady of Charity preparing for Lent, perhaps ‘giving up something’ is challenged by the pressing needs of our times. Rather, consideration this Lent should ponder the question: ‘how can I give more reflection and time to serve those that are vulnerable and are in my daily life?’ Whether through systemic change or direct service, how can I find the Suffering Christ that is in my midst?**