

LENT IS COMING

Lent is a season of prayer and penance set apart by the Church to prepare us for Easter and to recall Our Lord's fast in the desert (cf. Matt 4:11, Luke 4:1-13). This season of preparation and sanctification can be fittingly accomplished through voluntary amendment of life, acts of penance, and works of charity. Lent is also a time to learn to love our souls more than our bodies. Thus, every Christian should make a special effort to practice mortification and strive for holiness during the forty days of Lent.



DO NOT LET THIS TIME TO GROW IN HOLINESS PASS YOU BY!!

Consider the following categories on what you should do for Lent.

1. **VOLUNTARY AMENDMENT OF LIFE:** Give up things that you need to give up sooner rather than later, namely bad habits. Your goal is to break a bad habit forever and Lent is a good time to do it. Love your soul more than your body!

Examples: Gossiping, surfing the web without a real need, watching T.V., overeating, eating between meals, eating and drinking junk foods (i.e. soda), bad drinking habits, complaining, saying vulgar words, not going to bed at a reasonable time, not getting up on time, hitting the snooze button, wasting time playing video games, going to movies, senseless spending, listening to bad music, useless chattering on Facebook / Instagram/ Snapchat / blogs, and the like, etc...

In this category I am going to: _____

2. **ACTS OF PENANCE:** Perform some kind of penance. Your goal here is to train yourself to say "no" in little things so that you can say "NO" to big temptations later. You may resume doing the things you have given up here once Lent is over. Love your soul more than your body! Examples:

Avoid eating or drinking something that you enjoy, such as desserts. Give up eating out, eating meat on Wednesdays, taking hot showers, or drinking alcoholic beverages. Don't use salt or pepper on your food, or creamer in your coffee. Put a small pebble in your shoe each day, turn the shower to cold for the time it takes to say three Hail Mary's before getting out, sleep on the floor, or wake up in the middle of night for a prayer vigil.

In this category I am going to: _____

3. **WORKS OF CHARITY:** Perform some good works and holy actions. Your goal here is to strengthen your relationship with Christ and His Beloved Church. Ideally what you start here would continue in some way after Lent is over. Love God more than yourself! Examples: Pray the Rosary every day, attend daily Mass as much as possible, read the Sacred Scriptures for _____ minutes a day, spend _____ additional time every day with my family, read a life of a saint or saints, increase spiritual reading, make a daily visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament in a Church or the Adoration Chapel, visit the sick, pray for the dying, pray for the souls in purgatory. Practice Saturday devotions to Our Lady.

In this category I am going to: _____

I plan on making a good confession by this date during Lent _____

30 Pious Practices for Lent

Our Lord tells us, as recorded in Scripture, "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

1. Abstain from Meat
2. Abstain from fast food / junk food / soda / alcohol
3. Abstain from using salt and pepper for food / cream for coffee
4. Abstain from desserts
5. Fast each day
6. Take a cold or luke-warm shower
7. Limit shower time to 5 minutes
8. Put a small pebble in your shoe daily
9. Limit or refrain from watching T.V.
10. Limit the use of the internet to only what is necessary
11. Abstain from video games
12. Abstain from watching movies / videos
13. Abstain from social media
14. Abstain from unnecessary spending
15. Pray the Rosary daily
16. Pray the Angelus daily - 6 am, 12 pm, and 6 pm
17. Wear the Brown Scapular
18. Pray the Litany of Humility daily
19. Pray the litany of Trust daily
20. Visit the sick or a shut in
21. Attend Mass daily
22. Make a daily visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament
23. Do daily Spiritual reading for at least 15 minutes
24. Practice 15 minutes of mental prayer daily
25. Read a life of a saint
26. Pray for the Souls in Purgatory
27. Pray for those who are close to death
28. Make a weekly confession
29. Make an examination of conscience at lunchtime and before bed each day
30. Pray the stations of the cross daily

This list is not extensive. There are many other pious and penitential practices you may adopt during the season of Lent. Remember, the goal is to do these things out of Love of God, and for the good of our souls.

Catholic Fasting and Abstinence practices and principals

Fasting: Fasting refers to how much food we eat. It means taking only one meal during a calendar day. The meal should be an average-sized meal as overeating at the one meal is against the spirit of the fast. Fasting generally means that the meal is to be taken later in the day. Along with the one meal, up to two snacks (technically called either a collation or frustulum) are permitted. These are optional, not required. Added up together, they may not equal the size of the one meal. No other snacking throughout the day is permitted. Fasting does not affect liquids, aside from the Eucharistic Fast which is a separate matter.

Abstinence: Abstinence in this context refers to not eating meat. Meat refers to the flesh meat of mammals or fowl. Beef, poultry, lamb, etc are all forbidden on days of abstinence. Abstinence does not currently prohibit animal byproducts like dairy (e.g. cheese, butter, milk) or eggs, but in times past they were prohibited. Fish is permitted along with shellfish and other cold-blooded animals like alligators. In times past, days of fast were always days of abstinence as well; however, not all days of abstinence were days of mandatory fasting.

Laws of Days of Abstinence

- Begins on one's 14th birthday
- Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent
- Obliges the abstention from flesh meat

Laws of Days of Penance

- Applies to all the Faithful
- Lent and Fridays outside of Lent

Laws of Days of Fasting

- Applies to everyone aged 18 to 59, inclusive
- One full meal permitted and two other meals may be taken which, when combined are less than a full meal.
- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday

The obligation to do penance is lifted on Fridays that are also celebrated as a Solemnity.

The Law of the Eucharistic Fast

The fast for Holy Communion is one hour before reception of the Holy Eucharist. This fast is from all food and drink with the exception of water.

