



# LENT 2018



**"The season of Lent** is a preparation for the celebration of Easter. The liturgy prepares the catechumens (those adults preparing for Baptism) for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery by the several stages of Christian Initiation; it also prepares the faithful, who recall their own baptism and do penance in preparation for Easter." - *General Norms for the Liturgical Year, 27*

By the threefold discipline of **fasting, prayer, and almsgiving** the Church keeps Lent from Ash Wednesday until the evening of Holy Thursday. All of the faithful and the catechumens should undertake serious practice of these three traditions.

## FASTING

*"When you fast, see to it that you groom your hair and wash your face. In that way no one can see that you are fasting except your Father who is hidden; and your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."* -Matthew 6:17

THE LENTEN REGULATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Abstinence from meat** is observed by all Catholics 14 years and older on **Ash Wednesday**, on all of the **Fridays of Lent**, and on **Good Friday**.
2. **Fasting** must be observed on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** by all Catholics between their 18<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Those who are bound by this may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to each one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted. (Fasting is encouraged Mondays through Saturdays of Lent, but not required).

**There is a serious obligation to observe these penitential practices in a substantial way.** Those whose work or health would be impaired are excused from fast and abstinence. Individual conscience should decide proper cause for excuse. A more serious reason is required to excuse oneself from Ash Wednesday fast and abstinence – or from the fast and abstinence of Good Friday.

The tradition of "giving up" something for Lent is a small way to remind ourselves of the sacrifices which Jesus made for us. We can also consider "taking on" an extra practice during Lent: daily Mass, praying Morning or Evening Prayer, serving in a soup kitchen, visiting the sick, or even practicing greater patience with our loved ones.

## PRAYER

*"In the days when Christ was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications...and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when perfected, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."* - Hebrews 5:7-9

## ALMSGIVING

*"When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do... to win the praise of others."* (Matthew 6:2).

*"Do not neglect to do good and share what you have; God is pleased with sacrifices of that kind."* (Hebrews 13:16).

*May this Lenten Season be a blessed time for all!*