



Lenten Regulations

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock.

Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days.



Prayer + Fasting + Almsgiving

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are **prayer, fasting and almsgiving**.

These pillars should be practiced in relationship to our baptismal renewal.

Prayer: More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray especially for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully. We might pray for those who will be baptized at Easter and support their conversion journey by our prayer. We might pray for all those who will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with us during Lent that they will be truly renewed in their baptismal commitment.

Fasting: Fasting (deliberately saying "no" to our desires for satisfaction) is one of the most ancient practices linked to Lent. In fact, the paschal fast predates Lent as we know it. Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God. Fasting should be linked to our concern for those who are forced to fast by their poverty, those who suffer from the injustices of our economic and political structures, those who are in need for any reason.

Almsgiving: It should be obvious at this point that almsgiving (giving to the poor), the third traditional pillar, is linked to our baptismal commitment in the same way. It is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptized. Please consider participating and making your contribution to **OPERATION RICE BOWL** (offering containers can be found in the narthex of the Church).

Ash Wednesday and **Good Friday** are days of **FAST** and **ABSTINENCE**. This means that we do not eat meat and we have only one full meal.

The other **FRIDAYS** of the season of Lent are also days of **ABSTINENCE** from meat. This obligation to abstain from meat binds Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to **FAST**, limiting to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18-59. Those who are younger or older may freely embrace these disciplines. Lenten disciplines should never endanger your health.

The Fridays of the year outside of Lent are also days of penance. Abstaining from meat is the traditional way of observing these days of penance; however, each person is free to replace this with some other practice of voluntary self-denial or personal penance.

It is obvious that abstaining from meat is meaningless to vegetarians; it is equally obvious that replacing meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with the **SPIRIT OF LENTEN PENANCE**. Abstinance from meat on the other Fridays of the year may be replaced with time spent reading and studying the Scriptures, special prayers, thoughtfulness and charity to those in need, or acts of personal witness to one's faith.

While the season of Lent is the primary period of Catholic penitential practices, these regulations are not intended to limit the occasion for Christian penance. The practice of spiritual discipline is always appropriate during periods of special need for the individual and the larger community.



Confession

Lent is the primary time for celebrating the Sacrament of Penance. Early Christian teachers called this sacrament "second Baptism," because it is intended to enable us to start again to live the baptismal life in its fullness. Those who experience the loving mercy of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation should find themselves standing alongside the newly baptized at Easter filled with great joy at the new life God has given all of us.

Individual Confessions will be heard every Saturday afternoon from 4:00 – 4:30 PM in the Chapel.

STATEWIDE DAY OF CONFESSION

Bishop Libasci is asking all parishes in New Hampshire make an effort to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation available for an extended period during **Monday of Holy Week, March 29th**. At Charles Church, Msgr. Gerry will hear confessions in the Chapel during the hours of **10:00AM–12:00 PM** and from **4:00 PM–6:00 PM** on that day.



Stations of the Cross

When we pray the Stations of the Cross, we recall the passion and death of Jesus Christ and we are reminded that we, too, may be called to suffer in order to be faithful to the call of God. We will pray the Stations of the Cross, in the Church, **Every Thursday of Lent at 9:15 AM**, except on Holy Thursday. We will pray the **Mary's Way of the Cross** version on **March 4th** and on **Good Friday, April 2 at 6pm**.



Mass Schedule for Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 17th **Masses: 8:30 AM and 5:30 PM**
Ash Wednesday is a day of **FAST** and **ABSTINENCE**
Ashes are distributed after the homily at both Masses.
A national collection for *Aid for the Churches of Central and Eastern Europe* is taken up at the Ash Wednesday Masses.

DAILY MASS

Monday, Thursday, Friday	8:30 AM in the Church
Saturday	5:00 PM in the Church
Sunday	8:00 AM and 10:30 AM in Church
Holy Thursday, April 1st	Mass at 7 PM
Good Friday, April 2nd	Service at 3 PM
Holy Saturday, April 3	Easter Vigil at 7 PM
Easter Sunday, April 4	Masses at 8 AM & 10:30 AM

Adoration

On Friday, **March 5th**, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for individual adoration from **9:00 am until 10:00 am**.



Liturgy of the Hours

On Good Friday, **April 2 at 8:30am** the Liturgy of the Hours will be prayed in the Church.