



■ SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Monday thru Friday, 11:15-11:45am, at Notre Dame
Saturdays, 3:00-3:45pm, at Notre Dame

■ EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Monday thru Friday, 11:00am-12:00pm, at Notre Dame

■ VESPERS - The Evening Prayer of the Church

Tuesdays, 6:30pm, at Notre Dame

LENT: The Foundations

Why Prayer, Fasting and Alms?

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING anyone can do for Lent is to "return to the Lord with your whole heart" (Joel 2:12). That's the root meaning of repent: to turn around. Catholics have traditionally expressed sorrow for sin and the desire to live as genuine disciples of Christ through the three traditional Lenten disciplines of **fasting**, **almsgiving** and **prayer** - which help to turn us toward Christ as the true source of happiness. These are forms of self-denial: we deny the tendency in us to seek happiness in physical pleasure, in economic security, or in power. Just as Jesus was tempted in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11), we must face our temptation to put pleasure, property or power ahead of our relationship to God.

LENTEN DISCIPLINES prepare us to receive the grace of Easter. By virtue of Christ's victory over death, our relationship to pleasure, property and power is no longer a matter of following our own selfish inclinations, but of gratefully receiving all that the Lord has to give us.



FASTING and abstinence practiced as the Church instructs is a good beginning. A bodily way to remind ourselves that we need God above all things, fasting is also a sacrifice, a gift back to God of our heart's intent to depend more completely on God. The interior free desire to deepen our relationship to God is the essence of a Lenten fast.



ALMSGIVING readjusts our priorities while it expresses both our love of neighbor and our trust in God. A free gift to those in need confirms our basic trust in Providence while concretely helping those in need. Just as we fast without starving ourselves, so we give alms without jeopardizing our security or that of our family. The point is to give from the heart.



PRAYER is a recognition that we need help to turn back to God. From daily Mass to the Rosary to Centering Prayer to the Stations of the Cross to Eucharistic Adoration, the Church encourages a wealth of prayerful practices. A very simple way to pray is to sit quietly for a moment before taking up one of the Gospels and slowly reading a passage that you like. Simply sit with the passage for a bit, savoring the Word and allowing it to touch you, read it again slowly, and then respond to God.

LENTEN REGULATIONS 2021

■ ABSTINENCE/FASTING

All Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are bound also to observe the Law of Fast on the following days: **Ash Wednesday (February 17th) and Good Friday (April 2nd)**. Fasting, that is, eating less, involves limiting oneself to a single full meal and avoiding food between meals. Lighter nourishment may be taken on two other occasions in the course of the day. All Catholics who have reached their 14th birthday are bound to abstain totally from meat on the following days: **Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday**.

■ EASTER DUTY

All Catholics who have reached the age of reason must confess their serious sins in the Sacrament of Penance at least once a year. They must also receive Holy Communion at least once each year between the First Sunday of Lent (February 21st) and Trinity Sunday (May 30th).

■ OBLIGATION

All Christ's faithful are obliged by divine law to do penance. The days set aside for fast and abstinence in Lent are special ways of doing penance and are an expression of unity for all the Church.