

REGULATIONS FOR LENT 2008

Abstinence and Fasting

Abstinence from eating meat is to be observed on all Fridays during Lent. This applies to all persons 14 and older. The law of fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday applies to all persons 18 or older and younger than 59. Fasting means that one full meatless meal per day may be eaten. Two other meatless meals may be taken sufficient to maintain strength, but together they should not equal a full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juice, may be taken between meals. If health or ability to work is affected, fasting does not oblige. Private, self-imposed observance of fasting on Lenten weekdays is strongly recommended. Pastors and parents should ensure that children who are not bound by the laws of fasting and abstinence are taught an authentic sense of penance, conversion, and reconciliation.

Penance and Reconciliation

In this penitential season of Lent, the Christian faithful are obliged and encouraged to confess sacramentally all serious sins not previously acknowledged in individual confession. Pastors and parishes are encouraged to make available communal celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation, to emphasize the social and ecclesial aspects of sin and reconciliation. Padre Serra's Communal Reconciliation Service will be Friday, March 14 at 7:00 pm.

Lenten Observance

Catholics are encouraged to participate in the Eucharistic liturgy and in the sacrament of penance during Lent and parishes are encouraged to provide regular and frequent opportunities for such participation. Likewise encouraged are devotions such as Stations of the Cross, vigils, and prayer services. Traditional practices – including increased prayer, Scripture and spiritual reading, alms, personal self denial in food and drink, increased care and service to the sick and needy – are also suggested.

Easter Duty: Holy Communion

All initiated Catholics are bound by the obligations of receiving Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled during the Easter duty season, which is from the first Sunday of Lent (February 10) until Trinity Sunday (May 18) unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at some other time of the year.

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SOME THOUGHTS ON LENT AND FASTING

Lent should be more than a time of fasting; it should be a joyous time of feasting.

Lent is a time to fast from certain things, and to feast on others.

It is a season in which we should:

Fast from judging others, and feast on the Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from emphasis on our differences, and feast on our unity.

Fast from apparent darkness, and feast on the light that God gives us.

Fast from obsessive thoughts of illness, and feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute, and feast on the phrases that purify and give joy.

Fast from discontent, and feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger, and feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism, and feast on hope.

Fast from worry, and feast on confidence in God.

Fast from complaining, and feast on appreciation.

Fast from negativity, and feast on affirming others.

Fast from relentless pressures, and feast on regular prayer.

Fast from hostility, and feast on making peace.

Fast from bitterness, and feast on forgiveness.

Fast from personal anxiety, and feast on a more personal surrender to God.

Fast from discouragement, and feast on starting over.

Fast from thoughts that depress, and feast on truths that uplift.

Fast from idle gossip, and feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm, and feast on prayer that under girds.

(Author unknown)