



THE DIOCESE OF YAKIMA • PASTORAL OFFICE
LA DIÓCESIS DE YAKIMA • CENTRO PASTORAL

Memo

To: Priests, Diaconate Community, Religious, Seminarians, Parish Staff
From: Rev. Msgr. Robert Siler, Chancellor
Date: January 26, 2024
RE: Lenten Disciplines

Lent is the 40-day season of penance in preparation for the celebration of the greatest event in human history: the redemption of the human race by Jesus Christ. Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024 and ends on Thursday, March 28, followed by the Sacred Triduum, March 28-30, and Easter Sunday, March 31.

Lenten Disciplines

“All Christians, by the nature of their lives, are obliged to live in a spirit of penance whereby our exterior acts of prayer, self-denial and charity bear witness to the inner values of our Faith.”

The Church specifies certain practices of penance during the season of Lent.

1. Self-imposed observance of fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended.
2. Catholics are obliged to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, February 14 and Good Friday, March 29.
3. The Fridays of Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.
4. Catholics age 14 and older are bound by the law of abstinence.
5. The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat.
6. The law of fasting is obligatory for Catholics from the age of 18 through age 59.
7. The law of fasting prescribes that only one full meal be taken per day; the other meals, if needed, should be significantly smaller, but in accord with one's health needs. Fasting assumes avoidance of food between meals.

The “substantial observance” of these laws is a grave obligation; that is:

1. Anyone who neglects all forms of penance, or deliberately shows contempt for the Church's penitential discipline, may be guilty of serious sin.
2. Occasional failure to observe penitential regulations is not seriously sinful.
3. Proportionately grave circumstances – sickness, dietary needs, social obligation – excuse from the obligation of fast and abstinence, but not from seeking out other forms of penance.

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