



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd.

Masses will be celebrated at 9:15 am and 7:00 pm.

Stations of the Cross will take place every Friday during Lent following the 9:15 am Mass.

Confessions will be heard on Tuesdays at 8:30 am and Saturdays at 5:00 pm, and anytime by appointment.

Lent can be a good time to reflect on the people who mean the most to us and the relationships we hold most dear.

For those of us who live in industrialized countries, it can be jarring to realize that our time together as a family might amount to no more than a few minutes a day. Our lives are independent as we scatter in different directions each day for work, school or childcare. This season of reflection and renewal might be an appropriate time to pray about our family lives and how we can be more thoughtful and prayerful about Lent as a family. Perhaps we could hold a family meeting over dinner or some other relaxed place. We could discuss Lent and the symbols of the season using the resources here. We might want to talk about how our faith life is not a journey we make alone, but one we are in as a community, as a family. One Lenten family practice might include a daily act of love for our family. Can we look around and see some small thing that needs to be done to make our lives together better? Is there laundry to sort or dishes to be washed? Is there a floor that needs sweeping or a room that needs dusting? Just one effort by each of us each day can make a dramatic difference in sharing the workload in the family. The grace we are reaching for goes beyond getting the garbage taken out, for example. We know it is a grace when my experience of taking the garbage out, feels to me like an act of love, an act of solidarity as a family.

Perhaps the simplest way to prepare for this grace is to pray:

Dear Lord, may this simple, ordinary sacrifice of my time for the sake of those I love, draw us closer together as a family whose hearts you are drawing to yourself in the togetherness of our family love.

One of the real graces of Lent has to do with forgiveness and reconciliation – mercy and healing. This is never simply a matter between Jesus and me. It always has something to do with my family and with my relationships – how we are with each other. What in us needs mercy and healing? What patterns that we have need our reflections and common family choices and actions this Lent?

In accordance with the prescriptions of canon 1253, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops decrees that the days of fast and abstinence in Canada are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fridays are days of abstinence, but Catholics can substitute special acts of charity or piety on this day. Anyone over the age of 18 and under the age of 59 are obliged to fast and abstain.

Fasting, in the Latin Church, is the limitation of food and drink – typically to one main meal and two smaller meals (that together do not equal the regular meal in size), with no solid foods in between. Abstinence is the refraining from certain kinds of food or drink, typically meat.

FASTING AND FEASTING

LENT is a time for fasting.

LENT is a time for a joyous season in feasting.

LENT is a time to **FAST** from certain things and to **FEAST** on others.

During Lent, Holy Mother the Church calls on us to:

Fast from judging others;	feast on the Christ indwelling them.
Fast from emphasis on differences;	feast on the unity of all life.
Fast from apparent darkness;	feast on the reality of light.
Fast from thoughts of illness;	feast on the healing power of God.
Fast from words that pollute;	feast on the phrases that purify.
Fast From discontent;	feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger;	Feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism;	feast on optimism.
Fast from worry;	feast on divine order.
Fast from complaining;	feast on appreciation.
Fast from negatives;	feast on affirmatives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures;	feast on increasing prayer.
Fast from hostility;	feast on non-resistance.
Fast from bitterness;	feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern;	feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety;	feast on eternal Truth.
Fast from discouragement;	feast on Hope.
Fast from facts that depress;	feast on truths that uplift.
Fast from lethargy;	feast in enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion;	feast on truth.
Fast from thoughts that weaken;	feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from shadows of sorrow;	feast on the sunlight of serenity.
Fast from idle gossip;	feast on purposeful silence.