



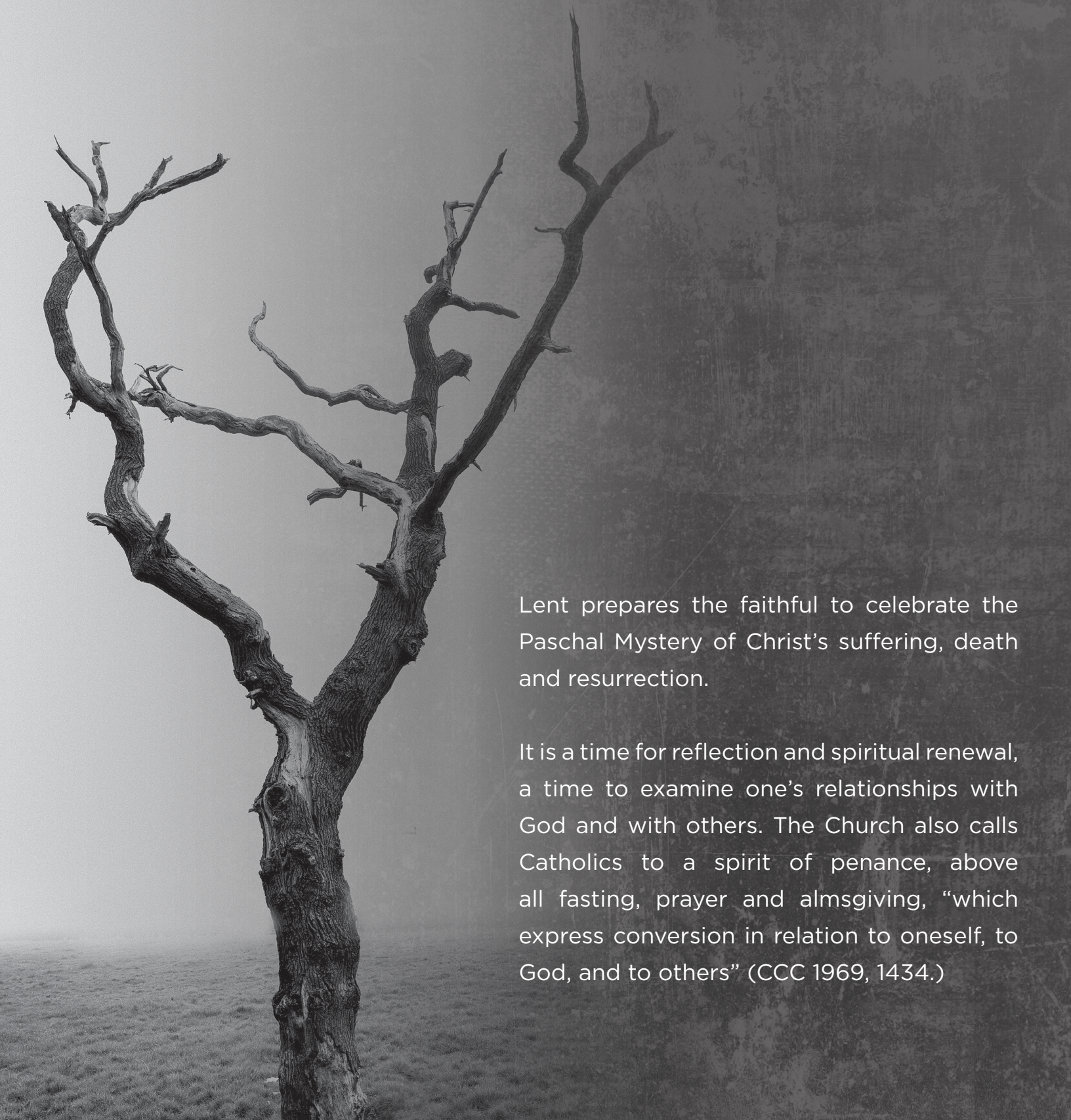
*a* **COMPLETE GUIDE**  
*to the RULES for*

**LENT**

40 DAYS *of*  
**RENEWAL**

✝uCatholic | *lent*





Lent prepares the faithful to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

It is a time for reflection and spiritual renewal, a time to examine one's relationships with God and with others. The Church also calls Catholics to a spirit of penance, above all fasting, prayer and almsgiving, "which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others" (CCC 1969, 1434.)



# LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE

## ABSTINENCE

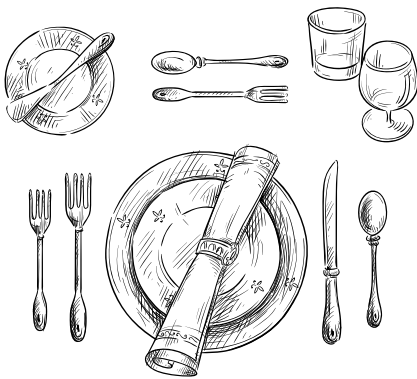


**NO MEAT**  
Mammals or Fowl

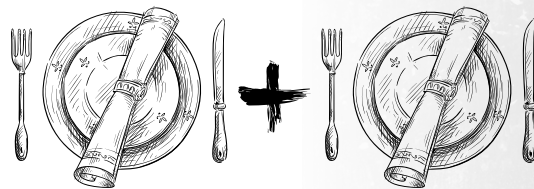


**FISH IS OK**  
So are Amphibians and Reptiles

## FASTING



**1 REGULAR MEAL**



**AND**

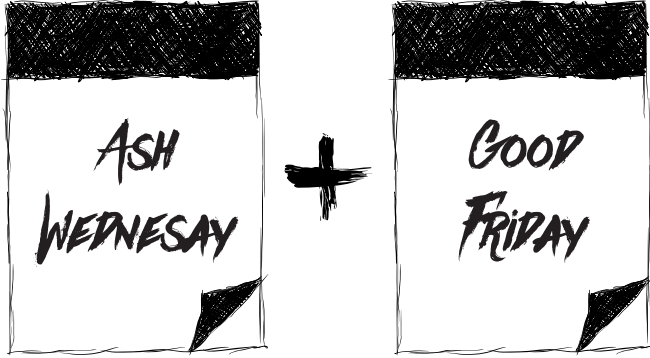
**2 SMALLER MEALS**

that together do not equal the  
regular meal in size

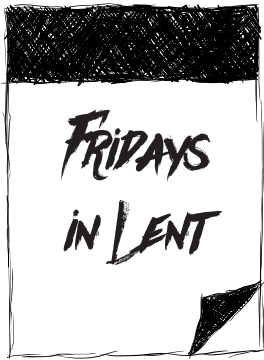


**NO SNACKS**

# LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE



## FASTING & ABSTINENCE



## ABSTINENCE

### INTERESTING NOTE:

Canon 1250 names Fridays all year long as penitential days which should be marked by some sort of sacrifice and penance. While abstinence from meat is a traditional sacrifice, Canon 1253 leaves the decision for the particular sacrifice up to the local conference of Bishops. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has obtained permission from the Holy See for Catholics in the USA to substitute a different penitential, or even a charitable practice for abstinence from meat during the year if they so choose.

**ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT IS OBLIGATORY DURING LENT EVERYWHERE.**





# LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE

**CATHOLICS**

**14+**

**ARE OBLIGED TO  
PRACTICE ABSTINENCE**



**CATHOLICS**

**18-58**

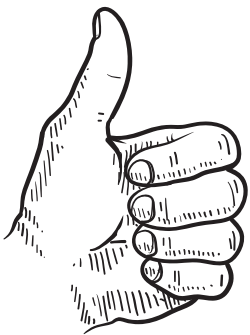
**ARE OBLIGED TO  
TO FAST**



## THOSE OUTSIDE THE AGE LIMITS



and those whose state in life (e.g. pregnant women, manual laborers, those who are ill) may be excused from the requirements of fasting and abstinence, but are encouraged to take up some other form of penitence or acts of charity or piety.



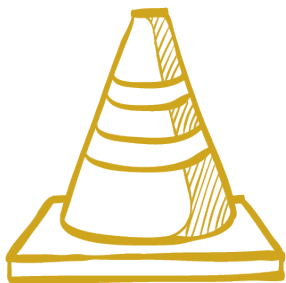
## PLEASE NOTE:

These guidelines are the minimum requirements for Lenten sacrifices. All are encouraged to impose some sort of personal penance or or act of charity or piety on top of these minimums.

You could increase the number of days you practice fasting and/or abstinence, or abstain from a favorite food or activity for all of Lent. You could add things, such as committing to read the Bible for 20 minutes a day.

**AS IN ALL THINGS, LENTEN PENANCE AND MORTIFICATION  
CALLS FOR PRUDENCE.**

It is wise to consult your spiritual director before undertaking additional Lenten practices.





# FASTING & ABSTINENCE

To foster the spirit of penance and of reparation for sin, to encourage self-denial, and to guide us in the footsteps of Jesus, Church law requires the observance of fast and abstinence (Canon 1249-1253).

1. **ABSTINENCE:** All persons who have already celebrated their 14th birthday are bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent.

2. **FASTING:** Everyone, from the celebration of their 18th birthday to their 59th birthday, is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Voluntary fasting on other weekdays of Lent, especially on Wednesdays and Fridays, is highly recommended. Fasting is generally understood to mean eating one full meal each day. Two other partial meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken; but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids are allowed.

Other forms of “fasting,” especially regarding alcoholic drink, needless television, video games, Internet use and social entertainment, is of true spiritual value and is strongly encouraged. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, neither the law of fasting nor the law of abstinence obliges. If in doubt, one’s parish priest or confessor may be consulted.

Airport workers, travelers, and others while on board ships or airplanes are dispensed from the laws of fast and abstinence for the duration of their journey (except on Good Friday). It is desirable that they perform some other pious act instead.



# PRAYER

In order to deepen one's love for Christ, Catholics are urged to read and pray over sacred Scripture; to study the Catechism of the Catholic Church; to participate in devotions offered by the parish; and to pray more fervently — individually, as families, and in common with others. The faithful are exhorted to pray the rosary, to make private visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and to pray especially for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, for world peace, and for an ongoing implementation of the pastoral initiatives of the Third Diocesan Synod.

**1. SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION:** Lent is a privileged time for celebrating this sacrament. Parishes generally make readily available the Sacrament of Penance, including its communal celebration. (In this way, the social and ecclesial aspects of sin and reconciliation, as well as one's personal reconciliation with God may be underscored. At communal celebrations of reconciliation, however, general absolution is not permitted. People should attend also to reconciliation in every aspect of human life — personal, familial, societal, and ecclesial. During the Lenten and Easter time, Catholics are reminded that they are obliged to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance at least once a year.

**2. LENTEN MASS SCHEDULE:** Daily Masses during Lent are so scheduled so as to facilitate the attendance and spiritual growth of the faithful. The faithful are urged to attend Mass on weekdays.

**3.** The Stations of the Cross are celebrated publicly in each parish on Fridays during the Lenten season. Parishioners are urged to participate.

**4. WEDDING MASSES** may not be celebrated during the Easter Triduum, on Sundays of Lent, Ash Wednesday, or during Holy Week. Marriages may take place at other times during Lent according to the proper liturgical norms and provisions, but it is contrary to the penitential spirit of the season to have elaborate weddings or lavish receptions.

**5. FUNERAL MASSES** may not be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday, nor on the Sundays of Lent. When pastoral reasons require that a funeral be celebrated on these days, a Liturgy of the Word, with the final commendation and farewell rite, is held.

**6. MASS MAY NOT BE OFFERED ON HOLY SATURDAY**, except the Easter vigil, which may be celebrated only after nightfall, in darkness.

**7. EASTER DUTY:** All Catholics who have been initiated into the Holy Eucharist are bound to receive Holy Communion worthily at least once during the Easter Season. Catholics are encouraged to receive Communion as often as possible, not only during Eastertide, but throughout the liturgical year. However, "Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to Communion" (CCC 1385.)



# ALMSGIVING

The act of giving to the poor, in the most ancient tradition of the Church, is an expression of penance, a form of piety, a witness of fraternal charity and an expression of Lenten conversion. Therefore, all Catholics are urged to support generously the charitable works of the Church. People are also encouraged to assist the sick, the aged, the needy and the imprisoned in other ways. Fasting and abstinence together with works of charity help Catholics live in solidarity with the crucified Christ reflected in the image of our brothers and sisters who suffer.

In our Lenten pilgrimage of faith and ascent to the holy mountain of Easter, may God direct our steps to Him, and show us how to walk always in His way.



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