



**L**ent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock.

Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days.



## Prayer + Fasting + Almsgiving

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are **prayer, fasting** and **almsgiving**.

These pillars should be practiced in relationship to our baptismal renewal.

**Prayer:** More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray especially for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully. We might pray for those who will be baptized at Easter and support their conversion journey by our prayer. We might pray for all those who will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with us during Lent that they will be truly renewed in their baptismal commitment.

**Fasting:** Fasting (deliberately saying “no” to our desires for satisfaction) is one of the most ancient practices linked to Lent. In fact, the paschal fast predates Lent as we know it. Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God. Fasting should be linked to our concern for those who are forced to fast by their poverty, those who suffer from the injustices of our economic and political structures, those who are in need for any reason.

**Almsgiving:** It should be obvious at this point that almsgiving (giving to the poor), the third traditional pillar, is linked to our baptismal commitment in the same way. It is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptized. Please consider participating and making your contribution to **OPERATION RICE BOWL** (offering containers can be found in the narthex of the Church).

### **FAMILY SOUP & BREAD SUPPER SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 6PM**

Join parishioners for a  
Soup and Bread Pot-Luck Supper after Mass.  
Share a favorite soup or bread with friends  
or just come and enjoy supper with friends.



## Lenten Regulations

**Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** are days of **FAST** and **ABSTINENCE**. This means that we do not eat meat and we have only one full meal.

The other **FRIDAYS** of the season of Lent are also days of **ABSTINENCE** from meat. This obligation to abstain from meat binds Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to **FAST**, limiting to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18-59. Those who are younger or older may freely embrace these disciplines. Lenten disciplines should never endanger your health.

The Fridays of the year outside of Lent are also days of penance. Abstaining from meat is the traditional way of observing these days of penance; however, each person is free to replace this with some other practice of voluntary self-denial or personal penance.

It is obvious that abstaining from meat is meaningless to vegetarians; it is equally obvious that replacing meat with a gourmet seafood meal is not in keeping with the **SPIRIT OF LENTEN PENANCE**. Abstinence from meat on the other Fridays of the year may be replaced with time spent reading and studying the Scriptures, special prayers, thoughtfulness and charity to those in need, or acts of personal witness to one's faith.

While the season of Lent is the primary period of Catholic penitential practices, these regulations are not intended to limit the occasion for Christian penance. The practice of spiritual discipline is always appropriate during periods of special need for the individual and the larger community.



## Confession

Lent is the primary time for celebrating the Sacrament of Penance. Early Christian teachers called this sacrament "second Baptism," because it is intended to enable us to start again to live the baptismal life in its fullness. Those who experience the loving mercy of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation should find themselves standing alongside the newly baptized at Easter filled with great joy at the new life God has given all of us.

**Individual Confessions** will be heard every Saturday afternoon from 4:00 – 4:30 PM in the Confession Room in the back of the Church.

**A Special Reconciliation Service** with Individual Confessions at Sacred Heart Church in Laconia with several Confessors on Sunday afternoon, **March 24th at 1:30 PM**

### STATEWIDE DAY OF CONFESSION

Bishop Libasci is asking all parishes in New Hampshire make an effort to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation available for an extended period during **Monday of Holy Week, April 15th**. At St. Charles Church, Msgr. Gerry will be in the Confession Room to hear confessions during the hours of 11:00 am–1:00 pm and from 5:00 pm–7:00 pm on that day.



## Stations of the Cross

When we pray the Stations of the Cross, we recall the passion and death of Jesus Christ and we are reminded that we, too, may be called to suffer in order to be faithful to the call of God.

A variety of settings and opportunities to pray the Stations of the Cross will be presented:

- † **All Thursdays of Lent** (not on Holy Thursday) in the Chapel following the 8:30 AM Mass
- † A special **Way of the Cross for Children** will be celebrated on Sunday March 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 AM
- † **“Mary’s Way of the Cross”** will take place on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM
- † Join our Youth Ministry in the **Living Stations of the Cross** on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM in the Church. This is a family gathering and all are welcome to participate in the Stations of the Cross as portrayed live by our parish youth.



## Mass Schedule for Lent

**Ash Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Masses: 8:30 AM and 5:30 PM**

A national collection for *Aid for the Churches of Central and Eastern Europe* is taken up at the Ash Wednesday Masses.

**Ash Wednesday** is a day of **FAST** and **ABSTINENCE**

Ashes are distributed after the homily at both Masses.

### DAILY MASS

Monday, Thursday, Friday

Saturday

Sunday

8:30 AM in the Chapel

5:00 PM in the Church

8:00 AM and 10:30 AM in Church

## Adoration

Every Friday during Lent and throughout the year, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for individual adoration following the 8:30 AM Mass until 10:00 AM.



## Adult Faith Formation

**Adult Faith Formation is a very high priority in the parish!** Building a relationship and walking our journey with Jesus never ends.

**Lenten Series “People of God’s Mercy”**

Every Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>

Offered at two times: 9:15am – 10:30am or 6:00pm – 7:30pm

The series will be a reflection on the Scriptures that opens us to the reality of who Jesus is and lead each of us into a deeper relationship with Christ through prayer, Scripture and small group discussions.