

REGULATIONS FOR LENT 2012

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 ages 18 to 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 are 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 fast and abstinence are taught an authentic sense of penance, conversion and reconciliation.

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 (with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, if opportune). 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 26) until Trinity Sunday (June 3), unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at some other time of the year.

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.