

ARCHDIOCESAN LENTEN REGULATIONS

Then to all Christ said, "Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps" (Lk 9:23).

The Church has always helped us fulfill these words of Jesus by prescribing very definite penance for all Catholics. Accordingly, the Pope and the American bishops have outlined obligatory fast and abstinence as follows:

- Ash Wednesday (March 9, 2011) and Good Friday (April 22, 2011) are days of abstinence for all Catholics over the age of 14. On these two days, fast as well as abstinence is also obligatory for those from the ages of 18 to 59. Abstinence means abstinence from meat. Fast means one full meal a day, with two smaller meals and nothing between meals (liquids are permitted). No Catholic will lightly excuse himself or herself from this obligation.
- All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat. Here again Catholics will not hold themselves lightly excused, but if there is a serious health problem, this obligation would not apply.
- We should strive to make all days of Lent a time of prayer and penance.