

LENTEN REGULATIONS

The Season of Lent Is a Time of Penance, Reconciliation, Mortification, Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer.

The Universal Law of the Catholic Church obliges Catholics to *confess one's sins to the priest*, in other words, "to go to Confession". It is assumed that one would have at least one serious sin to be confessed. The Season of Lent, geared as it is to Penance and Reconciliation, is a most salutary and opportune time to celebrate this great Sacrament.

The Universal Law of the Church obliges all Catholics from age 14 and older to *not eat meat* on Ash Wednesday, February 14) and on all the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday (February 17, 24; March 3, 10, 17, 24. Incidentally, the requirement to *not eat meat* is commonly called "***abstinence***" and it also includes soups, gravies, drippings, etc., made from meat.

The Universal Law of the Church obliges all Catholics 18 to 59 years of age to fast. On a fast day one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted but liquids, including milk and juices are allowed

When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. YOU are the best judge of your own situation.

Parents and those concerned with the Christian upbringing of children, are to create, instill and foster "*an authentic sense of penance, prayer and reconciliation*", according to the ages and abilities of the children. Toward this end, a daily effort with the appropriate catechesis is most fruitful.

Voluntary *Penance, Self-mortification, Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer* are strongly recommended and encouraged. Participation in communal Prayer and the devotion of the *Stations of the Cross* are greatly esteemed by the People of God. The great grace of *Almsgiving to the Poor* goes together with and is inseparable from Fasting, Abstinence and Self-Mortification. To fast and to mortify oneself, and fail to offer the money saved to charity is unchristian and selfish.

A genuine sense of gratitude to God for the gift of another Season of Lent whereby we may better improve the life of grace in our soul and better prepare for the celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord, is strongly encouraged and fostered. In the words of the famous televangelist, Mother M. Angelica: "*Don't miss the opportunity!*"