

Regulations for Lent

Following the example of Jesus, the Church has encouraged fasting and abstinence from meat as preparation for major celebrations and growth in the spiritual life. Fasting is taken on to remind us of our dependence on God, to express a desire for repentance, and provide for our spiritual development. What you see underlined refers to the legal minimum that is required by Church Law in the United States of America.

Abstinence: Catholics age 14 years old and older are asked to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays during Lent.

Fasting: Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting means *limiting oneself* to one full meal on a given fast day. On those days, two additional smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength. Eating between meals is not permitted.

If someone is ill, taking medicine, or working in a job where fasting may be a problem (police officer, fire fighter, etc.) they can be exempt from the rule.

We are encouraged to do more than what is legally required. For instance, we may choose to fast every day of Lent except on Sundays, or we may choose to eat meat only at one meal per day for each weekday of Lent.