



**THE DIOCESE OF YAKIMA • PASTORAL OFFICE**  
**LA DIÓCESIS DE YAKIMA • CENTRO PASTORAL**

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Memo

**To: Priests, Diaconate Community, Men and Women Religious, Seminarians**  
**From: Rev. Msgr. Robert Siler, Chancellor**  
**Date: February 27, 2019**  
**RE: Lenten Disciplines**

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Lent is the 40-day season of penance in preparation for the celebration of the greatest event in human history: the redemption of the human race by Jesus Christ. Lent begins Ash Wednesday, March 6, and ends on Thursday, April 18, followed by the Sacred Triduum, April 18-20, and Easter Sunday, April 21.

**Lenten Disciplines**

“All Christians, by the nature of their lives, are obliged to live in a spirit of penance whereby our exterior acts of prayer, self-denial and charity bear witness to the inner values of our Faith.”

The Church specifies certain practices of penance during the season of Lent.

1. Self-imposed observance of fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended.
2. Catholics are obliged to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, March 6 and Good Friday, April 19.
3. The Fridays of Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.
4. Catholics age 14 and older are bound by the law of abstinence.
5. The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat.
6. The law of fasting is obligatory for Catholics from the age of 18 through age 59.
7. The law of fasting prescribes that only one full meal be taken per day; the other meals, if needed, should be significantly smaller, but in accord with one's health needs. Fasting assumes avoidance of food between meals.

**The “substantial observance” of these laws is a grave obligation; that is:**

1. Anyone who neglects all forms of penance, or deliberately shows contempt for the Church's penitential discipline, may be guilty of serious sin.
2. Occasional failure to observe penitential regulations is not seriously sinful.
3. Proportionately grave circumstances – sickness, dietary needs, social obligation – excuse from the obligation of fast and abstinence, but not from seeking out other forms of penance.

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