

## **Guidelines for Lenten Fasting and Abstinence**

During the Season of Lent all Catholics are obligated to practice the disciplines of fasting and abstinence. We practice these Lenten disciplines as a means of doing penance.

The law of fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening (the order of meals is optional). The law of fasting also requires no eating of food between meals. The quantity of food taken at the two lesser meals shouldn't exceed the quantity at the full meal. Drinking ordinary liquids does not break the fast. Fasting is to be observed by all Catholics from the completion of their 18<sup>th</sup> year to the beginning of their 60<sup>th</sup> year.

The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat, but not of eggs, the products of milk or condiments made of animal fat. Permissible are soups, gravy and sauces flavored with meat. Abstinence is to be observed by all Catholics from the completion of their 14<sup>th</sup> year – from the day after their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday – and throughout life.

Ash Wednesday (and Good Friday) are days of fasting (eating only one full meal, two lesser meals, and no eating between meals) and days of abstinence (no eating of meat). The Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from eating meat. These days of fasting and abstinence are binding only to those in good health. For more information about these Lenten regulations call the Archdiocesan Worship Office at 313-237-5934.