

# Lenten Regulations 2017

Each year the *Holy Season of Lent* provides us a special time of grace and spiritual renewal so that we may become better instruments in sharing the Gospel message.

This year, **Ash Wednesday**, the beginning of *Lent*, falls on March 1, 2017. The present laws of the Church regarding fast and abstinence during the *Season of Lent* are as follows:

1. **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** are days of **fast**. On days of **fast**, one full meal is allowed. Two lesser 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. This law binds Catholics who have completed their 18th year until the beginning of their 60th year.

2. **Ash Wednesday** and all *Fridays of Lent* are also days of **abstinence**. On days of **abstinence**, meats should not be taken at any meal. The law of **abstinence** binds all Catholics who have completed their 14th year.

The Obligation to observe, as whole, or “substantially,” the penitential days specified by the Church is a serious obligation. The New Code of Canon Law states:

*“On these days (of Penance), the faithful are in a special manner to devote themselves to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, to deny themselves, by fulfilling their obligations more faithfully and especially by observing the fast and abstinence ....”*

May this *Holy Lenten Season* provide us an opportunity for deepening our faith, hope, and love through a life of deeper prayer, penitential practices, and works of charity.