

Dear Listeners

During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seeking the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by giving alms, and to sacrifice self-control through fasting. Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season.

Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this reflection.

In Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ.

"As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst... 'Repent and believe' Jesus tells us. What are we to repent? Our indifference, our hardness of heart. What are we to believe? Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor -- He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you."

In addition, the giving of alms is one way to share God's gifts—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. As St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs."

Pope Francis tells us "Lent is a favorable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ."

Wishing you all a blessed Lent