

During the season of Lent, the Christian faithful engage in works of fasting.

- By fasting, the faithful proclaim that “man does not live by bread alone but by all that comes forth from the mouth of the LORD” (Dt 8:3). They are freed from attachments to earthly things so that they may cling to the things of eternity.
- Through fasting, men and women also stir up longing for the coming of God’s Kingdom in its fullness. They recognize that without Christ they have no power to accomplish this Kingdom, and so they fast.
- Fasting likewise leads to almsgiving. Because one eats smaller portions of food and less expensive foods, there is food and money left over. This food and money become alms for the poor.

In the dioceses of the United States of America,

- On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, the faithful are obliged to abstain from meat and to fast, i.e., to have at most one full meal and two smaller meals which together do not equal a full meal.
- Additionally, on the Fridays of Lent, the faithful are obliged to abstain from meat.
- The norms regarding *fasting* apply to members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 18 until age 59.
- The norms regarding *abstinence* apply members of that same church from age 14 onwards.
- Members of Eastern Catholic Churches are to follow the norms of their churches.
- Whenever possible, all the Christian faithful are encouraged to continue the fast and abstinence of Good Friday until the Easter Vigil. In this way, they join themselves to the longing of the Christ for the rebirth of the entire cosmos.