

# Spirituality

“What return can I make to the Lord for all his goodness to me?”

*Psalm 116*

A Lenten Program with Suggestions for 40 Days of Renewal

*Ideas from the Sermons of St. Augustine and Pope Leo the Great*

✚ Realizing the goodness of the Lord, turn away from sin by

Fasting: “emptying out to make room for the Lord”



- Consider the portions of food of the poor.
- Practice moderation in personal life and in all activities.

Thank the Lord for food and all good things.

Penance: “practicing self-discipline for the strength to do good”

- Celebrate forgiveness with the Sacrament of Penance.
- Reach out to help the poor, the sick or the suffering people.

✚ Walking in God’s presence, grow in the Christian Life with

Spiritual Exercises: “taking on practices that draw us closer to God”

- Study and pray with the Scriptures, the Creed and the Our Father.
- Join in devotions: The Way of the Cross, Holy Hour, Spiritual Reading, Rosary, etc.
- Reflect with daily readings from: “The Little Black Book” (*Stewardship Resource Manual*)

Liturgical Prayer: “gathering for public prayer with the community”

- Pray Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer with a grateful heart.
- Participate in Sunday Mass and daily Mass if possible.
- Use additional Prayers from the Stewardship Resource Manual

✚ Following 40 Days of Lent, Celebrate with the Triduum

Holy Thursday: **Accepting the Holy Oils, Washing of Feet, Stripping of the Altar**

Good Friday: **Hearing the Passion, Praying for the World, Venerating the Cross**

Easter Vigil: **Blessing the Fire, Hearing the Bible Stories, Blessing the Water,**

**Initiating the Catechumens, Singing Alleluia, Celebrating Easter Eucharist**

# Stewardship a Way of Life

## Lenten Prayers and Activities for the Home



As Christians and disciples we hear three fundamental calls in the gospel: pray, fast and give alms. Prayer is a reminder that all we are and have comes from the Lord. Prayer leads us to an ever-deeper understanding that stewardship is essentially about self giving. We are challenged to evaluate honestly how we are growing in prayer, service and sharing.

Words of Bishop Robert Morneau in *Paths to Prayer*, St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, OH, 1998.

### ✠ *Meal Prayers*

1. **Bless, O Lord**, this fruit of your good earth and the work of human hands.  
It comes to us through your grace  
and the loving care of many people.  
As we eat this food,  
make us joyful today.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
  2. **Thank you, Lord**, for the food we have eaten  
and for all your gifts.  
Keep us mindful of the needs of people  
who suffer from hunger.  
Bring us ever closer to each other  
and ever nearer to you  
in a spirit of thanks and praise. Amen
- Prayers adapted from *Children's Daily Prayer*, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago.

### ✠ *Prayer for Lent*

**Merciful God,**  
You called us forth from the dust of  
the earth. You claimed us for Christ  
in the waters of Baptism.  
Bless our journey through the desert  
of Lent to the font of rebirth.  
May our fasting be a hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
Our prayer, the chant of humble  
and grateful hearts.  
All that we do and pray is in the name  
of Jesus, now and forever. Amen

### *Stewards in Action*

- ✠ Read and discuss next Sunday's gospel as a household.
- ✠ Start a prayer journal to record your gratefulness for God's gifts.
  
- ✧ Plan an outdoor event to take care of our physical need for exercise.
- ✧ Listen prayerfully to some religious (or other) music. Our souls need nourishment too.
  
- ♥ Get to know the candidates and catechumens in the RCIA process. Invite one to lunch.
- ♥ Consider becoming involved in a ministry at church. Families can serve in hospitality.
  
- ✧ Sort through clothing and toys. Give some to the poor.
- ✧ Take responsibility to recycle. Preserve the earth's resources.
  
- ✧ Give a homebound person a ride to church or medical appointment.
- ✧ Pray as a group at meals, morning, and/or evening.

## **Suggested Bulletin Ideas for Lent and Triduum**

Lent is 40 days of responding in responding God's love and care. During Lent we keep asking ourselves this question: How much does the Lord's Spirit within me affect and shape my life? Come join us on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2003 and begin the journey into a deeper interior life with God.

Seven steps to guide us through Lent: Take time to plan the journey. Take fasting seriously. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Increase service to the poor, the sick and the suffering. Take time for prayer. Reflect on your journey and take time to be with God. Participate in the three days of Triduum on April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.

Lent is not mission impossible. And it isn't a mystery season to be solved. The prescription for observing Lent is simple and clear: give alms without fanfare, pray privately, serve the poor and fast cheerfully. Most of us take these words of Jesus to heart and do what we can during these forty days to make a return for God's goodness to us. Lent begins on March 5, 2003 and continues to Holy Thursday on April 17, 2003.

Lent actually ends on Holy Thursday evening. We then enter into the Triduum. We get ready for it on Palm Sunday and walk with the Lord as he enters Jerusalem. Christians walk with the Lord through Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. On Easter we die and rise with him to a new way of living. Come celebrate the great mystery with us during Lent and for the three days of Triduum, April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.

## Suggested Bulletin Ideas for the Triduum

**The Triduum** is the high point of the liturgical year and the central Christian mystery of the triumph of life over death. The 40 days of Lent have been leading us to the three days where Christians gather to celebrate the mystery of passion, death and Resurrection. With prayer and dramatic ritual we move into Easter, coming forward to place our hand in the baptismal waters and renew our response to the Lord. Welcome to our services on **Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil on April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.**

**The Triduum** is the Church's endless reflection on a way of life that leads through the cross to the Resurrection. You are invited to come to the Triduum: **Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday on April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.**

**HOLY THURSDAY:** Celebrate the joy of ministry that is the fabric of service to others. In the washing of the feet we come to a profound humility rooted in the example of Christ. On this same Holy Thursday night, we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Oils to our community: the Oil of Chrism, the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens. Welcome to our **Holy Thursday celebration on April 17, 2003.**

**GOOD FRIDAY:** Celebrate the ultimate mystery of the triumph of the cross. Unite your sufferings and those of the world with the Lord of the Cross. Venerate the cross, our sign of victory beyond pain and death. Good Friday is the birth of hope and peace. Welcome to our prayer on **Good Friday April 18, 2003.**

**THE EASTER VIGIL:** Celebrate darkness broken by light. Relive new life given in the waters of Baptism. Welcome new Christians and join us in the proclamation of the Resurrection and the refreshment of the Eucharist. Welcome on **Holy Saturday, April 19, 2003.**

**THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM:** The central celebration of the core Christian message and the high point of the entire Christian year is the three day celebration of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. By dying the Lord destroyed our death, by rising He restored our life. The Easter Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ is the celebration of the Paschal Mystery, our salvation. Welcome to the **Paschal Triduum celebrated on April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.**

**THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM:** The Triduum is one single liturgical action that continues over three days: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. The Triduum is not a part of Lent, but in its entirety, celebrates the Easter event. The spirit of the fast during the three days is not a Lenten Fast but the Paschal Fast. The entire focus of the Triduum is on the Triumph of the Cross and the Resurrection.

Therefore every Catholic is greatly encouraged and invited to join in the drama and action of **The Three Great Days of Triduum, April 17, 18 and 19, 2003.** For every Catholic this is more than the story of Christ, it is the story of our own life, passion, death and resurrection.