



**To: Priests & Pastoral Associates, Principals,
Parents & Parishioners**

Re: Lenten Regulations

Date: 8th February 2017

In an age of comfort and materialism, it is easy to put aside the obligations of penance. The Church marks each Friday in Lent as a day of penance.

It is a useful time to focus on our own need for conversion and to enter into, in some way, the passion and death of Christ. Fridays in Lent including Good Friday take on a particular importance for us. Hence there are rules regarding fasting and abstinence. It is very important that children are educated to appreciate the value of fasting and abstinence in their lives... to do without, to deny themselves, for the greater love of God and others. It is my hope that parents, parishes and schools will strive to pass on this tradition to young people with enthusiasm and joy. Such an action is certainly counter cultural but it has a value that transcends all cultures and helps to make us more acutely aware of the place of Christ in our everyday lives.

LENT – 2017

All members of the Christian faithful in their own way are bound to do penance in virtue of divine law; in order that they may all be joined in a common observance of penance, penitential days are prescribed in which the faithful in a special way pray, exercise works of piety and charity, and deny themselves by fulfilling their responsibilities more faithfully and especially by observing fast and abstinence according to the norm of the canons. (c.1249)

ASH WEDNESDAY and GOOD FRIDAY are days of fasting and abstinence from meat.

ALL OTHER FRIDAYS in Lent are days of penance. Any one of the following fulfills such penance:

Prayer – for example, Mass attendance, family prayer, a visit to a church or chapel, reading the Bible, making the Stations of the Cross, praying the Rosary, attending prayer meetings.



Self-denial – for example, not eating meat, sugar, alcohol, dessert, sweets; giving up TV or other forms of entertainment; limiting our food and drink in-take, saving monies to donate to Project Compassion for those who need it most.

A special effort to help others - giving our time to people in need, making more of our precious time available to those who need assistance. Seeking out the elderly, the lonely, the sick, and the over-burdened.

Who are bound to fast?

All the faithful who are over eighteen and under sixty.

Who are bound to abstain?

All the faithful who have completed their fourteenth year. Nevertheless, pastors and parents are to see to it that minors who are not bound by the law of fast and abstinence are educated in an authentic sense of penance.

What about the obligation to receive Holy Communion once a year?

Each of the faithful who has made their first Holy Communion is obliged to receive Holy Communion once a year between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday, unless for a good reason it is fulfilled at another time during the year. The obligation also exists to confess grave sins at least once a year.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "+ Christopher Saunders". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

+Christopher Saunders
Bishop of Broome