

Lent



is March 1, the beginning of the Season of Lent. While Lent is described as being of a duration of 40 days, there are actually 45 days between March 1 and Easter Sunday, which is April 16. You can find different formulas for counting the days of Lent to end up with an even "40." What's essential to us, as people of faith, is the symbolic value of the number. From the flood of Noah, to the Israelites wandering in the desert, to Jesus' own days in the wilderness – "40" conveys a significant duration; a patient trust in God's own time. In our own lives these next 45 days might not seem of a duration long enough for our conversion. The season will fly by all too quickly. Some ways to enhance a change during Lent might be:



PRAYER



FASTING



ALMSGIVING

- **Prayer**
 - Attend daily Mass, at least once a week
 - Spend some extra time, each day, in prayer or spiritual reading
- **Fasting**
 - Give something up (coffee, chocolate, TV show) and give the money/time to charity
- **Acts of charity** (almsgiving)
 - Daily donation of your extra change to the Rice Bowl
 - Help at a soup kitchen or food pantry
 - Help at a Habitat for Humanity build

Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

The point of fasting and abstinence is to remind us of our radical need for God's support as we undergo conversion in his love.

- **Ash Wednesday is a day of fast** (for those 18-59 years of age: one full meal and two smaller/lighter meals, with no food between meals) **and abstinence** (14 years and older – cannot eat meat).
- The **Fridays of Lent** are also **days of abstinence**.