

Liturgical Year: Lent

God strengthens us to be humble and contrite when we encounter temptation and sin.

Chapter Summary

During Lent, the Church and its members do acts of penance—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Jesus teaches that, unlike the hypocrites, we should offer these penances with humble and contrite hearts. We learn to do this by uniting our penances and sufferings with the sufferings of Jesus. The Lenten devotion of the Stations of the Cross and the Mass on Palm Sunday are opportunities for us to unite our penances and sufferings with Jesus' sufferings.



Uniting our Sufferings to Christ's

Lent is a time for doing acts of penance with humility and contrition. When we consider penance, we need to remember that God ultimately seeks our hearts. Our penances during Lent should be directed to the end of having our hearts conformed more and more to Him.

Penances bring suffering and cause discomfort. We should look beyond focusing solely on the suffering we are experiencing during Lent. If we're not careful, our penances could turn into sources of complaint and excuses to cry, "Woe is me!" We must be on guard against such temptation and assist our families in combating it.

There is more to suffering than meets the eye. Jesus will always meet us there when we invite Him to do so. By uniting our sufferings with Christ's, we are strengthened with His grace and grow in our love and gratitude for His sacrifice. By recalling a specific aspect of Christ's Passion each time our penances cause us discomfort and suffering, we come to know Christ better.

Taking an active part in the life of our parishes during Lent will help us unite our sufferings with Christ's. Attending Stations of the Cross each Friday is a good tradition to practice. If that's not available in your parish, coordinate with other families to do it in one of your homes. As always, attending Sunday Mass and even a daily Mass will keep you and your family focused on Christ during Lent.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.