



*From Father Doug:*

Lent offers an opportunity to renew our commitment to faith, to look at where we have drifted away from God, to renew our relationships with those God has brought into our lives, and a chance to reach out to those in need. The traditional disciplines of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The guidelines from the Church on Lenten observance are included in this bulletin. Fasting, not often observed anymore, is a great way to focus on how excessive our lives can be, how we consume more than virtually anyone else on the planet, and how often we ignore the needs of those around the world.

Prayer offers us the chance to come closer to God through additional devotions and study. The best way to observe Lent is to attend Mass more frequently. Mass is celebrated here Monday through Friday at 6:45 and 9 a.m. It is celebrated at St. Elizabeth's in Avon at 8 a.m. Fridays at 7 p.m. we will have Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. This offers us the opportunity to walk with our Lord the last steps he took during his Passion, and to reflect on what he endured for love of us. You will also see a selection of offerings throughout Lent listed in this bulletin. There is a Lenten Morning of Recollection, several study and discussion opportunities, and there will be Penance Services here and in neighboring parishes near the end of Lent.

Finally, as a discipline of sacrifice we are called to almsgiving. One of the traditional ways we do this is through the "rice bowl" collection that benefits Catholic Relief Services. While we speak of the economic troubles facing our nation, we also need to put this in perspective with the many, many people around the world for whom daily life is a struggle simply to survive.

By combining these disciplines, we can find in our Lenten journey a sure way to draw closer to God and to understand ourselves better. By additional prayer and study we can become better witnesses to the truth of the faith in a world growing cold to Christ's message of love and life.

A Blessed Lenten Journey to you all!