

SPECIAL FAMILY PRACTICES DURING LENT

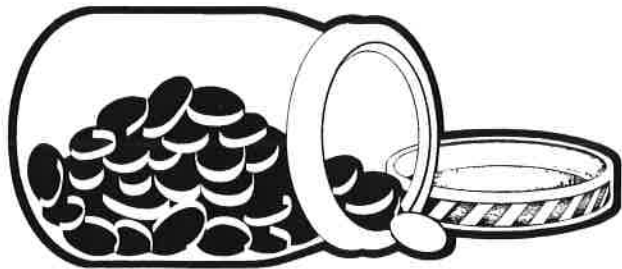
Whenever possible participate in a weekday Mass with family members. If your parish or a neighboring parish has scheduled Stations of the Cross on Fridays plan on attending them with members of your family.

Initiate a practice of saying extra prayers at family Lenten meals. Read passages in Scripture which help to explain the meaning of fasting and of penance in our lives.

ALMSGIVING

Lent is a time for learning about giving to those in need. There are many ways that children become compassionate people. One of them is through early lessons on giving alms. Here is a simple idea for families.

On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, put a clean, recycled jar on the kitchen table. Make a special label to cover and identify the jar. Some ideas for the labels: Help the Poor, Feed the Hungry or Pennies for Peace.



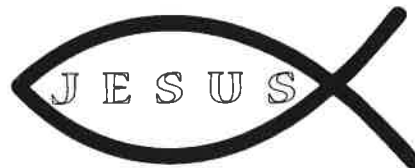
Encourage every family member to put a coin in the jar each day. Help the children count up the money at the end of Holy Week. Put the donation in an appropriate offering envelope and submit it with your Easter Sunday collection money.

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FOR STUDY AND REFLECTION

Families might develop a Lenten reading program. Reading can replace some of the television shows given up for Lent.

Also, reading aloud from the Bible or from a Catholic classic every evening for half an hour can be a way of fostering family conversation about the Catholic faith.



Maria von Trapp (of "Sound of Music" fame) suggested that every year we should divide our reading into three parts: something for the mind, something for the heart, something for the soul.

FOR A SMILE

The priest giving the homily was wired for sound with a lapel mike, and as he preached, he moved briskly about the platform, jerking the mike cord as he went. Then he moved to one side, getting wound up in the cord and nearly tripping before jerking it again. After several circles and jerks, a little girl in the third pew leaned toward her mother and whispered, "If he gets loose, will he hurt us?"

WOWs— Words of Wisdom

- If you fill your heart with regrets of yesterday and the worries of tomorrow, you have no today to be thankful for.
- Happy memories never wear out. Relive them as often as you want.
- Home is the place where we grumble the most, but are often treated the best.
- To get out of a difficulty, one usually must go through it.
- Do what you can, for whom you can, with what you have, where you are.