

Fast and Abstinence Regulations (from Diocese of Superior website)

Abstinence

1. Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all the Fridays of Lent, and on Good Friday. Abstinence includes meat that comes from animals which live on land (such as chickens, cows, sheep or pigs) as well as the meat of birds. Abstinence does not include meat juices and liquid foods made from meat. Because of this, foods such as chicken broth, consommé, soups cooked or flavored with meat, meat gravies or sauces, as well as seasonings or condiments made from animal fat are technically allowed. However, moral theologians have traditionally taught that abstinence should include avoiding the consumption of all animal-derived products (except foods such as gelatin, butter, cheese and eggs, which are derived from animals but do not have any meat taste). Fish are a different category of animal. Salt and freshwater species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, (cold-blooded animals) and shellfish are permitted during days of abstinence from meat. While shrimp, lobster and other shellfish are not considered meat and so can be consumed on days of abstinence, and while indulging in a meal of costly seafood on abstinence days does not conflict with the letter of the law, perhaps it does conflict with its spirit.

Fasting

2. Everyone between 18 and 59 years of age is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, except those who may be excused (see below).

3. Besides the abstention from meat, on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday only one full meal is allowed. If truly needed to maintain necessary strength, up to two very small meals may be also be taken, but together these additional meals should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted. When a person's health or their ability to do necessary work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. Liquids are allowed at any time, but no solid food should be consumed between meals.

4. Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from these prescribed minimal penitential practices. However: Those who are excused from abstaining from meat:

- People who are under the age of 14.

Those who may be excused from fasting:

- People who are under 18 and those who are 60 or over.
- Those who are physically ill
- Those who are mentally ill
- Those who suffer from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Ill persons should not further jeopardize their health by fasting.
- People whose ability to do necessary work would be negatively affected
- Women who are pregnant or nursing