

# LITURGY BYTES

## Here Comes Lent



Ash Wednesday is late this year, March 2<sup>nd</sup> to be exact, bringing us to Easter on April 17<sup>th</sup>. With the cold and snowy January we have had, spring will happen on March 20<sup>th</sup>! Daylight is lasting longer each day, also showing us spring is on the horizon. In fact, the name Lent simply means “spring.” It is thought to have Germanic roots and seems likely to have been used to describe the season when the days began to lengthen, signifying new life and renewal. Over time, the word Lent came to be linked specifically to the Christian tradition of fasting before Easter.

Lent draws its inspiration from the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert. During this time, the Gospels tell us that Jesus fasted as he resisted Satan’s temptations before heading to Galilee to begin his public ministry. As Ash Wednesday draws near, many Catholics begin wondering what they will do for Lent or what they will give up for Lent. Either one is beneficial for each of us to consider. Lenten sacrifices are valuable if they help increase our reliance on Jesus and if the void we create by giving something up opens up space in our hearts for God to fill. Another aspect to consider for Lent which is helpful, is to commit to something additional in our lives like attending daily Mass during Lent, for example.

Perhaps a question to ponder for ourselves is, what other actions can we take to better ignite our faith this Lent? Why not seek the Lord in prayer by reading more Scripture, or serve our brothers and sisters in need by almsgiving, or make fasting a part of your everyday life? There is much food for thought for each of us as Lent 2022 draws near. Some of the changes in the Liturgy that we notice are the elimination of the Gloria and the Alleluia before the Gospel reading, as well as the change from green to purple with banners and vestments.

So, as we embrace Lent with the visible outward sign of ashes, it is important to reflect on the inner conversion that needs to take place within each of us!

Have a safe, blessed, and healthy week! ~ *Michele Hall*