

Msgr. Bill's Weekly Letter...

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we approach the holy season of Lent, I thought a list of activities might be appropriate. Obviously, no one should try to do all of these. Lenten observances are not meant to cause us great pain that can alienate us. They are practices to help us grow in wisdom and holiness.

St. Francis wrote, "Do few things, but do them well. Simple joys are holy." These sacrifices are meant to bring us closer to God not just prove I can do them. If I chose to do "X" and on Easter Sunday I am filled with pride, we've wasted our time. They are meant to bring more harmony into our lives.

Kids / Teen Fasting Ideas – Give up a favorite toy or game / Fast from social media for a day / Give up a favorite snack / Drink only water at school / Give up a favorite chair at home or seat at school / Go without headphones or air pods for a day / Play your favorite game, focusing on helping others instead of winning / Allow others to pass in front of you in the lunch line

General Ideas for Lenten Sacrifices – Give up coffee (or only brew it at home) / Give up alcohol / Give up certain social media sites or limit them to certain days or time of day / Give up electronics after a certain time in the day (i.e., no screens after 8 p.m.) / Sleep without a pillow / Wake up without hitting the snooze button / Shower without hot (with only luke-warm) water / Keep the thermostat several degrees cooler / Park in the back of the parking lot and say a prayer as you walk to the grocery store / Abstain from reading gossip or rumor sites

Ideas/Teen Prayer Ideas – Pray on the way to school / Play Guess the Saint each day - Pick a relative each day and pray for that person / Call a grandparent after church and discuss the Gospel and homily / Go to bed five minutes early and spend extra time talking with God / Research the name of your church and learn about its origins / Pay special attention to the intercessions at Mass and choose one to pray for during the week / Explore Hallow Kids / Go to confession



Adult Prayer Ideas – Subscribe to a daily prayer newsletter (Notre Dame and the Jesuits both offer good options) / Each morning, scroll through the contacts on your phone, and randomly stop and say a prayer for whichever person you land on / Spend a few minutes with Scripture each day / Start the Bible in a Year podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz on Hallow / Attend daily Mass once a week / Attend or pray the Stations of the Cross every Friday / Invite a friend to attend Mass with you / Join the Bible study group at church / Attend Adoration of the Eucharist / Go to confession / Pray the Rosary once a day / Pray the Daily Examen on Hallow / Join Hallow's #Pray40 Lent Challenge

Kids/Teens/General Almsgiving Ideas – Spend time volunteering as a family / Allow kids to be the one to place money in the basket during the offertory at Mass / Introduce children to a charity and explain

to them how and why to donate to it / Have children identify a toy they are willing to donate to Goodwill / Help children identify an article of clothing they can donate and explain that their donation can be a blessing to someone in need / Designate a jar to collect change to donate / Donate food to a food bank / Donate a service (free homework tutoring, free professional assistance, etc.) / Give a smile to someone you pass who may be living on the street (instead of ignoring them) / Follow new charities on social media and engage with their posts / Support a business that advertises in your parish bulletin

Help our children have a great Lenten experience, not only through our encouragement, but also through our personal example of Lenten observances. Our children learn more by our example than our words. Let us have a great Lent.

pace – bene,

Msgr. Bill