

# A Reflection from Fr. Canisius for the First Sunday of Lent

Dear Parishioners,

In these early days of Lent, we consider what practices we might take on during these 40 days. Perhaps we have already started them, or perhaps we are still discerning what we can do. Whatever path we choose, we all have the same aim: to grow closer to God. Our Lenten practices are meant to help us not only grow in understanding of him but also to grow in understanding of how we can live out his love in the world.

We have these 40 days to consider our relationship with God, specifically where we are disobedient and fail to trust him like the woman and man in our first reading. We know God should be at the center of everything we do; we are at our best when this is the case. And we have this time to focus on how we can keep him there, and resist all temptations otherwise, as Jesus did in the Gospel.

Our Lenten practices focus on three ways in which we can grow closer to God. First, we have prayer. There are so many different ways in which to pray. We can consider which prayer has helped us grow closer to God. Or perhaps there is a type of prayer we would like to try. These 40 days are our opportunity to explore and to pray in ways that help us to recenter God in our lives.

Second, we have the practice of fasting. There is power in our communal practices when we fast together on Fridays, but perhaps there are individual practices of fasting that will help us to remove any distractions or obstacles in our relationship with God. Fasting is a way to be more mindful of our reliance on God in our daily lives.

Finally, we have the practice of almsgiving. Offering up what we have reminds us that all we have is a gift from God. God calls us to share our gifts with others, especially those in most need. Perhaps there is a group that needs our sacrifices on this day; we could focus our almsgiving efforts there.

Our Lenten practices require nourishment at the Eucharistic table. God is always with us and calls us to grow closer to him as we journey these next 40 days.

Have a blessed week!

*Fr. Canisius*