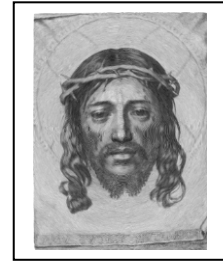


Dear Mission Partners:

How can we challenge ourselves as a community of faith here at Immaculata to approach the upcoming Lenten season with love and service as Christ the Redeemer did?



This year we celebrate the beginning of the season on February 22, on Ash Wednesday! Lent is a liturgical season of six weeks leading up to Good Friday and Easter Sunday. We know that the Paschal mystery, Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection, is primary to the faith of Christians and Catholics. This season of forty days is best celebrated by our **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving!**



There are so many forms of **prayer** – books have been written to help us pray, and the daily scriptures offer us the very best texts to help us focus our prayer. Here is a link: [Daily Bible Readings, Audio and Video Every Morning | USCCB](#)

There are so many forms of **fasting** besides “giving up” candy which some of us did as children. Pope Francis has given us a few ways: *“Fast from Hurting Words and say Kind words; Fast from Sadness and be filled with Gratitude; Fast from Anger and be filled with Patience; Fast from Pessimism and be filled with Hope; Fast from Worries and Trust in God; Fast from Complaints and contemplate Simplicity; Fast from Pressures and be Prayerful; Fast from Bitterness and fill your heart with Joy; Fast from Selfishness and be Compassionate to others; Fast from Grudges and be Reconciled.”* This could be our lifestyle even beyond the 40 days of Lent!

What is almsgiving? A major Lenten practice is almsgiving, which is donating one's time, money, or possessions to those who are less fortunate. It invites us to put others first in our activities during Lent.

And why do we pray, fast, and give alms? Lent is the perfect opportunity for this because it's a time dedicated to living the Christ life. Christians are called to see all people, and all of creation as priceless in God's plan and deserving of help when in need, just as Jesus, the Redeemer, did when he consistently reached out to those on the margins of society. He showed us the way to live as his followers and disciples by choosing to love.

Blessings on your Lenten days! Let's pray for one another!

Sincerely, in the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
Sister Antoine Therese, IHM