

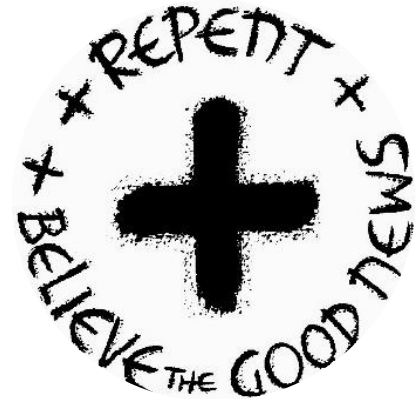
## LENT BEGINS ON WEDNESDAY! HURRAY!

From the STM Bulletin February 11, 2018

Lent is a wonderful liturgical season characterized by our special attention to three great disciples aimed at drawing us closer to God:

### Prayer. Fasting. Almsgiving.

Lent is also a time for us to attend to those things in our lives that move us away from our “right relationship” with the Father, away from the closeness with Him that He wills for us.



*Unleash the Gospel* calls us in particular ways to this **Reconciliation**:

- In Confession, to take advantage of the Mercy there, and because renewal of this Sacrament in our parish is essential to unleashing the Gospel.
- Through the disciplines of the “penitential” season of Lent, because we grow spiritually through prayer, fasting, and charitable works.
- With a deep change of heart and embrace of a *Spirit of Reconciliation*. “Return to me with your whole heart” says the Lord in an Ash Wednesday reading from the Prophet Joel (2:12-18).

*Unleash the Gospel* charges each of us to:

“Reclaim the sacrament of **reconciliation as a lived reality in your home**: heal wounds and brokenness in your family through sacrifice, forgiveness, mercy and love.” (Action Step 1.3.5)

A Spirit of Reconciliation can become a sacramental reality in our daily lives.

What might that look like in our homes?

Think small, many little things, random acts of kindness, micro-sacrifices and mini-gifts.

Try these:

- Forgive little inadvertent slights.
- Pick up after someone without saying anything.
- Say a simple prayer for someone who annoys you:
  - “Dear Jesus, please bless ‘X’. Amen.”
- ‘Swallow’ a complaint (does it even matter?)
- Thank a co-worker for ... anything!
- Give up the remote (even when there’s a game on).
- Do the dishes without being asked.
- Ask your spouse how their day was first, and listen.
- Apologize.

**LENT**  
Pray + Fast + Give