

HAVE AN EFFORTLESS LENT!

The virtuosity of the athlete, the dancer, the musician or singer makes their artistry seem effortless. Uncomplaining, they spend themselves daily in passionate labor – so focused on the goal they become self-forgetful.

The goal of our Lenten discipline is to focus so entirely on God and others that we become self-forgetful through virtuosity in prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Pray with obedience but *no fuss*; so as to listen to God in the silence of a mind surrendering to the Word and quieted of its impulses to control or “call the shots”.

Fast with chastity – *no lust*; so as to desire God alone in the stillness of a heart resting in Jesus and gathering all its passions into one: passion for the One whose love is the source of ours; purifies and perfects it.

Give alms with poverty – *no rust*; so as to serve in the serenity of a self freed from the impulse to control by submitting all things to God with trust – freed from fear – to love out of a true sense of being in solidarity with others and motivated by unconditional love for them.

We are literally all bound up into one great living mystical body with Jesus, our Beloved Savior and Lord. So, with no fuss, no lust, and no rust, have a blessed and effortless Lent in the virtuosity of the lovers of God and neighbor – children of God in one spiritual family – and disciples of Jesus!

Inspired by Fr. David Denny & the Spiritual Life Institute

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PIOUS CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES FOR LENT

“Unless you repent (change your ways, do penance) you will all perish as they did.” Luke 13:3 **“Make straight the way of the Lord!”** John 1:23 **“My Father goes on working and so do I.”** John 5:17 **“As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing.... it was I who chose you and sent you to go and bear much fruit, fruit that will last.... I tell you to love one another.”** John 15:5.16-17

Pray the Rosary, meditating on the **Scripture** inspired **Mysteries of the Rosary** – the **Joyful, Sorrowful, Luminous, and Glorious Mysteries** in the life of **Jesus and Mary** – let yourself be carried by the prayers flowing along the beads. Make use of the paintings depicting them in the church above the **Stations of the Cross**.

Attend Mass during the week. Offer God a **prayer hour** before the **Blessed Sacrament**. Pray for those in **Purgatory**, and those here on Earth in *danger of dying separated* from the love of God by serious sins. Pray for those you have led into sin, for an *end to the slaughter of innocents* by **abortion**, for **peace** in the world through labor for **justice**. Go to confession and celebrate **Penance** and **Reconciliation** more often. Examine your conscience before bed, asking God forgiveness for displeasing Him by things done or left undone, and taking note of them for the next confession.

Perform good works: **visit** the sick, or elderly; **read** the Bible and from the life of a saint every day; **take** a person to Sunday Mass or Confession with you; **get** someone with a marriage problem to see a priest; **visit** or **have** someone visit a fallen-away Catholic; **invite** someone to become a Catholic – **start talking** to him/her about it; **get** them to see a priest about it; **distribute** good spiritual reading material, prayer cards and leaflets; **read** from a good Catholic book every day; **counsel, picket** or **pray** at an abortion clinic; **join** in an abortion rescue effort; **consecrate** your life to God – **renew** this consecration daily. (See “True Devotion to Mary.”)

Remember: Lent is a holy time of extra prayer, penance, sacrifice, good works and almsgiving, to frequent the Sacraments and attend Mass more often, for the welfare of our souls. Many a pious Lent practice has become a lifelong virtuous habit to perfect a person.