



ARCHBISHOP'S LETTER FOR LENT 2019

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This Lent, I invite you to focus on family prayer. It will strengthen your home life, promote personal holiness, and advance world peace.

I firmly believe that “the family that prays together stays together.” It is vital for families to share meals, discuss the events of the day, and pray.

Children who pray with their parents learn to take their joys and fears to God. They grow in peace and confidence—a blessing that touches the whole family.

Daily family prayer would be ideal, but I suggest that your family set aside 15–30 minutes at least on Monday evenings in Lent. Pray the rosary, reflect on the coming Sunday's gospel, and ask for graces for you, your parish, and your diocese. This will unite the church of Ottawa in prayer.

If you live alone, I urge you to have a regular time of prayer with fellow parishioners or neighbours.

A special fruit of the rosary is inner peace. Through Our Lady's intercession, this can spread throughout the world.

Lent should celebrate the Easter mysteries with mind and heart renewed. We seek the holiness of life begun in our union with Christ in baptism through a conversion of heart.

Besides prayer, Jesus commended to His disciples two other biblical practices that are fundamental to Lent: fasting and almsgiving.

The Lenten fast for Catholics means no more than one full meal—as well as abstaining from meat—on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Remember also Jesus' death on Good Friday by not eating meat on the other Fridays of Lent.

You can redirect the money saved by small self-privations to almsgiving—help to the poor, either those nearby through a local charity, or those in the Global South through Development and Peace.

Lent points us to the forgiveness of sins Jesus won for us by His death on the cross and resurrection to new life. Please take advantage of the wonderful grace of a personal confession this Lent.

Join me on this journey to Easter and the renewal of your inner self. Together, let us grow in love of Christ, who is everything to us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terrence Prendergast, S.J.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

✠ Terrence Prendergast, S.J.
Archbishop of Ottawa