



## **Vox Populi**

6 March 2025

The Season of Lent has begun.

The beginning of this season was marked by Ash Wednesday and the reception of ashes, a sign of mortality and repentance.

Throughout the next few weeks, we will engage in fasting, abstinence, almsgiving and prayer. While at many times, we can become obsessed with the individual penances we have chosen, ultimately the season is about drawing closer to Christ and to one another as members of His Body, the Church.

Our outward actions should reflect an inner joy and a conversion towards Christ. When we fast or abstain, we are reminded it is not worldly or physical things that give us joy, but rather, it is the love of Christ.

On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, 18 April 2025, the Church calls us to abstain from meat and to fast as acts of penance and self-denial. All those who have completed their fourteenth year of age are to abstain from meat on these days, and those between the ages of 18 and 60 are urged to fast.

The Church also encourages us to embrace each Friday throughout the year as a special day of penance and prayer, as well as a day to accompany others, through charitable works of mercy. These practices of self-denial and charity help us to grow in holiness, especially as we follow Christ's example of self-sacrificial love, which we commemorate most powerfully in His Passion and death on the Cross.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo has urged all the faithful to embrace these Lenten disciplines not as a burden or imposition, but as joyful opportunities to grow closer to the Lord and to one another, as we share in the love and mercy of God.

The faithful are also encouraged to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout this Lenten season, receiving additional graces to prepare us for the Easter season.