



# DIocese OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

## OFFICE OF THE VICAR GENERAL/MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

February 2023

Dear Friends in the Lord,

The season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023 and ends just prior to the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 9, 2023, when the Paschal Triduum begins. Lent is the principal penitential season in the Church year. All the Christian faithful are urged to develop and maintain a voluntary program of self-denial (in addition to the Lenten regulations which follow), serious prayer and the performing of deeds of charity and mercy, including the giving of alms.

St. Patrick's Day, March 17, this year falls on a Friday during Lent. Adhering to the obligation of abstaining from meat on this day as on the other Fridays of Lent is a commendable way to honor the heroic virtue and sacrifice of St. Patrick's life as a disciple of Our Lord. For a just cause in individual cases, a pastor can grant a dispensation from the obligation of observing a day of penance or can grant a commutation of the obligation into other pious good works (per canon 1245 of the Code of Canon Law). The faithful who are desirous of such a dispensation or commutation of the obligation to abstain from meat on Friday, March 17, should speak with their pastor.

**LENTEN REGULATIONS** – Please share with your parishioners the following Lenten regulations:

1. **ABSTINENCE** – Everyone 14 years of age and over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.
2. **FAST** – Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 is required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

**On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is permitted. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength may be taken according to each person's needs, but together these two should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids (including milk and fruit juices) are allowed.**

3. **To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is seriously sinful.**

May this holy season be a time of spiritual renewal for each of us!

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Reverend Monsignor David J. Hoefler  
Vicar General