

Catholic

UPDATE

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Your Daily Lenten Journey With Fulton Sheen

ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

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The word *Lent*, from the Middle English word *lenten*, means “springtime.” The Lenten season lasts forty days because Jesus went into the desert for forty days of fasting, meditation, and reflection before beginning his ministry.

The Congregation for Divine Worship describes Lent as a time of preparation for Easter. “It is a time to hear the Word of God, to convert, to prepare for and remember Baptism, to be reconciled with God and one’s neighbor, and of more frequent recourse to the ‘arms of Christian penance’: prayer, fasting and good works.”

The quotations collected in this article are from the writings of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. They invite us to enter the season as an active participant.

DAY 1: INVITE GOD IN

There isn’t a single soul at which God hasn’t knocked thousands of times. As the sun is always illuminating, so God is always acting on the soul. The first impetus always comes from him. He seeks us before we dream of seeking him; he knocks before we invite him in; he loves us before we respond.

Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.

—Revelation 3:20

DAY 2: GIVE GOD YOUR HEART

God will love you, of course, even though you do not love him, but remember if you give only half your heart, he can make you only fifty percent happy. Only you have the freedom to give your heart away. To whom do you give yours?

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

—Psalm 86:11

DAY 3: PERFECT TRUST

In the order of divinity, nothing is accidental; there is never a collision of blind forces hurting us at random. Instead, there meets a divine will and a human will that has a perfect trust in ultimate good, although it may not understand how until eternity.

Every human being is, in point of fact, like a baby in the arms of his or her loving mother, who sometimes administers medicine.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

—Romans 8:28

DAY 4: PURIFY YOUR HEART

Prayer opens possibilities. Houseplants cannot live without water; the flowers will not blossom without drink. Windows will only let in light if we clean them. Our hearts will let God in if we purify them. Blessings come to those who put themselves in an environment of love.

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

—James 4:8

DAY 5: SHINE YOUR LIGHT

Away with mediocrity! Lift up your hearts! The world is looking for light. Will you hide yours under bushels? The earth is looking for savor; will you let the salt lose its savor?

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.

—Matthew 5:15