

Spirituality Commission — *** A Journey Through Winter and Lent, in the New Year ***

Winter, Lent, and a new year form a tapestry of renewal and transformation. Each season offers distinct yet complementary opportunities for spiritual growth. By embracing the quiet reflection of winter, the purposeful sacrifice of Lent, and the hopeful beginnings of the new year, we can emerge with a renewed spirit, ready to face the world with faith, courage, and love with these great suggestions.

Winter, with its stark beauty and stillness, invites us to slow down and reflect. The barren landscapes remind us of the cycles of life, death, and rebirth inherent in our faith. This contemplative season provides us with the perfect backdrop to increase our spirituality.

Tips for Winter:

- ❖ If you enjoy quiet reading in your favorite spot, explore a fantastic Catholic list of “7 Must Reads This Winter.” [Click here.](#)
- ❖ Take time to decompress and reflect on your spiritual journey. Consider a mini retreat for winter that you can do by yourself or in a group. [Click here.](#)
- ❖ The Catholic Mom, a blogger, offers wonderful ideas in her article, “A Catholic Approach to Easing the Winter Blues.” [Click here.](#)



New year is a season of hope, transformation, with a sense of hope and the promise of new beginnings. This is a time to set intentions and goals for personal and spiritual growth. The new year can be a time to renew commitments to faith, family, and community.

New Year and Renewal:

- ❖ The U.S. Catholic has a great article and helpful hints, “New year, new you: Spiritual resolutions to stretch your soul in ten minutes a day.” [Click here.](#)
- ❖ The National Catholic Register offers “A Catholic Guide to New Year’s Resolutions: 5 Doable Ideas.” [Click here.](#)
- ❖ Here’s refreshing twist and great article, “New Year, New Strength: Embracing Mary as Your Spiritual Guide.” [Click here.](#)



Lent is a season of sacrifice and renewal. Following closely on the heels of winter, Lent is a sacred time of penance, reflection, and fasting. It is a season to prepare for the resurrection of Christ on Easter, reminding us of the hope and renewal that follows sacrifice. For Catholic women, Lent offers a profound opportunity to deepen our faith and recommit to living a life that reflects Christ's teachings.

Lenten Practices:

- ❖ Make time to prepare yourself for Lent with a 45-minute mini retreat you can do by yourself or in a group. [Click here.](#)
- ❖ The USCCB has a plethora of resources that answer the question, “What is Lent” and guides you further. [Click here.](#)
- ❖ Why do we resist doing hard things? Why does Lent challenge us so much? Fr. Columba unpacks the power of sacrifice, discipline and trust in God. This is an excellent 5-minute YouTube video, and he has a lovely Irish voice. [Click here.](#)

*** Prayer for Winter and Lent in the New Year ***

Loving Lord, as the world around us is wrapped in the stillness of winter, we come before you with hearts full of gratitude and hope. The chill of the season reminds us of the dormant beauty that lies beneath the surface, waiting for the warmth of spring to bloom anew. In this time, we seek your guidance and strength as we embark on our journey through this new year and navigate both the challenges and joys that lie ahead.

We ask for your blessings upon us. May we find strength in our struggles and courage in our challenges. Let us be resilient, like the hardy evergreens that withstand the harshness of winter, standing tall and steadfast. Grant us the wisdom to know that, just as winter will give way to spring, our trials will transform into triumphs through Your divine grace.

During the sacred season of Lent, inspire us to pause and reflect on our lives, nurturing our spirits and souls. Encourage us to seek renewal, both in our faith and daily lives. May we find peace in moments of quiet reflection and joy in acts of kindness and compassion. Help us to grow in understanding and love, sowing seeds of positivity and hope in the hearts of those around us.

May we find a sense of community and belonging, where we can share our stories, uplift one another, and support each other's dreams. Remind us that we are never alone, and that Your love and the love of those around us form a tapestry of care and support, woven tightly to hold us through the storms of life.

We give thanks for the countless blessings bestowed upon us and carry hope into this new year. May we embrace the promise of new beginnings, filled with opportunities for growth, learning, and love. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen.