

## Three Pillars of Lent

### Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving

Almsgiving is the surely the most neglected, and yet, in the only place where the Bible brings all three together. Prayer and fasting are good, but better than either is almsgiving accompanied by righteousness ...

It is better to pray sincerely and to please God by helping the poor than to be rich and dishonest. It is better to give to the poor than to store up gold. Such generosity will save you from death and will wash away all your sins. Those who give to the poor will live full lives, but those who live a life of sin and wickedness are their own worst enemies. (Tobit 12:8-9)

Why is almsgiving better than prayer and fasting? Because it is prayer, and it involves fasting. Almsgiving is a form of prayer because it is "giving to God" — and not mere philanthropy. It is a form of fasting because it demands sacrificial giving — not just giving something, but giving up something, giving till it hurts.

This year the Council of Catholic Women Lenten mission is Almsgiving. We have created a Lenten Calendar to encourage each of you to give of yourselves by donating Food. Each day set aside the item or add it to your grocery list. We will place a collection box in the church and in the rectory. Monetary donations can be made online to the Council of Catholic Women (include in notes Food Drive). All donations will be made to the Ladies of Charity to distribute to the Center of Hope.