

As we approach the joy of another Easter victory, it is necessary to first pass through the penance and prayer part of another Lent. There is no glorious sunrise on Easter morn without first passing through the darkness of Good Friday. This was true for the Master, and, as He told us, *"the servant is no better than his Master."*

Lent is a preparation for Easter, just as Advent is a preparation for Christmas. It is a time when we should redouble our efforts to *"fight the good fight and run the race to the finish line."* As Scripture tells us, *"A three-ply cord is hard to break."* This cord in the spiritual life is prayer, fasting, and good works. Each one strengthens the other, making that cord that binds us to God all the stronger.

Have a real plan to maximize the potential of this Lent. Perhaps you can attend Mass daily, or 3 times each week of Lent. Make a good Confession at least once during Lent, if not monthly or even weekly. Pray the Rosary daily. Eat less and more simply if you can. Even something like sacrificing desserts for Lent can be a fine penance. Remember St. Therese's *"Little Way,"* doing *"little things with great love."* Please do something for the poor. There are actually thousands of normal people who are suffering the terrible anxiety of seeing their children hungry. Do something to feed the hungry, house the homeless, visit the sick or the elderly. They are the least of Jesus' brethren and as you care for them, you care for Him.

Remember that you cannot float through the spiritual life or life in general. It takes work to succeed. Work at your spiritual life. One of the greatest benefits of doing this is that you will find peace and joy almost immediately. All of your problems won't go away, but you will be given strength to handle them. That three-ply cord of prayer, fasting, and good works will bind you closer and more strongly to God who loves you.

Most of all: We win with God! Lent and Good Friday always lead to Easter Sunday.