



February 13, 2013  
Ash Wednesday

Dear Friends in Christ,

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a time of authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord as we are called to rediscover the gift of faith so that at Easter we can sincerely affirm our baptismal promises to reject sin and to profess our faith in God and in the Church.

Faith is an intimate, personal aspect of our lives and each of us can be at a different place in our faith journey. Lent offers us the opportunity to reflect on that journey and on our relationship with God.

This process of reflection is also called our Lenten observance. An important step in examining our relationship with God is turning away from sin, which can damage our relationship not only with the Lord, but also with each other and with ourselves. Other elements of a good Lenten observance are: forgiveness of those who have harmed or offended us; sincere efforts to pray better and more often; a resolve to deny ourselves, to forego wants and to manifest our need for God and His mercy; and a commitment to serve those in need, including some form of hands-on charity.

One way we overcome sin and its after-effects is through the sacrament of Reconciliation (also called penance or confession). This Lent in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, priests will hear confessions each Wednesday evening, February 20-March 20, from 7-8:30 p.m. in all our Catholic churches as part of an initiative called "*The Light is on for You.*" A helpful guide for how to make a good confession can be found online at [www.lightisonforyou.org](http://www.lightisonforyou.org) and will be available in churches throughout the Archdiocese. Additionally, the rules for fasting and abstinence can be found on the [Archdiocesan website](#).

I would be remiss in not acknowledging the recent news of our Holy Father's resignation from the papacy. His Holiness is a profound and loving teacher of the faith, a courageous defender of human rights and dignity, and a man of prayer, humility, and wisdom. Please join me in praying for the faithful of our Archdiocese, all women and men of good will, and for Pope Benedict as he concludes his long and loving service to the Church.

Finally, as we prepare to observe the death of Jesus and celebrate His resurrection, may this Lenten season draw us closer to Him and to His Church. May God continue to bless you and keep you always in His love.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend William E. Lori  
Archbishop of Baltimore



Archbishop William E. Lori receives the [Pallium](#) from Pope Benedict XVI, June 29, 2012