



**God, while remaining sovereign over all things, all souls, and all societies, created man in his image and likeness, and called him to exercise mastery over the created world and over his daily domain. To carry this out, a man must first of all put in the work necessary to gain mastery over *himself*.**

**Reconquista** (*a reconquering of oneself*) is a crusade for self-mastery and strength of character. Reconquista is a Lenten program used in various forms by some SSPX chapels. There are three pillars for this program. They are not ends in themselves. Rather, they are *means to an end*: tools to enable the participants to achieve the freedom of the sons of God, with His grace, so as to freely serve God.

### **1. Prayer:**

- Daily Rosary.
- Daily spiritual reading and mental prayer (15 min total), tenaciously adhered to.
- Daily examination of conscience: This will be done not so much as a mere reckoning of sins, but as an exercise in compunction, self-knowledge, and renewal of fervor. It will consist firstly of a thankfulness for the good deeds done that day, and then a sorrow for the faults committed.
- Regular confession, weekly or at least every two weeks.
- Growth in knowledge of the Faith through study.

**Daily spiritual reading** used in conjunction with meditation is: Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*.

Write up a daily reading schedule (total number of pages in the book divided by 40) and be faithful to it. In the pocket version of the Confraternity of the Precious Blood (highly recommended version and widely available,

masterfully illustrated), the reading schedule works out to ten pages per day. This is a good amount of material to use as fuel for mental prayer. **Mental prayer** is explained further ahead.

**Growth in knowledge of the Faith through study.** Create a Lenten reading plan and read some each day. Choose a book or two selected from the topics of Catholic teaching (catechism, exposition of the Faith), devotional and spiritual life, the sacred liturgy, and Tradition (the history and principles of our movement and our founder, Archbishop Lefebvre). Choose from the church bookstore or from reputable traditional publishers, especially Angelus Press ([angeluspress.org](http://angeluspress.org)), or republished classics printed before 1962, the onset of the Council and the modern crisis. Polemics and controversies are not conducive to the quiet and steady growth of the spiritual life in its intellectual dimension, especially during Lent. A suggested reading list will be posted.

## **2. Asceticism** - Rigorous exercise, self-denial, and detachment from things of the world

- Observe the traditional rules of fasting and abstinence during weekdays and Saturdays of Lent.
- Take short, cold (or tepid) showers.
- Practice regular, intense exercise, such as running or substantial manual labor.
- Get a full night's sleep (at least eight hours is recommended).
- Firmly set the times for getting up in the morning and for lights-out in the evening.
- Abstain from alcohol.
- Abstain from desserts and sweets.
- Abstain from soda or sweet drinks (white milk, black coffee, and black tea are permissible).
- Abstain from television and movies, or limit this to less than one hour per day.
- Abstain from video games.
- Abstain from non-essential material purchases.
- Only listen to music that lifts the soul to God, and observe recollection/silence when able.
- Only use the computer for work, school, or essential tasks.
- Only use mobile devices for essential communications; cut out non-essential or frivolous use.

## **3. Fraternity – Accountability**

- If you choose to pair with an accountability partner, check in each day to support each other. This can be with a *brief* phone call or text. Make it productive and not burdensome.
- Accountability can also be fostered (whether one chooses an accountability partner or not) by using the check sheet. You will have a visible record of how you are doing with the program.

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## **TRADITIONAL LENTEN FAST**

**These are the fasting and abstinence regulations in place immediately prior to Vatican II.** They were issued by the Catholic hierarchy with prudence and discretion, and conform very closely to the longstanding customs eventually incorporated into the 1917 Code of Canon Law. It is advisable to use these regulations because: (a) you do so in union with the vast army of Traditional Catholics around the world; (b) you follow the practice of faithful Catholics and your forebears from the prior centuries; (c) these regulations are not of an unreasonable laxity as found in the modern regulations of Paul VI, which have in effect killed the spirit of penance altogether; and (d) they are not of such rigor that they would be physically and mentally exhausting in conjunction with the pace of life and its accompanying stresses as we now have it thrust upon us; the Church as a good Mother has prudently tempered the penitential practices of the early Church and the medieval period (so-called “black fasts”) with this in mind; (e) they are therefore wise and reasonable, the fruit of the Church still in her vigor.

(a) Fasting is for those aged 21-59 (but 18-59 for Ash Wednesday and Good Friday). It includes **all days of Lent apart from Sundays**. One full meal may be taken per day, plus two meatless rations which are each less than half of a normal meal. Liquids may be taken at any time, but no eating between meals. The full meal may be taken at either midday or in the evening.

(b) Abstinence from meat is for those aged 7 and up. Meat includes red meat, poultry, pork, and related soups/gravies, but not fats, seafood, eggs, and dairy.

On days of complete abstinence, no meat may be eaten (**Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and all Fridays of Lent**).

On days of partial abstinence, meat may be eaten only at the main meal. This is already included in the fasting regulations for those aged 21-59. For those aged 7-21 and 59+, observe partial abstinence on Ember Wednesday and Ember Saturday besides observing the regulations for complete abstinence as described above.

(c) If you must mitigate the fast or abstinence on some occasion for sufficient reason or out of charity, you may do so without sin, but let prudence be the rule and let a generous spirit of mortification prevail over all.

(d) Obligatory under pain of mortal sin: (a) abstinence on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and the other Fridays of Lent for those over age 14; (b) fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday for those aged 18-59. On these days the fast and abstinence cannot be mitigated unless there is a serious reason.

(e) **For those under 21:** Maintain regular nutrition for growth. Observe the regulations of abstinence as described, but also give up something for Lent that you really like, such as a type of food. Make a small sacrifice at each meal (take more of something you don't like and less of something you do like, or decide not to put salt or dressings on your food, or if you are having to eat out, order something that is not your first choice, etc.). *You may choose to fast on some or all of the days on which you are obliged to completely abstain from meat, and this would be commendable.*

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## MENTAL PRAYER

(15 minutes at least, more if desired – set a timer and then forget about the time, persevere to the end)

Preparatory Prayers: Come, Holy Ghost, convert me, enlighten me, sustain me. Most Blessed Trinity, I place myself in Thy presence in this place and I worship Thee. (In Church: Lord Jesus Christ, I adore Thee here present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.) O my God and Sovereign Lord, I beg of Thee the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be directed during this meditation solely to the praise and service of Thy Divine Majesty. Holy Mary, pray for me. Holy Guardian Angel, assist me.

Imitation of Christ: Read through the pages for the day, slowly enough to absorb deeply what you are reading. As you feel inclined to, express your response mentally to God as if speaking with a cherished friend. Make requests regarding the fruit of the subject and make resolutions regarding the same. Move on to the next points, or stay as long as desired on one point. Make a Thanksgiving to God in your own words for the grace to spend this time in His presence and to unite yourself to Him with this small meditation. If you wish, write down a notation about the key insights gained or resolutions made.

Concluding Prayers: Hail Mary. Glory Be. Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. Within Thy wounds hide me. Suffer me not to be separated from Thee. From the malicious enemy defend me. At

the hour of my death call me, and bid me to come to Thee, that with Thy saints I may praise Thee forever and ever. Amen.

### **Spirit of the Group**

In the spirit of faith, the members will be convinced of the seriousness of life, and will resist the inclination to ease and amusements. They will strive above all to live the virtue of charity, specifically in its aspects of selflessness and generosity. Therefore, they will gladly embrace the difficulties of daily life, and of the surpassingly beautiful crown of love called sacrifice. They will be distinguished by their constant joy and cheerfulness. In the realm of religion and piety, members will find in the liturgical life an inexhaustible source of formation and sanctity. As “Christs in miniature” they will do their utmost to live the prayer of Christ, especially in its greatest act, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This will inevitably lead to an intense devotion to the Blessed Sacrament resulting in an ardent Eucharistic life that imparts the secrets of love and suffering, and gives the strength to live the divine calling to sanctity of life.

### **Commitment Prayer**

My Lord and my God, in Thy Most Holy Presence and in that of Thy Mother, of all the saints of the heavenly court and in particular of my holy patron and my guardian angel,  
I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish solemnly to enlist in Thy service in Reconquista every day from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday. Wishing to remain faithful to the promises of my Baptism, I beg Thee to come to my assistance in my weakness, to ratify this consecration of my whole self, that it may be but one offering with Thy Redeeming Blood, and that it may rise up before the throne of the Divine Majesty as a symbol of allegiance and honor. In these days when the powers of hell wage war on all who bear Thy name and Thine enemies seem to triumph everywhere, deign to accept and bless my promise, so that with the help of Thy grace, I may boldly take up arms. Thus, with no fear but that of failing in my promise, with the strength of Thy blessing, let me fight Thy battles for Thy glory and the exultation of Our Holy Mother the Church, snatching my soul and those that Thou wilt confide to my care from the clutches of the prince of darkness. In this battle in which I enlist, all too conscious of how poor and helpless I am, I turn with confidence to our Sweet Mother, Queen of Armies, and I beg her to receive me in a special way as her soldier for time and for eternity.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Reconquista Checklist - Lent 2026: February 18 - April 4																								
	Feb												Mar											
Feb-Mar-Apr	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Rosary																								
Reading/med																								
Examen																								
Study																								
Fast/abst																								
Cool Shower																								
Exercise																								
Wake/sleep																								
No alcohol																								
No sweets																								
Limit buying																								
Limit screens																								
Music/Silence																								
Rate day 1-10																								
Accountability																								
Confession																								
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Mar-Apr	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
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Check off the items you did. Reading/med = reading the *Imitation*, doing mental prayer. Examen = daily examination of conscience. Wake/sleep = keeping to your established healthy times for rising and retiring. Rate the day 1-10 = give yourself a score on how you did that day, on a scale of 1 to 10. Blank = your personal items. Shaded columns = Sundays.