

# 4 Ways to Have a Grace-Filled Lent FB LIVE Event with Christina Semmens

- Welcome
- Submit questions through the chat feature
- Background about myself and my ministry

# Why this FB Live Event?

- Lent begins **NEXT** Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>
- My military training taught me that “He who is well prepared has already won half the battle.”

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.”

— Benjamin Franklin





# Lent.

a season of spiritual preparation

# So how to prepare?

The first way to prepare for a grace-filled Lent is to:

## Keep the End in Mind

“If you don't know where  
you are going, you'll  
end up someplace else.”

— Yogi Berra



# What is that End?

Our “end” is to become like Jesus.

To become holy men and women.

For each of us to become a saint.

**THAT’S OUR GOAL!**

This is the end for which we were created and is our destiny,  
but only **IF** we **SAY YES** to the challenge.

# Called to Run the Race

"Do you not know that, of those who run in a race, all of them, certainly, are runners, but only one achieves the prize?"

*Similarly, you must run, so that you may achieve. And one who competes in a contest abstains from all things. And they do this, of course, so that they may achieve a corruptible crown. But we do this, so that we may achieve what is incorruptible."*

--1 Corinthians 9:24-25

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Way to Prepare

The second way to prepare for a grace-filled Lent is to:

# Make a Plan

*“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”*  
— *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*



What is the Goal of my Plan?

To live the Gospel better each day

So I can become more like Jesus

And become the saint that God created me to be!

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Way to Prepare

The third way to prepare for a grace-filled Lent is to:

## Practice the Lenten Disciplines

# The 3 Lenten Disciplines

*Pray + Fast + Give alms*

# Prayer

- Of all the disciplines, this is **THE** most important one for you to try and grow, develop and deepen
- **COMMIT** and block out 20 minutes **EVERY** day  
You will **NOT** regret it!
- Most fruitful types of meditative prayer—**Lectio Divina** and **Rosary**
- **4 R's**—**Read, Reflect, Relate, Resolution**

# Help! How Do I Start?

- TONS of Resources out there for deepening your prayer and meditation and growing closer to Jesus during Lent
- A few that I recommend:
  - Dynamic Catholic's *Best Lent Ever*
  - Bishop Robert Barron's *Word on Fire* Daily Gospel Meditations
  - Good Catholic's *Thy Will Be Done*  
<https://www.catholiccompany.com/good-catholic/home.tr>
  - Augustine Institute-- *I Thirst* book--40 Day Journey with Mother Teresa
  - Catholic Culture.org *The Lenten Workshop*  
<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=12044>
  - Sacred Story Institute--*Forty Weeks: An Ignatian Path to Christ*
  - Fr. Francis Fernandez's Gospel Reflections--*In Conversation With God*
  - My own online courses--*First Things First* (available now); *3 Keys to Opening the Door to a Deeper Relationship With God* (starts next Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>); and *4 Hidden Gems to Help Sustain Your Faith Life All the Way to Heaven* (begins April 1<sup>st</sup>) [www.christinasemmens.com/online-courses/](http://www.christinasemmens.com/online-courses/)



## Lenten Disciplines of Fasting & Abstinence

Catholics in good health ages 18 to 59 are required to fast and to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Fasting consists of eating only one meal, with the possibility of two smaller snacks that do not add up to a single full meal.

Catholics age 14 and older are to abstain from meat on all Fridays in Lent.

# Fasting (or Sacrifice)

“The fast of Lent has no advantage to us unless it brings about our spiritual renewal. It is necessary while fasting to change our whole life and practice virtue. Turning away from all wickedness means keeping our tongue in check, restraining our anger, avoiding all gossip, lying and swearing. To abstain from these things— herein lies the true value of the fast.”

— St. John Chrysostom

Definition of Sacrifice is:

“Whatever I do not like, do not choose, and cannot change.”

# Give Alms (Almsgiving)

“The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit.”

—St. Basil the Great

“Be earnest in righteous works, by which sins may be purged. Frequently apply yourself to almsgiving, by which souls are freed from death.”

—St. Cyprian

“It’s not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.”

--St Mother Teresa of Calcutta

# Why Almsgiving?

“Almsgiving is good and salutary *when to it is united the amendment of the heart* from pride, malice, envy, slothfulness, indolence, gluttony, fornication, falsehood, deceitfulness, and other sins. *But if the man is not careful to amend his heart, trusting only to his alms, then he will obtain but little benefit from them,* for he builds with one hand and destroys with the other.”

—St. John of Kronstadt

This is why we pray and fast *along* with almsgiving.

# Why Practice the Lenten Disciplines?

- Practiced by the Church for *centuries*
- Help us turn away from sin and become more like Jesus

“Champions (saints) do not become champions (saints) when they win the event, but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it. The victorious performance itself is merely the demonstration of their championship (saintly) character.”

— Alan Armstrong

# 4<sup>th</sup> Way to Prepare

The fourth way to prepare for a grace-filled Lent is to:

## Persevere

# Persevere

Your plan of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, or your spiritual habits, are simply the *means*. They are not your end.

When you fall (and you will), just get up, tell God you're sorry, and ask Him to help you, and TRY, TRY, TRY again.

Use the Sacraments OFTEN, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

# Persevere

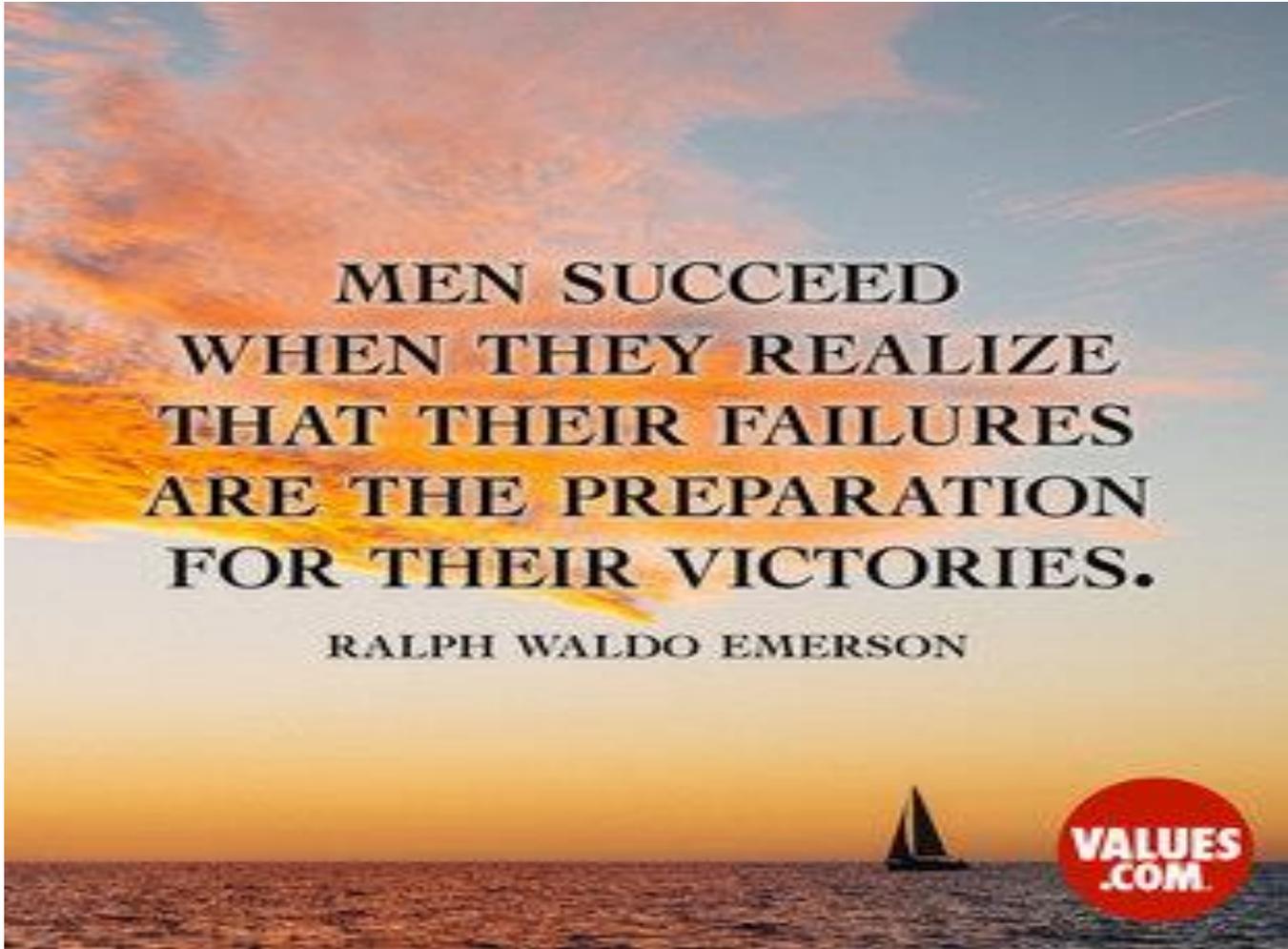
“The road to perseverance lies by doubt.”

--Francis Quarles

Discouragement, deceit and division are the tools of Satan.

Do **NOT** believe Satan when he tells you that you aren't going to be able to follow and be faithful to your Lenten plan.

Because....

A sunset over the ocean with a sailboat on the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, orange and pink clouds, transitioning to a clear blue at the top. The water is dark and calm, with a single sailboat visible on the horizon line. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

**MEN SUCCEED  
WHEN THEY REALIZE  
THAT THEIR FAILURES  
ARE THE PREPARATION  
FOR THEIR VICTORIES.**

**RALPH WALDO EMERSON**

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# Summary

The 4 Ways to prepare for a grace-filled Lent are:

Keep the End in Mind

Make a Plan

Practice the Lenten Disciplines

Persevere

*Lent* IS A TIME TO  
GROW W  
CLOSER TO JESUS

# SPECIAL THANK YOU

As a special THANK YOU for your time today and for participating in this Live Event:

I will be making all of the slides from my talk today available as a FREE PDF download

AND

Am offering you a discount for enrolling in any of my online courses. Just use Coupon Code FACEBOOK when you register

# Want to learn more?

Watch for my blog posts on the Say Yes to Holiness FB page, my Wordpress blog and on my website.

And to hear about upcoming events or be notified about upcoming online courses or my book release later this year, simply sign up for my mailing list at my website:

[www.christinasemmens.com](http://www.christinasemmens.com)

THANKS AGAIN for your time, and please know of my continued prayers that you will continue to SAY YES on your journey to holiness and have a grace-filled Lent!