



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

OFFICE OF
CATHOLIC CHARITIES &
SOCIAL CONCERNS

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Memo

To: All
From: Miriam Sammartino
Date: August 3, 2026
Subject: Care for Creation: Autumn Ember Days – September 16, 18 and 19

The title “Ember Days” is an alteration of the Latin phrase *quatuor tempora*, meaning “four seasons” – Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. Ember Days are documented as being celebrated as early as the fifth century and are among the oldest traditions of the Church’s liturgical calendar.

Ember Days are an opportunity to thank God for the gifts of nature, ask for continued blessing upon the harvest and those who produce our food. The Autumn Ember Days are observed following the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and prompt us to thank God for the gift of the harvest and

All are invited to observe the Autumn Ember Days on September 16, 18 and 19th, through:

- **Prayer:** Prayer helps us grow in our relationship with God. During Ember Days, attend mass and dedicate time for prayer and quiet reflection. Pray for Vocations and the priesthood.
- **Fasting & Abstinence:** Fasting and Abstinence can open our hearts to God’s grace. Fasting and abstinence during Ember Days helps us resist temptation to sin.
- **Contemplate Creation:** Spend time outdoors and consider our role as stewards and continue to sanctify our relationship with nature considering God’s amazing gift of creation.
- **Support local agriculture:** Visit local farms with family and friends, learn about your local agriculture and the men and women dedicated to ensuring we have food throughout the year.
- **Charitable Acts:** Donate and volunteer at your local food pantry, visit homebound neighbors and serve the most vulnerable in your community.

Please see the attached flyer for the promotion of Autumn Ember Days. For more information, please visit: <https://www.scd.org/catholic-charities-and-social-concerns/care-our-common-home>.

Respectfully,

Miriam Sammartino, Director

Autumn Ember Days

September 16, 18 and 19, 2026

Ember Days invite us to pause and focus our attention to the goodness of God's creation. They are special times for penance and intercessions.

During Ember Days, we are invited to offer prayer, fasting and almsgiving in reparation for our own sin and the sins of the world.

We thank God for the gift of creation, a bountiful harvest, and for those who labor to ensure we are nourished.

Let us turn our attention to our dependence on God, who alone fulfills our hungers and brings healing to a wounded world.



Office of Catholic Charities
& Social Concerns

Psalm 102: 2-5, 13

O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.
Hide not your face from me in the day of my distress.
Incline your ear to me; in the day when I call, answer my speedily.

For my days vanish like smoke, and my bones burn like fire.
Withered and dried up like grass is my heart; I forget to eat my bread.

But you O Lord, abide forever, and your name through all generations.

Autumn: Reparation for Sins Against the Poor

Almighty God,
to you belongs the sea, for you made it,
and the dry land shaped by your hand.
We hold the riches of the universe only in trust.

Make us honest stewards of your creation,
careful of the good earth you have given us,
compassionate and just in sharing its bounty
with the whole human family.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Observe Ember Days!

- **Pray:** Attend mass, dedicate time for quiet prayer & reflection.
- **Fast and Abstain:** Fast and abstain from meat during Ember Days to open our hearts to God's grace.
- **Contemplate Creation:** Spend time in nature, consider our role as stewards of God's creation.
- **Support local agriculture:** Visit local farms, learn about your local agriculture and those dedicated to ensuring we have nourishing food.
- **Charitable Acts:** Donate and volunteer at your local food pantry, visit homebound neighbors, and serve the most vulnerable in your community.