



Title: Lent

Scripture

Matthew 5:38-48

"You cannot be a slave of two masters; you will hate one and love the other; you will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

"This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? Look at the birds: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds? Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it?

"And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? What little faith you have!

"So do not start worrying: 'Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?' (These are the things the pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things. So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings.



Prayer for Ash Wednesday:

God Our Father, your love for us has no limits. Your love for us supports us at all times and in all places. Today, on Ash Wednesday, we begin the Holy season of Lent. Today we receive ashes traced on our forehead in the shape of a cross. Let this remind us that life has no meaning without our dedication to loving you and serving one another. Help us to over-come selfishness and grow in generosity. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Lord, Amen

Pray for:

- a meaningful Lent for each of us.
- persecuted Christians across the world unable to observe Lent.
- those who rely on the help and support of Nugent Care.
- those who are out of work.
- the success of our Good Shepherd Challenge.

Focus on
one each
day

Prayers

Prayer to St Julie Billiart

Saint Julie, through your great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you were miraculously cured and favoured by many graces.

By your powerful intercession, obtain for us above all, a great trust in God in all the difficulties of life, the strength to accomplish in all things the adorable will of God, and the special grace we now ardently ask of you.

Reflect: Lent begins on Wednesday so this is a really special week for us as Christians. On Tuesday many of us will eat pancakes to mark the very old tradition of Shrove Tuesday, the final day before Lent begins. Lent is a time of abstinence (giving things up) so Shrove Tuesday is the last chance to indulge ourselves, and to use up the foods that traditionally weren't eaten in Lent - fat, butter and eggs (all the ingredients of pancakes!). The name Shrove comes from the old word "shrive" which means to confess. On Shrove Tuesday in the Middle Ages, people would confess their sins in order to begin Lent in the right relationship with God.

On Ash Wednesday we will all have an opportunity to receive Ashes to mark the start of the Lenten period. The ashes are placed on the forehead in the form of a cross, a reminder that Lent allows us to make that journey to the cross with Christ.

- Why do people 'abstain' during Lent?
- How could Lent make a difference to you?

Prayer in action this week:

- Get involved in our Cafod challenge to show you care.
- Say sorry to someone you have hurt or upset.
- Make a commitment to DO something for Lent.
- Spend time in silence.

What is Lent? A quick reminder:

It is the 40 day period before Easter which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at Sun-down on Holy Thursday (which this year is 2nd April). We don't count Sunday's when we count the 40 days because Sundays commemorate the Resurrection and so we see them as days of celebration.

Lent is a time for soul-searching and repentance, a season for reflection and taking stock, it's a time of Preparation.

The 40 days of Lent are a time when Christians imitate the time Jesus took himself into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. For centuries, Christians have observed the season of Lent by fasting from food and Making other sacrifices. Many people these days also make a commitment to DO something MORE during Lent - to go out of their way to do an extra act which in some way will bring them closer to God.

How can you go that extra mile this Lent?

Make your bed each day? Be involved in the Cafod fast? Help with younger siblings regularly?

Go back to Mass? Do something kind every day?

What behaviour or attitude do you need to give up this Lent?

Gossiping? Being unkind? Rudeness? Selfishness? Laziness?

Bullying via social networking sites? Being wasteful? Lying? Smoking? Drinking?

Father, thank you for this time of Lent - a time to think about our lives and make changes.

Lent is a time to 'spring - clean' our lives and clear out the rubbish:

the bad behaviour and habits we have turned to.

May we use this time well to make ourselves more worthy of the name 'Christian'.

We ask this in your name and for your sake, **Amen.**

Father, during this season of Lent, help us to see, in our ordinary difficulties and duties, in the trials and temptations of every day, the best opportunity of making up for past wrongs.

We ask this in Jesus' name, **Amen**

Father, through our observance of Lent, help us to understand the meaning of your Son's death and resurrection, and teach us to reflect it in our lives. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Loving God, you give us the gift of Lent that we might recall how deep your love is for us.

During Lent, help us to let go of habits and behaviours that are self-destructive.

Strengthen our understanding of one another and our compassion for those who suffer rejection and cruelty. Help us to reach out in kindness to those who are unhappy. **Amen**

Jesus, our Good Shepherd,
walk with us through this season of Lent.

As we make our journey with you to the cross,
remind us to think of others;

Inspire us to be generous
Encourage us to be truthful;
and strengthen us on our journey.

Amen

Lord, as we begin Lent and our Cafod Challenge: help us to be creative in imagination, help our spirits to be generous and help our community join together in the spirit of love so that we can make a difference to the lives of our brothers and sisters both near and far.

We ask this in your name, **Amen**

