

Lent & Triduum



Disciples through Prayer

**Diocese of Prince Albert
Liturgy Office**



Lent

The whole church goes on retreat for six weeks about a month and a half after the Christmas season. This annual spiritual renewal prepares for the celebration of Christianity's most fundamental belief: Jesus was raised from the dead and is Christ, the Lord. Lent, therefore, has no meaning in itself. It prepares for Easter and new life. This has given rise to a great variety of religious traditions from the earliest centuries of Christianity. Three themes hold the six weeks together: (1) the mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection, (2) the implications of this mystery for those preparing for baptism, and (3) a spiritual renewal of faith and conversion on the part of those already baptized.

Lent is closely associated with the transition from winter to spring. The word "lent," for example, comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for springtime, *lencten*. It describes the gradual *lengthening* of daylight after the winter solstice.

Taken from: Catholic Customs and Traditions: a popular guide
(by Greg Dues)

"The days of Lent are often compared to a journey. That means that at the end of Lent we expect to find ourselves somewhere different than where we started. That's why the stories of the journey of father Abraham and mother Sarah and other scriptures about journeys are an important part of Lent. On the final Sunday of Lent we will come to our destination. We will enter Jerusalem, the holy city."

*taken from 'Companion to the Calendar'
by Mary Ellen Hynes

More about Lent

The book 'Blessing and Prayers through the Year' talks about Lent like this: "Lent is not an unhappy time, but it is a serious time. It is an opportunity to think about how much the Gospel means to us and how well we are living up to God's law of love. We watch and pray with Christ. We choose actions that help us become more prayerful, help us live more simply, and teach us to share what we have with those who are in need. That is the purpose of Lenten sacrifices... Lent is a time to turn back to those we have hurt or offended, and to apologize, ask pardon, and restore peace between us. We turn our thoughts inward and try to recognize the ways we have refused to obey God's laws or failed to live up to God's call to lead a holy life."

Things to help us go through Lent

Ash Wednesday: Ash Wednesday officially begins Lent and the Easter cycle on any date from February 4 to March 10, depending on the date of Easter. Ashes from burned palms saved from the previous year are placed on the forehead of parishioners.

Fasting and Abstinence: Fasting and abstinence are often linked together but are two different disciplines. Fasting has to do with the quantity of food eaten on particular days (little or none). Abstinence refers to the kind of food denied oneself, for example, meat... Another motive has always been part of Lenten fasting and abstinence: almsgiving, giving to the needy from what is saved through the discipline of fasting and abstinence, or from one's surplus.

Stations of the Cross: Traditionally, Lenten devotions in parish churches have drawn attention to the suffering and death of Jesus.

*taken from 'Catholic Customs & Traditions' by Greg Dues

Making a Prayer Center at Home!

- A table or shelf can be covered with a purple cloth, the traditional colour for Lent.
- A cross made of twigs, or a crucifix on the table.
- A bowl of ashes reminds us of Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent.
- An empty, dry bowl might remind us that we are waiting for the water of Baptism at Easter.
- A bowl planted with flower bulbs or seeds, or a vase of bare branches can remind us that Lent is a time of growth and preparation for the flowering of Easter joy.
- A container for alms that you collect and for our promises to do good might also be placed in the prayer center.

As a family, decide which of these items you would like to use. These items could be switched during the different weeks of Lent. Decide together if there is something else you would like as a family to add to the prayer center.

Saint Joseph (March 19)

In Canada, we especially celebrate St. Joseph Day as he is the Principal Patron of Canada, as well as the Patron of the Universal Church.

If you are able to make it to Mass that day you will hear this prayer at the beginning of Mass:

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that by Saint Joseph's intercession
your Church may constantly watch over
the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation,
whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Annunciation of the Lord (March 25)

A prayer that could be said especially on this date would be the Angelus:

Leader: The angel spoke God's message to Mary,
All: **and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.**
Hail Mary...

Leader: "I am the lowly servant of the Lord:
All: **let it be done to me according to your word."**
Hail Mary...

Leader: And the Word became flesh
All: **and lived among us.**
Hail Mary...

Leader: Pray for us, holy Mother of God:
All: **That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Leader: Let us pray.
Lord, fill our hearts with your grace:
Once, through the message of an angel
You revealed to us the incarnation of your Son;
Now, through his suffering and death
Lead us to the glory of his resurrection.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**

(This version is found in the book 'Blessings and Prayers through the Year' A Resource for Parish, School and Home.)



More Specials Days during Lent

Some dates and events were already mentioned, but check out each of these special dates and feasts and see how you can celebrate them!

- Ash Wednesday



- First Sunday of Lent /
Diocesan Rite of Election

Mar 19 – (Solemnity) Saint Joseph,
Husband of the Blessed
Virgin Mary

Mar 25 – (Solemnity) The
Annunciation of the Lord

- **Diocesan Chrism Mass**
(Prince Albert)

- Palm Sunday of the
Passion of the Lord
World Day of Youth...

April 17 – St. Kateri Tekakwitha

- Triduum / Holy Thursday
- Triduum / Good Friday
- Triduum / Holy Saturday,
Easter Vigil

- (Solemnity) The
Resurrection of the Lord /
Easter Sunday

Holy Week & The Three Days

Holy week is the heart of the church year. Official church rituals and other traditions observed during this week remember and make present the passing of Jesus from life to death to new life and all of creation along with him. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday – called Passion Sunday today – because the theme of Jesus’ suffering and death begins with the reading of the passion. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week are preparation days, both spiritually and physically, for the holy days to come later in the week.

Holy Thursday begins the Triduum, it commemorates the historical gospel events surrounding the Last Supper and the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Maundy Thursday, another popular title in English-speaking countries, comes from the solemn ritual of washing of feet in imitation of Jesus at his Last Supper. Good Friday is the anniversary of the death of Jesus on the cross just outside the walls of Jerusalem. The daytime hours of Holy Saturday, continuing the atmosphere of Good Friday, have been observed as a time of quiet and fasting from the earliest centuries. The day had no liturgy or religious traditions of its own. There was an atmosphere of anticipation for the coming of night and for the celebration of the resurrection.

****taken from ‘Catholic Customs & Traditions’ by Greg Dues**

Meal Prayer for Lent

Leader: Let us offer God Praise and thanksgiving.

+ All make the sign of the Cross

Leader: Behold! Now is the acceptable time!

All: Now is the day of salvation!

Leader: I was hungry:

All: and you gave me food.

Leader: I was thirsty:

All: and you gave me drink.

Leader: I was a stranger:

All: and you welcomed me.

Leader: I was naked:

All: and you clothed me.

Leader: I was ill:

All: and you cared for me.

Leader: I was in jail:

All: and you visited me.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, be with those who are in need. Bless us, and bless the food we eat today. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

+ All make the sign of the cross

(This is a great opportunity to take turns being the leader of the prayer before each of the meals that your family shares together!)

