



LENT

## What is Lent?

Lent is an important season in the Church's Year.

Every year in Lent we prepare ourselves for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, on Easter Sunday.

## When is Lent?

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday before the Mass of the Lord's Supper. It is forty days long as Sundays are not counted part of Lent. This is because we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus every Sunday.

## Origin of the word Lent

Lent is a word that has been around for a long time.

It came to us from the Anglo-Saxons as they really looked forward to spring after their long winters.

Our word Lent comes from their word "lengthen" because that is when the days started lengthening and getting warmer.

# Why does Lent last for forty days?

Jesus spent 40 days in the desert preparing for his ministry.

We spend 40 days preparing for Easter to remind us of the days Jesus spent being tempted in the desert.



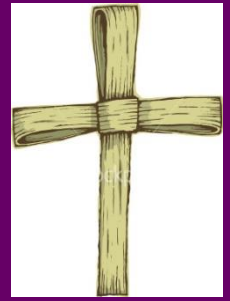
# Shrove Tuesday



On Shrove Tuesday it was customary for people to eat pancakes or other foods made with butter, eggs, and fat that would be given up during the Lenten season. This dates back to the 16th century. The word 'shrove' is a form of the English word 'shrive', which means to receive absolution for one's sins by Christians repenting of their sins and fulfilling a penance in preparation to start the season of Lent.



# Ash Wednesday



The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday.

During Mass on that day the priest will put some ash made from last year's Palm Crosses on each person's forehead as a sign of our faith; that people are willing to become closer to Jesus during Lent.

The priest will say,

'Repent and believe in the Gospel.'

The ash is a sign of God's love for everyone and reminds us all that one day we will be with him forever in heaven.



# LENT

A time of prayer  
fasting and  
almsgiving

# Prayer

Pope Francis said that 'Lent is a privileged time for prayer'.

Prayer offers us all a very special opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and to deepen our commitment to a way of life, rooted in our baptism. In our busy world, prayer provides us with an opportunity to experience sorrow for what we've done and failed to do, and to be generous to those in need.

## Fasting

The Lenten Fast prescribed by Church law is on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. It applies to Catholics 18 to 59 years old, who are in good health. On Fast days there is only one full meal; and two smaller meals. Eating between meals is not permitted. On these two days, and on all Fridays during Lent, Catholics who are 14 and older also must abstain from eating meat. This is a good way to help us remember the sufferings of Jesus

# Almsgiving

Almsgiving is one of the traditional practices during Lent. Jesus presented almsgiving as a necessary part of Christian life: "when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Mt 6:2-3). He does not say IF you give alms, but WHEN. Like fasting and prayer, almsgiving is non-negotiable.

# The Gloria

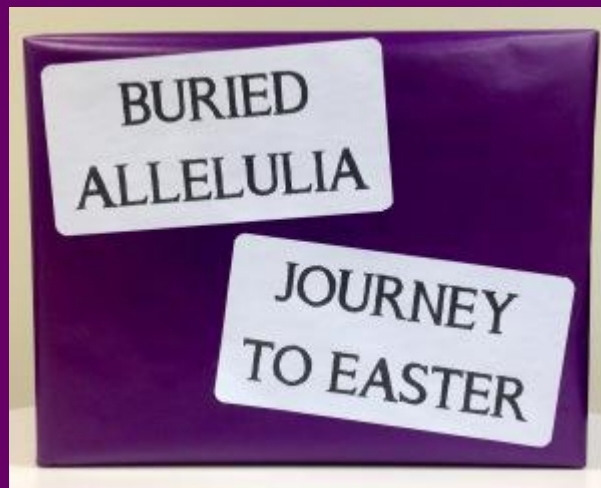
During Lent we do not sing the Gloria. The Gloria is a hymn that celebrates the coming of the Lord using words from the angels at Christ's birth. The Church during Lent returns in spirit to a time when the people of God were in exile, waiting for the Messiah to come and save them.



Gloria!

# The Alleluia

There is a popular custom of burying the Alleluia before Lent begins because we do not speak or sing the word 'Alleluia.' The Church reflects on the 40 years the Israelites spent in the desert; where the faithful said, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" (Psalm 137:4) The word "Alleluia" means "praise the Lord" and is thus omitted during Lent because it is considered an Easter word and that by not using it for 40 days, perhaps we will come to appreciate more just how joyful this acclamation is.



## The significance of the colour Purple in Lent.

Purple is the colour of penance, preparation and sacrifice. It symbolizes both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as the suffering of humanity and the world under sin. But since purple is also the colour of royalty, it reminds us of Jesus' resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated on Easter Sunday. The priest will wear a purple vestment when he celebrates Mass and purple is the colour of the cloth on our prayer focus..



# Walk with Me Prayer

God our loving Father,  
we come to you today.

Be with us, hear us, guide us  
in all we do and say.

You give us times and seasons,  
your spirit makes us grow,  
in times of joy and sadness,  
we see your blessings flow.

I place my life before you  
in all my work and play.

I'll try to walk with Jesus,  
and in his friendship stay. Amen.

