

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

JESUS IN THE DESERT

In this week's lesson, we find Jesus going into the desert alone to pray before beginning His public ministry. Jesus spent forty days and nights alone with God the Father to prepare to teach God's people and save them from sin. Like Jesus, we prepare for Easter by spending the season of Lent praying (which is also forty days), serving others, and offering small sacrifices to God in thanksgiving for Jesus. We begin our Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday and end with the Easter Triduum. Lent is an opportunity for us to grow closer to Jesus and become more like Him.

PRIMARY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is the season where we prepare for Easter.

Scripture Resources: [Job 42:6](#); [Mark 1:12-15](#); [Matthew 4:1-11](#)

Catechism Resources: [CCC 538-540](#)

Like Jesus, we spend extra time in prayer and fasting during Lent.

Scripture Resources: [Matthew 6:1-4, 16-18](#); [Acts 13:2-3](#)

Catechism Resources: [CCC 1438](#)

We have other special practices during Lent such as abstaining from meat on Fridays, participating in almsgiving, and choosing something to give up.

Scripture Resources: [Matthew 6:5-15](#); [Joel 2:12-27](#)

Catechism Resources: [CCC 2443-2446](#)

**PONDER: EXPLORE KEY THEMES FOR THE WEEK**

Look for opportunities throughout the week to ponder with and communicate these truths to your child(ren). Use the questions below each objective to explore the topic throughout the week. Remember that our faith is a mystery and you don't always need all the answers. Refer to the Parent Guide for more recommendations on pondering with your child(ren).

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:***Learning Objectives*****01 Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is the season where we prepare for Easter.**

Lent is a time of 40 days when we prepare ourselves to celebrate Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday. To begin the season of Lent, we receive ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent.

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

- Have you ever needed to spend time preparing for something? How did you get ready?
- How can we get ready for Lent?
- Do you know what ashes are? Have you ever worn them? Why do we wear ashes?

02 Like Jesus, we spend extra time in prayer and fasting during Lent.

Jesus showed His love for God the Father by spending time with Him – this is called “prayer.” Fasting means that we give up a meal, treat, or even time spent playing with a favorite toy or video game. These are small sacrifices given to God and examples of what we “give up” for Lent.

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

- What is something that you would like to give up for Lent as a special “fast” you offer to God to thank Him for all He has done for you?
- How can you spend special time with Jesus during Lent?
- What are some of your favorite ways to pray and show God that you love Him?

03 We have other special practices during Lent such as abstaining from meat on Fridays, participating in almsgiving, and choosing something to give up.

During Lent, we try to grow closer to Jesus by living the way He did. Almsgiving is when we give something good to someone who is in need of it. Abstaining means to refuse to do something. So, Lent is a time that we give good things to people in need and refuse to do other things, like saying bad words or being mean to a sibling. We practice almsgiving and abstaining to try to be more like Jesus.

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

- What are some small ways during Lent that you could show your love to others in need?
- Is there anything that you can abstain from during Lent? What?
- Why do you think almsgiving, spending time praying, and fasting/abstaining are good for us and our souls?

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Learning Objectives

01 Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is the season where we prepare for Easter.

During Lent, we commemorate the forty days of Jesus' fasting and prayer. On Ash Wednesday, we receive ashes on our forehead as a sign of sorrow for our sins. When we receive the ashes, the priest makes the sign of the cross on our foreheads and says, "Turn away from sin and believe in the gospel." ([Mark 1:15](#))

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

- What are ashes made from? (From the palms of last year's Palm Sunday)
- Why do you think Catholics wear ashes on Ash Wednesday and not something like dirt or paint instead? ([Job 42:6](#))
- How do ashes help us prepare for Easter?

02 Like Jesus, we spend extra time in prayer and fasting during Lent.

Offering daily prayers and going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (or Confession) prepares our hearts to become more like Jesus' heart. In the same way, when we fast from something that we enjoy (candy, sweets, video games, screen time) as a sacrifice to Jesus. We show Him we love and want to be like Him. During Lent, we fast in order to purify ourselves and grow in both virtue and holiness.

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

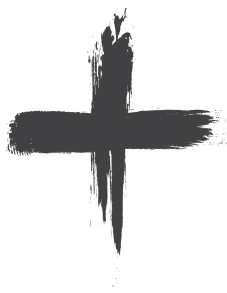
- How can you find special time during the day to spend a few minutes in prayer with Jesus?
- What will you fast from this Lent?
- How can your fast help you grow in virtue?

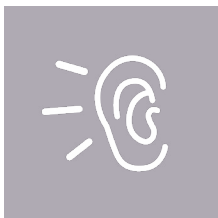
03 We have other special practices during Lent such as abstaining from meat on Fridays, participating in almsgiving, and choosing something to give up.

Jesus teaches us that taking care of the poor is our Christian duty. The Church asks us to pay particular attention to the poor and suffering during Lent. The Church also asks us to abstain from meat on Fridays and offer a Lenten sacrifice, or giving something up, for the Lord. These are some of the ways that we show our our repentance for our sins.

To help your child ponder this idea, ask:

- Can you think of ways to honor the Lord during Lent? Describe a few ways that you can do this.
- How does giving something up, or denying yourself of something (a favorite food/ activity) during Lent help you to become more like Jesus?
- Why do you think we abstain from meat on Friday? (Hint: think of what happened on Good Friday.)



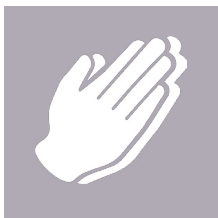


LISTEN: FAMILY LECTIO DIVINA

Choose one or more of the passages listed below for this week's family Lectio Divina time. Ask what your child's favorite part is or what stood out to them. Ask what God may be trying to show your child through the chosen scripture. Please refer to the Parent Guide for further recommendations on doing Lectio Divina with children.

[Mark 1:12-15](#) - Jesus in the desert

[Genesis 9:8-15](#) - God's covenant with us

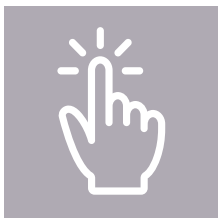


PRAY: SPECIAL PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

FOR THE FAMILY: Pray the **Prayer of St. Francis** before the Crucifix.

*All highest and glorious God;
Cast your light into the darkness of my heart.
Give me right faith, firm hope, perfect charity and profound humility;
With wisdom and perception,
Oh Lord, so that I may do what is truly your holy will.
Amen.*

Then, have each person choose a virtue from the list in the Prayer Guide to work on during Lent. Ask God to help you grow in this virtue. (See page 19 of the Prayer Guide.)



ACT: CONCRETE WAYS TO LIVE OUT THIS WEEK'S THEME

FOR THE FAMILY: Consider a few ways to draw your family closer to the Lord during the Lenten season. Together as a family, **VISIT** the Blessed Sacrament regularly during Lent. Encourage each member of the family to say "thank you" to Jesus as you kneel in prayer together.

ATTEND the Sacrament of Reconciliation together as a family during Lent.

PREPARE a special meal for someone who is sick, alone, or suffering in some way. Make the meal together as a family, having each child help with setting out the ingredients, mixing, stirring and preparing the food. Deliver the meal as a family to someone you think could use God's love right now.