

Lent



Lent

Purpose

To learn about the Christian Season of Lent and the events leading up to Easter.

Entrance of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow introducing the theme of 'Lent' for the pupils to enter assembly to (10 minutes).

Introduction.

The Christian season of Lent is the time when we prepare for Easter. It is an opportunity for us all to look into our hearts and think about what our faith means to us. The word 'Lent' means springtime and comes from the Anglo-Saxon word 'lencten'.

This special time gives us an opportunity to 'spring clean' our lives of the clutter and unnecessary things that get in the way of our relationship with God and with each other.

For us, Lent begins when all is darkness; the days are short and the nights are long. As Lent passes, the days grow longer and signs of spring begin to appear.

Shrove Tuesday (Also known as Pancake Tuesday and Mardi Gras)

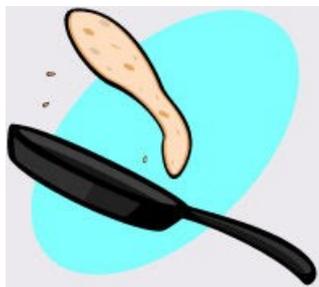
The final day before Lent begins is called Shrove or Pancake Tuesday and is a very old tradition. As Lent was a time of giving things up, Shrove Tuesday was seen as the last chance to have special treats and years ago those things included milk, butter and eggs. All the ingredients of pancakes! Mardi Gras literally means 'Fat Tuesday' meaning the last day to eat rich food. Many countries have a colourful celebration.



The name Shrove comes from the old word "shrive" which means to confess.

Many years ago, on Shrove Tuesday, people would confess their sins in order to begin Lent in the right relationship with God.

In the UK, pancake races form an important part of the Shrove Tuesday celebrations. It is an opportunity for large numbers of people, often in fancy dress, to race down streets tossing pancakes. The object of the race is to get to the finishing line first, carrying a frying pan with a cooked pancake in it and flipping the pancake as you run.



Ash Wednesday

On Ash Wednesday we can choose to receive Ashes on our foreheads, to mark the start of Lent. We are told by the priest to 'Repent, turn away from sin and believe the Good News.' The ashes are in the form of a cross, a reminder that during Lent we can make a journey with Jesus, over the next six weeks.



We can try to improve our relationship with God in lots of different ways. We can ask for forgiveness, for things we may have done wrong, or try to spend a little bit of time each day focusing our minds on Him, through prayer. We can give up something we like, to show that we are trying to be better people and try to go out of our way to do something for somebody else, instead of just thinking about ourselves.

The Temptation in the Wilderness

So why is Lent 40 days and nights long?

Lent is a time when we remember that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert, where he had to fast and put his trust in God for his safety and protection and was able to feel closer to God, as a result.

Bible Reading

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully, they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone” Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Luke Chp 4 v1-12





Trusting God is the way to a good, happy life. Jesus knew there would be better ways to show that he was God's Son than to fall for the temptations.

Jesus could have done as Satan asked but knew it was wrong to test God.

Jesus wanted people to accept him for who he was, not for the miracles he could perform. Jesus was tempted to 'show off' but did not give in. He wanted to show that real happiness comes from serving God and others, not from having status and fame.

The devil had asked Jesus to test his faith in God but he refused and stayed true to his beliefs.

So What Does Lent Ask of Us?

Prayer

Lent is about **Prayer**, choosing to talk and listen to God more during Lent. An example of this may be thanking God morning and night for the good things in your life.

Fasting

Lent is about **Fasting**, choosing to eat less food and drink. This helps you get control of your appetite and remember that half the world's population live on a lot less than you!



Charity

Finally, Lent is about **Charity**, choosing to give money or time to those in need, perhaps visiting an elderly relative or donating toys you don't play with anymore to a local charity shop.

By getting involved in any or all of these acts, we can get to feel closer to God and to others. They can make Lent far more meaningful and worthwhile.



Holy Week

Lent officially ends on Maundy Thursday, leaving three days to recall Jesus' death on Good Friday and Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday

On Palm Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, we are reminded of when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and his path was carpeted in palms by the people who worshipped him. How quickly this was to change over the next few days!

The ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from the burning of the palms, blessed in the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration.

The ashes are usually mixed with Holy Water or oil, and carry the scent of incense.

Spy Wednesday

Spy Wednesday is the name traditionally given to the Wednesday of Holy Week. This is the day Judas betrayed Jesus, telling the high priest when Jesus would be in a place where he could be arrested, in exchange for thirty pieces of silver. It's called Spy Wednesday, because Judas had 'spied' on Jesus.



Maundy Thursday

On the night before Jesus died, he shared a Passover meal. He washed his disciples' feet and told them to be servants to others. He told them to love one another. He said the bread and wine was his Body and Blood.

The word Maundy comes from the Latin 'mandatum' meaning 'commandment'. Following this meal Jesus led his remaining disciples, to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus spent time in prayer. Judas had left to inform the Jewish authorities of Jesus' whereabouts. Jesus was arrested and taken to the Caiaphas, the Jewish High Priest.

A Poem for Lent

In order to walk the path of my life,

I need to travel with Jesus

In order to go forward in my life

I need to love and forgive

And in order not to get lost

Or go the wrong way,

I need to walk in his footsteps

On the path of my life

I travel with him,

I place my trust in him,

I listen to his word,

I believe in him.

I pray to him and

Welcome him into my heart.



The Challenge of Lent

- How is Lent going to be a time of preparation for you?
- How can you give up some of your time to others this Lent?
- How will you challenge yourself this Lent?
- Is there someone you need to say sorry to?
- What difference will your Lent make to you and to others?

Let's Pray:

Dear Lord and loving God,

Be with us as we begin our journey through Lent, help us to use this time of change and renewal to become better people. Let us remember to give thanks for the love you have shown us and that we can show that love in the way we treat others. Help us not to be selfishness and grow in generosity. We ask this in your name.

Amen.

Putting it into Practice

**Show your best manners today.
Be a friend to a shy person.
Pick up litter and put it in the bin.
Follow instructions without complaining.
Hold the door open for someone.**



Exit of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow of the key issues raised in the assembly about the theme of 'Lent' for the pupils to exit assembly to (10 minutes).



Collective Worship and Putting it into Practice for the Rest of the Week

Day 2 Prayer

Dear Lord and loving God,

Today we are focussing on our conversations with you. We hope our thoughts and prayers will be heard and that you will send your love and strength to all those we pray for today. So in our prayers today we think of all those special people who love and care for us, our teachers, our parents, grandparents and others who look after us. Keep these people in your care Lord and help us to show our thanks to them for all they do for us, every day. We ask this in your name.

Amen.

Thank all the adults who help and care for you.

Think of a special way you can show someone that cares for you, how much you appreciate them.

Tell someone in your family why they are important to you.

Pray for someone you know who is ill at the moment.



Day 3 Fasting

Dear Lord and loving God,

Today we think about fasting. We ask you for the strength to go without something we like today, maybe a snack, or perhaps time spent on video games or phones. Let us use this experience to understand what it is like to go without something we enjoy and realise how lucky we are to have such things. We pray for all the children in the world who have so much less than we do, not enough food to eat, no toys to play with, no Easter eggs to look forward to. We hope that one day, there will be no more child poverty, in the world and that no child will go without anymore. We ask this in your name.

Amen

Try to do without something you enjoy today, maybe some food, or games, or watching TV and think what it would be like to not have those things, in your life.



Day 4 Charity

Dear Lord and loving God,

Today we think about what 'generosity' means. We pray that we can make a difference by giving to others. Jesus made a sacrifice for us, so it is only right that we try to follow his example and give either our time, unwanted possessions, or money to help those in need. Let remember those in need today and promise, in our own small way, to help them. We ask this in your name.



Collect together all your unwanted toys and ask those who care for you to take them to the local charity shop.

Help a little more in your house tonight.

Help a classmate who is struggling with their work.

Spend time with those who care for you and ask them how they are, to show that you care for them.

Day 5 The Challenge

Dear Lord and loving God,

You give us the gift of Lent so we can remember how deep your love is for us. During Lent, help us to let go of bad habits and behaviours. Strengthen our understanding of one another and our care for those who suffer rejection and cruelty. Help us to reach out in kindness to those who are unhappy. Help us to rise to the challenges of Lent. Make us strong enough to keep the promises we have made, to be more generous or try that little bit harder to be kind to others. We ask this in your name.

Amen

On the fifth day pupils could write down on a small piece of paper, something they would like to change about themselves during Lent. Then collect them and seal them, in a see through jar or a clear plastic wallet, which could be put on the teachers desk or pinned to a notice board, as a visible reminder that Lent is a time of change and renewal.



PRAYER



FASTING



ALMSGIVING

