



# LENT is a ...

time for us to renew our prayer life, to fast and sacrifice in ways that will bring us closer to God, and to share our love and treasure with the poor. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are the foundational themes of Lent and help us to prepare for Christ's resurrection.

•GIVE UP• *Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.*  
Hebrews 13:16

Traditionally we choose something special to "give up" during Lent. Each time we don't watch our favorite TV show, don't buy that candy bar or forego that cigarette, we remind ourselves of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. These small, selfless acts are loving gestures of self-denial, pleasing to God and ourselves. It will help us keep God in our hearts and minds during Lent.

•GIVE BACK• *Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister... cannot love God...*  
1 John 4:20

When we serve the poor, we love God. When we use the time, talent and treasure that is given to us by God to help those less fortunate, we become the hands and feet of God in our world. Service to the needy—almsgiving—is an essential part of our Lenten devotion and Catholic tradition.

•GIVE IN• *Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*  
Hebrews 11:6

The most important contribution we can make to our spiritual lives during Lent (or anytime) is a complete surrender to God—giving in to God's unending love, letting it transform us in new ways. In fasting, charity and prayer, our hearts and minds open to God's life-giving grace. Each small act of kindness and love, every sacrifice, every prayer, every gift we return to God is a step on the path of true discipleship.

**Prayer for Lent**—Jesus Christ, Lord and Redeemer, we who have been baptized into your death hope to be raised to new life in you. Send your Holy Spirit upon us this Lent so that we might have the courage to take up our cross each day, to fulfill our duties with great love and to hope always in your Word. May this sacred season strengthen us to live as men and women dead to sin and alive in you. *Amen.*

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## *Readings for Ash Wednesday, Sundays of Lent and Easter Sunday*

### **Ash Wednesday**

Joel 2:12-18; Psalm 51:3-6, 12-14, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2;  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

### **First Sunday of Lent**

Deuteronomy 26:4-10; Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15; Romans 10:8-13; Luke 4:1-13

### **Second Sunday of Lent**

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Psalm 27:1, 7-9, 13-14; Philippians 3:17—4:1;  
Luke 9:28-36

### **Third Sunday of Lent**

Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15; Psalm 103:1-4, 6-8, 11; 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12;  
Luke 13:1-9

### **Fourth Sunday of Lent**

Joshua 5:9, 10-12; Psalm 34:2-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

### **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126:1-6; Philippians 3:8-14; John 8:1-11

### **Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**

Luke 19:28-40; Isaiah 50:4-7; Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24; Philippians 2:6-11;  
Luke 22:14—23:56

### **Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord**

Acts of the Apostles 10:34, 37-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23;  
Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; John 20:1-9 or Luke 24:1-12

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