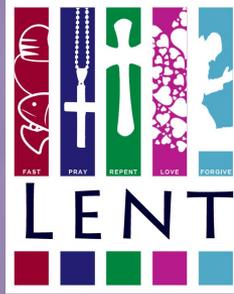




LENT



This week's theme isn't based on the Readings from Sunday, but rather on the fact that we begin the Season of Lent this week.



In the Catholic Church we have a few seasons of celebration (Christmas and Easter) and before each of these we have a season of preparation. Advent before Christmas and Lent before Easter.

Lent invites us to reflect on our lives and to prepare ourselves for Easter.

Lent is traditionally 40 days long. This is because, before he began his public ministry, Jesus went into the desert for 40 days

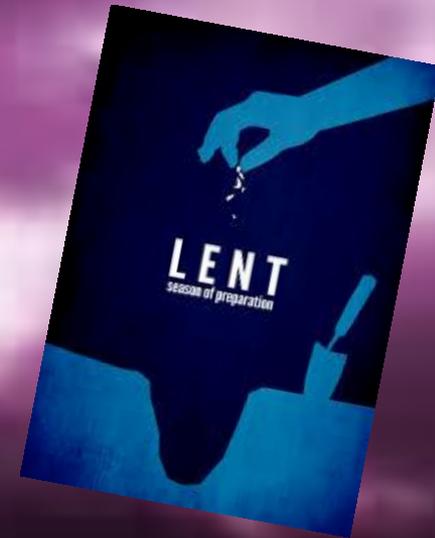
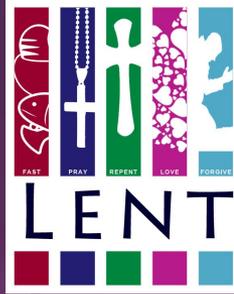
Traditionally in Lent, Catholics are called to practice, *fasting, alms giving and prayer.*



Prayer One

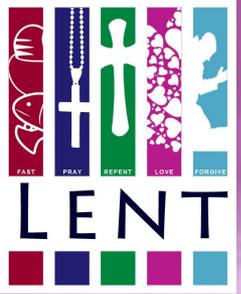
The Sign of the Cross

Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



Reflection

*This week's theme is LENT
which is a time of preparation
and reflection.*



Here are some things which you might like to think about as Lent begins. You are invited to close your eyes for a few moments and think about the following questions:
[please pause for a moment after each question]



What does it mean to properly prepare for something?

Why is it so important to prepare for Easter properly?

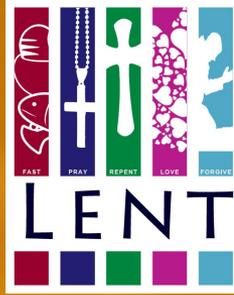


Final Prayer

God our Father, as we start a long and important journey toward something beautiful and amazing help us to use Lent in the right way... to make ourselves the very best that we can be.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

In the name of the Father and of the Son...



Prayer Two

The Sign of the Cross

**Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Reflection

Lent is a time when we remember Christ's time in the desert. We all have to go through difficult challenges in our lives, and this was certainly one for Him.





The Gospels tell us that Jesus went into the desert where he fasted and prayed, and where he was tempted by the devil. This prepared Jesus for the start of his public ministry, and it is this period of time on which lent is based.

Many of us will be going through difficult times in our lives at the moment. Or at least, we will know people who are.

Perhaps today we can pray for strength and for support for those going through difficulties at the moment.

Take a moment to think about people you know who are going through difficult things at the moment.

[LEAVE A BRIEF PAUSE]





Final Prayer

God our Father, be the strength of those who are weak, be the hope of those who have lost their way, be the companion of those who feel alone and be the courage that guides us all through life.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

In the name of the Father and of the Son...





Prayer Three

The Sign of the Cross

Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Reflection:

Normally during Lent people chose to give something up. Sometimes people chose to take on something extra as well...



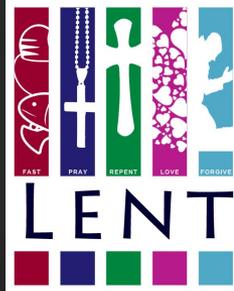
If you want to give something up for lent and you haven't done so yet, then it's not too late. You might also want to take something on, like perhaps making a bit of time to pray every day or making time to talk to people you don't normally spend much time with.

The purpose of giving something up is that it focuses our minds. It is hard to be without things that we like, and that reminds us that we are in a special time.

It also reminds us that Jesus gave up a lot for us. The reason why Lent is forty days long is because Jesus went into the desert to pray before he started off his public ministry. He felt that he needed some time to prepare himself before starting something so important.

Giving things up for lent also reminds us of how important it is not to put anything before God and before our serious responsibilities in the world, like loving others and making the right choices.

In short, we give things up in Lent to help us remember what's really important.



May be you would like explore the idea of doing something extra this Lent, click on the logo below for more ideas, video clips and useful resources:





Final Prayer

Loving Father,

Help us to have the courage this Lent to focus ourselves on what's really important. There is so much in our world and so many choices for us, that things can get confusing at times. We ask you to walk beside us this Lent and to help us see what's really important.

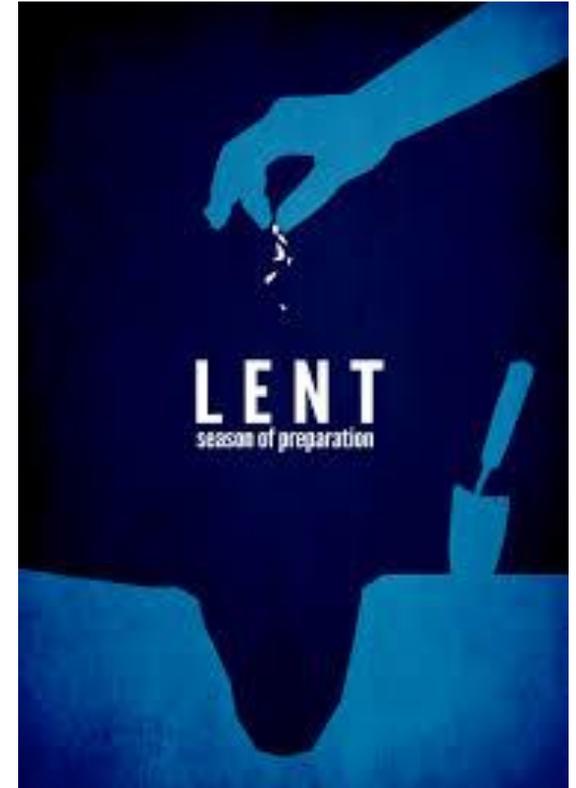
In the name of the Father and of the Son...



Final Thought...



“LET TODAY BE
THE DAY YOU
GIVE UP WHO
YOU’VE BEEN
FOR WHO YOU
CAN BECOME.”



Next Weeks Theme: Temptation