

FAMILY FAITH

Liturgical Year: Lent

During Lent, we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Chapter Summary

Before Jesus began His public ministry, He went into the desert for forty days. He fasted and prayed during this time. He was also tempted by the Devil. “By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert” (CCC 540). Because we are united to Jesus during Lent, we are prepared to celebrate His Resurrection on Easter. During this liturgical season, we repent of our sins and turn back to God. The liturgical color for the season is purple, signifying the penitential nature of the season. Lent is a fitting time to pray, give alms, and fast. Doing so enables us to grow in love of God and self-mastery.

More for Parents

Lent is a time of penance, in which we deny ourselves, turn away from sin, and focus on growing in our relationship with God. We participate in the season of Lent through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. As a family, come up with a plan to pray, give alms, and fast this Lent. Then have a conversation with your children in which you discuss how they can participate in these Lenten practices. Have them write down the family’s commitments. Then display this list in your house as a way of reminding everyone of their Lenten preparations.

Virtue in the Family

The observances we are called to during Lent are hard to take on alone. We must take them on together as a family. Encouraging one another and being mutually accountable can make Lent a sanctifying season.

Observing Lent

- Family prayer activity
 - Make representations of each of the items in Jesus’ Passion: a crown of thorns, long nails, and a small cross. Establish a special prayer space to house them.
 - When you pray as a family, have your children hold one of the items of Jesus’ Passion as a reminder of His love for them.
 - Conclude by praying, “Lord Jesus, as we hold these reminders of Your Passion, strengthen us to keep our Lenten observances in return for Your love for us.”
- Discuss your children’s allowance (if they don’t have an allowance, then come up with one task that you pay them for). Find a charity they could give at least 10 percent of their income to as almsgiving.
- As a family, agree on a penance that would be helpful for everyone to grow closer to God. Choose something that will set aside more time for intentional family time and prayer (for example, not watching TV or not using devices during certain hours).
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a family at least once every other week. To prepare, lead your family in a short examination of conscience each night. Remind them of the grace they receive to continue in the season of penance and prayer. You can use the examination of conscience on page 294 of the Student Text.

Vocabulary Words for Your Children to Review

- **almsgiving**
- **Lent**
- **prayer**

Find digital flash cards to help your children review on the parent portal.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.