

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, the Church's season which lasts six weeks (forty days set aside to prepare for Easter).

These 40 days remind us of the time Jesus spent in the desert after he had been baptised by John in the river Jordan. Jesus needed to be alone to pray to prepare for his ministry. It was not an easy time for Jesus. He was tempted, but he resisted temptation, and the experience strengthened him for his mission. This is Luke's story of what happened.

Jesus went out into the desert. There was nobody there; nothing but sand and rock. He was all-alone for forty days. He ate nothing, so at the end of forty days he was extremely hungry. He heard a voice telling him that he could change stones into bread, if he wanted. Jesus knew that eating was not the most important thing in life. He remembered God's word: 'No one lives on bread alone'.

Again he was tempted. The voice promised him all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus knew that the only true ruler of the world is God. He remembered God's word: 'I am the Lord your God, you shall serve no one before me'.

A third time the tempting voice came to Jesus. "If you are God's Son you can do anything and God will take care of you. Even if you threw yourself off the highest place, God would protect you." Jesus remembered God's word, 'You must not put God to the test'. The voice of the tempter was silent.

Based on Luke 4: 1-12 (God's Story 3)

Jesus went into the desert to think and pray, and work out what God wanted him to do. In the same way, it is important that we stop every now and again, to think about how we are following Jesus, and doing what he wants of us. We have Lent as a special time to do this, and we pray that the Spirit of God will help us to be strong, to make good decisions, and to be generous in our giving.

During Lent, Christians try to make changes to their lives in order to become more like Jesus and to prepare for the celebration of Easter. During Lent Christians try to grow in holiness, to grow in God's way. Traditionally Christians go to church on Ash Wednesday to receive ashes, but that may not be possible this year. The ashes are a symbol of penance and contrition, and a reminder that God is loving and merciful to those who call on Him.

The palms left over from last year's Palm/Passion Sunday are burned leaving the ashes. The priest blesses the ashes and prays: "*Lord God, bless all who ask for your forgiveness. Bless all those who receive these ashes. May they keep this Lenten season in preparation for the joy of Easter.*" The priest then makes a cross with the ashes on the forehead of everyone who comes in procession to the altar: he says, "*Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.*" These words remind Christians that they are beginning a time when they are making a new start by giving themselves to God and others, through **prayer**, giving up things (**fasting**) and doing good for others (**almsgiving**). During Lent, the Church uses the colour purple, to symbolise repentance and does not use the word Alleluia until Easter. The Church family tries to do something extra during the 40 days of Lent:

Try to follow the suggestions for each day on the Mission Together Lenten calendar.
Make a Lenten promise showing how you can be more generous to others: e.g. During Lent I promise to ... because ...

If you can, look at the other Mission Together resources:

<https://missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/resources-for-lent-2021/>

Or the resources on the CAFOD website

<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources/Lent-resources-for-children>

Mission Together Lenten Calendar 2021



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
15 FEBRUARY  15 FEBRUARY Decide as a class on your mission this Lent.	16 Shrove Tuesday  16 Shrove Tuesday Why do we make Pancakes today?	17 Ash Wednesday  17 Ash Wednesday Find out why ashes are placed on our foreheads today.	18 Write a Lent prayer.  18 Write a Lent prayer. Include the words: pray, share, help, listen, Jesus.	19 With your class, pray and reflect on the first two Stations of the Cross.*  19 With your class, pray and reflect on the first two Stations of the Cross.*	20 As a family, pray the Our Father for children in need of help. What else can you do to help?  20 As a family, pray the Our Father for children in need of help. What else can you do to help?	21 Why does the Church use the colour purple in Lent?  21 Why does the Church use the colour purple in Lent?
22 Sunday's Gospel  22 Sunday's Gospel Read from Mk 1:12-15.* Read it as a class. What did Jesus say was near?	23 Find out about Mission  23 Find out about Mission Together and how you can share God's love everywhere.	24 Say the Mission  24 Say the Mission Together prayer as a class. 'May all children in the world, share love, share friendship, and live in the peace of God's love, now and forever. Amen.'	25 What can you share with someone today?  25 What can you share with someone today? Ask God to help.	26 With your class, pray and reflect on the 3rd and 4th Stations of the Cross.*  26 With your class, pray and reflect on the 3rd and 4th Stations of the Cross.*	27 Share with a family member three things you have learned about Lent.  27 Share with a family member three things you have learned about Lent.	28 Share any worries you have with Jesus, our God and friend.  28 Share any worries you have with Jesus, our God and friend.
1 MARCH Sunday's Gospel  1 MARCH Sunday's Gospel Read from Mk 9:2-10.* Read it as a class. What does God tell us to do?	2 Yesterday was the Feast of St David. What does Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Hapus mean?  2 Yesterday was the Feast of St David. What does Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Hapus mean?	3 Find out what the word 'sacrifice' means. Then consider what you could sacrifice for someone today.  3 Find out what the word 'sacrifice' means. Then consider what you could sacrifice for someone today.	4 Centuries ago 'Lent' used to be the name for 'spring'. Look out for signs of spring today.  4 Centuries ago 'Lent' used to be the name for 'spring'. Look out for signs of spring today.	5 With your class, pray and reflect on the 5th and 6th Stations of the Cross.*  5 With your class, pray and reflect on the 5th and 6th Stations of the Cross.*	6 As a family, pray for those in need this Lent and think of ways you can help them.  6 As a family, pray for those in need this Lent and think of ways you can help them.	7 Find a quiet place to be and say a prayer for those who are sick, sad or lonely.  7 Find a quiet place to be and say a prayer for those who are sick, sad or lonely.
8 Sunday's Gospel  8 Sunday's Gospel Read from Jn 2:13-25.* Read it as a class. Why was Jesus angry?	9 Keep an eye out for someone who needs help today.  9 Keep an eye out for someone who needs help today.	10 Visit the Mission  10 Visit the Mission Together virtual map, choose a country to visit and pray for the children there.*	11 Eggs are a symbol of new life. How does this link to Easter?  11 Eggs are a symbol of new life. How does this link to Easter?	12 With your class, pray and reflect on the 7th and 8th Stations of the Cross.*  12 With your class, pray and reflect on the 7th and 8th Stations of the Cross.*	13 Lent is a special time to say sorry and forgive. As a family, pray for the strength to do both.  13 Lent is a special time to say sorry and forgive. As a family, pray for the strength to do both.	14 Mothering Sunday  14 Mothering Sunday Ask God to bless all mums and grandmas.
15 Sunday's Gospel  15 Sunday's Gospel Read from Jn 3:14-21.* Read it as a class. Who did God send into the world?	16 Make someone smile today and share God's joy with those around you.  16 Make someone smile today and share God's joy with those around you.	17 Feast of St Patrick  17 Feast of St Patrick Find out where St Patrick went to share God's love.	18 Tomorrow is the Feast of St Joseph. Find out why he is an important saint.*  18 Tomorrow is the Feast of St Joseph. Find out why he is an important saint.*	19 With your class, pray and reflect on the 9th and 10th Stations of the Cross.*  19 With your class, pray and reflect on the 9th and 10th Stations of the Cross.*	20 Tell a family member about the Stations of the Cross and why we pray them in Lent.  20 Tell a family member about the Stations of the Cross and why we pray them in Lent.	21 Thank God for all the beautiful things he has created. Pray that you may care for them all.  21 Thank God for all the beautiful things he has created. Pray that you may care for them all.
22 Sunday's Gospel  22 Sunday's Gospel Read from Jn 12:20-33.* Read it as a class. What does Jesus predict?	23 Make a small sacrifice this week and put a coin in your Little Red Box.  23 Make a small sacrifice this week and put a coin in your Little Red Box.	24 Feast of St Oscar Romero  24 Feast of St Oscar Romero Find out why Fr Romero was made a saint.*	25 Feast of the Annunciation  25 Feast of the Annunciation How did Mary's 'yes' change the world?	26 With your class, pray and reflect on the 11th and 12th Stations of the Cross.*  26 With your class, pray and reflect on the 11th and 12th Stations of the Cross.*	27 Ask a family member to help you discover why palms will be given out at church tomorrow.  27 Ask a family member to help you discover why palms will be given out at church tomorrow.	28 Palm Sunday  28 Palm Sunday What did the crowd sing when Jesus entered Jerusalem?
29 Sunday's Gospel  29 Sunday's Gospel Read from Jn 12:12-16.* Read it as a class. What does it say about hope?	30 Today we remember how Judas made a bad decision. Ask God to help you make good choices this week.  30 Today we remember how Judas made a bad decision. Ask God to help you make good choices this week.	31 Today Jesus planned his last supper. Thank God for your food and pray for children who are hungry.  31 Today Jesus planned his last supper. Thank God for your food and pray for children who are hungry.	1 APRIL Maundy Thursday  1 APRIL Maundy Thursday Why does the Pope wash the feet of others today?	2 Good Friday  2 Good Friday Sit quietly, be still, and thank Jesus for showing us how to love.	3 Holy Saturday  3 Holy Saturday Today we wait as Jesus lies in the tomb. Tomorrow we celebrate as Jesus rises to new life.	Jesus is risen. Alleluia!  Jesus is risen. Alleluia!

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Asterisks refer to abridged scriptures, or accompanying liturgies and activities, all are available on the Lent page of the Mission Together website. Our virtual map is hosted on the home page.

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