

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 by the devil, but he resisted him, and the experience strengthened him for his mission. This is Luke's story of what happened.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The Devil said to him, 'If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread'. But Jesus answered. 'The scripture says, people cannot live on bread alone'.

Then the Devil took him up and showed him in a second all the kingdoms of the world. 'I will give you all this power and all this wealth, the Devil told him. 'It has all been handed over to me, and I can give it to anyone I choose. All this will be yours, then, if you worship me.'

Jesus answered, 'The scripture says, Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!'

Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem and set him on the highest point of the Temple, and said to him, 'If you are God's Son, throw yourself down from here. For the scripture says, 'God will order his angels to take good care of you'. It also says 'They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones'. But Jesus answered, 'The scripture says, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'. When the Devil finished tempting Jesus in every way, he left him.

Luke 4: 1-12

We are all tempted at times, at different stages of life, in all sorts of ways, and we need to stay close to God in order to have the strength to resist and to live in his way. Like Jesus' 40 days in the desert, we can use Lent as a special time of the year when we think and pray about how we live our Christian life, showing our love of God and neighbour; it is a time of 'turning back' to God, a chance to start again and follow the way of Jesus.

Traditionally Christians go to church on Ash Wednesday to receive ashes to start their Lenten journey, but that may not be possible this year. The ashes are made by burning the palms left over from last year's Palm/Passion Sunday. The priest would then make a cross with the blessed 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."*

The ashes are a symbol of the repentance of the person who receives them.

Lent is a time to choose a new way of life and start again. 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. There are three particular ways that the Church recommends: firstly, **prayer** and reflection, through reading scripture and spending more time each day speaking to God; secondly, **fasting**, that is giving up something and thirdly, **almsgiving**, that is doing good for others.

Look at the Mission Lenten Together calendar and the suggestions for each day. Make your own Lenten calendar showing how you will spend the forty days of Lent preparing for Easter. Make a Lenten promise – to give something up or to do something extra - throughout Lent. 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 Decide as a class on your mission this Lent. 	16 Shrove Tuesday Pancake day Why do we make Pancakes today? 	17 Ash Wednesday Find out why ashes are placed on our foreheads today. 	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.* 	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?
22 Sunday's Gospel was from Mk 1:12-15.* Read it as a class. What did Jesus say was near? 	23 Find out about Mission Together and how you can share God's love with children everywhere. 	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? Ask God to help. 	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. 	28 Share any worries you have with Jesus, our God and friend.
1 MARCH Sunday's Gospel was 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? 	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. 	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. 	7 Find a quiet place to be and say a prayer for those who are sick, sad or lonely.
8 Sunday's Gospel was Jn 2:13-25.* Read it as a class. Why was Jesus angry? 	9 Keep an eye out for someone who needs help today. 	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? 	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. 	14 Mothering Sunday Ask God to bless all mums and grandmas.
15 Sunday's Gospel was 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. 	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.* 	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. 	21 Thank God for all the beautiful things he has created. Pray that you may care for them all.
22 Sunday's Gospel was 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. 	24 Feast of St Oscar Romero Find out why Fr Romero was made a saint.* 	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.* 	27 Ask a family member to help you discover why palms will be given out at church tomorrow. 	28 Palm Sunday What did the crowd sing when Jesus entered Jerusalem?
29 Sunday's Gospel was 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. 	31 Today Jesus planned his last supper. Thank God for your food and pray for children who are hungry. 	1 APRIL Maundy Thursday Why does the Pope wash the feet of others today? 	2 Good Friday Sit quietly, be still, and thank Jesus for showing us how to love. 	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!

Mission Together, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU; 020 7821 9755; missiontogether.org.uk; missiontogether@missiontogether.org.uk; Reg. Charity No. 1056651
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.

missio