

Prayer Focus – The Season of Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday when the Easter Vigil begins. Purple is the colour used during this season and it signifies a time of preparation and a time where we focus on seeking forgiveness for our sins. Appropriate prayers such as an Act of Contrition, the Confiteor can be displayed and used.

Feast days that occur during Lent are St. Chad (March 2), one of the diocesan patrons and St. Joseph, husband of the blessed virgin Mary (March 19). Images of them could be displayed.

A 40 Day calendar to represent the time Jesus spent in the desert could be added to the prayer focus. A bowl of ashes on the prayer space would serve as reminder of the ashes placed on the forehead on Ash Wednesday, the start of this season. Sand and stones could be used to recreate the emptiness of the desert. Flowers are not placed in the prayer space during Lent.

Holy Week - Towards the end of Lent, focus should be given to the events of Holy Week and these can be represented in Holy Week. At this time, it is appropriate to cover statues with purple cloth. This shows we are entering a time of great solemnity. Images of the Stations of the Cross could be added as a reminder of the events of Jesus' arrest to his death. Symbols of Holy Week could also be added to the prayer space such as palms to represent Palm Sunday and bread to represent the last supper. Symbols from the Passion can be added including a crown (the crown of thorns that was placed on Jesus' head), dice (used by the soldiers to cast lots for Jesus' clothes), a cloth (which was used by Veronica to wipe Jesus' face). Stations of the Cross can be prayed before Holy Week.



Lent in a Bag

In order to stimulate discussion and deepen understanding of Lent at home, you could create family share bags. You could include;

1. Sand - Place sand within a sandwich bag. 'Jesus between his baptism and the beginning of his ministry went into the wilderness for 40 days to be 'tested'. What do you find difficult in your life? How might you overcome these difficulties?
2. Rock - In the wilderness, Jesus was invited to turn stone into bread. He didn't do this there and then, however, in his ministry he was renowned for feeding people who were hungry for food, for love or for a word of gentle encouragement.
3. Human Figure - Jesus was made fully human and understands how we think and feel. What will you make a conscious effort to do this Lent to make the world a better place for others?
4. Candle - Jesus, according to John's Gospel is 'The Light of the World'. Where do you shine? How do you keep your light lit?

Taken from <https://buildfaith.org/lent-in-a-bag/>

Prayers for the Season: Lent

The Church during Lent prays for a number of intentions. These include Candidates for the Sacraments, The Needy and Hungry of the World, Women's World day of Prayer, Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Penitents and Wanderers.

The Liturgy Office website contains a wealth of resources and prayers to help cover these key themes.

*Father of love and power,
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.*

*Guide the elect of your Church:
strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son,
and seal them with the Spirit of your promise. Amen.*

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

<https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/LentCP.shtml>

Pope's Prayer Intentions

March: For families in crisis

Let us pray that broken families may discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

April: For the use of the new technologies

Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

Dates for the Diary*

February 2025

Fri 28 Memorial of St. Oswald (Worcester)

March 2025

Sat 1 Feast of St. David, Bishop, Patron of Wales
Sun 2 Solemnity of St. Chad, Patron of the Diocese
Wed 5 Ash Wednesday
Fri 7 Commemoration of Ss. Perpetua and Felicity
Women's World Day of Prayer
Sun 9 Day of Prayer for the Candidates for the Sacraments (Sundays of Lent)
Wed 12 Dementia Prayer Week
Fri 14 Lent Fast Day
Mon 17 Feast of St. Patrick, Bishop, Patron of Ireland
Tues 18 Commemoration of St. Cyril
Wed 19 Solemnity of St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Tues 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

April 2025

Wed 2 Commemoration St Francis of Paola
Fri 4 Commemoration of St. Isidore, Bishop, Doctor of the Church
Sat 5 Commemoration of St. Vincent Ferrer, Priest
Mon 7 Commemoration of St. John Baptist de la Salle, Priest
Fri 11 Commemoration of St. Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr

**For a complete list of dates, readings and colours please refer to the Archdiocese of Birmingham Ordo 2024-2025.
Further prayer resources can be found on <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/>*

CAFOD & Mission Together Resources

CAFOD

LiveSimply: Over 76 schools have now achieved the LiveSimply award and by the end of the academic year we anticipate that over half of all schools within the Archdiocese will have achieved the award; thank you. Please remember to use the hashtag #LiveSimplyBham on social media!

Lent Resources: CAFOD have several resources on their website, including assemblies, classroom prayer and liturgies. There will also be a national assembly on Thursday 6th March. Resources can be accessed here:

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources/lent-resources-for-children>

Mission Together

Pilgrims of Hope: Mission Together have developed further resources to explore the theme of hope, including songs, scripture to explore and a Gospel Drama. <https://missiontogether.org.uk/jubilee-2025-pilgrims-of-hope/>