**Lent – 14th February – 31st March 2024**

*Resources and ideas to explore with home, school and church.*

**What is Lent?**

The season of Lent lasts for forty days (not including Sundays), beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter Sunday. It is a time when Christians reflect and prepare for the celebrations of Easter. The early Church focused on marking the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus through prayer, repentance and fasting. This became recognised as forty days of preparation based on the time which Jesus spent in the wilderness and encouraging a time of self-reflection. Prayer is a significant focus during Lent, Christians seek God’s forgiveness, accept his love and mercy, and repent /say sorry to turn away from sins. Fasting or abstaining from something like favourite food or activity, gives time to pray and reminds Christians of Jesus’ suffering and sacrifice. Giving time to others is also a way of marking Lent and there are many opportunities and charities that offer suggestions.

**Suggested Learning Points and Bible Readings by Age Group**

**All:** Learn the meaning of Lent.

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| **Age** | **Suggested content** | **Creative Exploration** |
| **0-5:** | * Importance of talking to God through prayer and other people. * A time for thinking about God and us. * <https://www.eden.co.uk/christian-books/christian-books-for-children/gift-books-for-children/childrens-prayer-books/how-can-i-pray-9781784987572/> | * Making prayer hands. * <https://www.yourmodernfamily.com/diy-prayer-hands-kids/> * Exploring Lent   <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vp1aA6kG43mLob3zylev66ICZsQvdjqt/view> |
| **5-7:** | * How talking to God enables you to make a difference in your own or others’ lives. * A time of thinking about God, ourselves, and each other. * We look at our lives and what we’ve done. How can we make things better with God and those around us. * What is Lent anyway? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKjEDrvkHUg>   <https://www.eden.co.uk/age-8-to-10-easter-and-lent-books/watch-and-pray-child-single-copy/>   * Barnabas Read-Aloud Bible Matthew 4: 1-13 | - Talking to God- giving thanks and giving something up to help others  - [https://www.muddychurch.co.uk/lent-40-moments- and-40-bags](https://www.muddychurch.co.uk/lent-40-moments-%20%20%20and-40-bags)  - <https://meaningfulmama.com/cross-fingerprint-craft-awana-cubbies-bear-hug-18.html>  -<https://www.sunhatsandwellieboots.com/2023/02/eco-lent-resource-for-kids-what.html> |
| **7-11** | * The linking of prayer to action as individuals or groups that will make a difference to how we live. * A time of thinking about God, ourselves, and each other. God’s world, my world, and our world. * Matthew 4: 1-13 and Mark1: 12-13 * Primary Assemblies – The Festival of Lent   <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-ks2-lent/zy6br2p>   * Bring nature into your home or garden. What could you grow inside your home, in the garden or even at church? Plant a herb or flower as a reminder of our responsibility to steward God’s earth. As you tend to this plant, prayerfully ask God how you might nurture nature better at home over the Lent period and beyond. | -What is Lent? Looking at what Lent means and activities to create  -<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3L3c23MfC0>  Making a lent spiral and Easter garden. –  -<https://aroundtheyear.org/lent-crafts-for-children/> |
| **11-17** | * Explore how self-reflection and if appropriate self-denial (fasting for example) brings the individual closer to God. * A time of thinking about the great sacrifice that Jesus made to restore the relationship with God. * The discipline of fasting <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/resource/discipline-fasting-0?return-url=https%3A%2F%2Fcontent.scriptureunion.org.uk%2Fresources%3Fs%3DLent> * Jesus – The devil tempts Jesus.   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWENd6zRxec>   * Luke 4: 1-13 | * <https://godspacelight.com/2019/02/12/resources-for-lent-the-latest-for-2019/> * Can you take something on for Lent? Help a friend or neighbour? |

**Reflection / Spiritual development**

* Imagine being totally alone for 40 days; no friends, no devices, no connection. What would be the hardest part? What difference would time alone make to your life and how you relate to others?

You may want to include a song or poem to further extend your session and give the children/young people an opportunity to explore through a time of reflection.

**Suggestions for prayers**

For younger children

Have a group of teddies, a safe candle and a cross. Have pre-made prayers the children choose from a bag, adults to read and children place on a tree or board. Older children can say their own prayers or write them down.

Dear God, Thank You that You are loving and forgiving. Help us to love people in the same way as You have loved us. Help us do generous things for others because we love You.

**Collect for Ash Wednesday**

Almighty and everlasting God,

you hate nothing that you have made

and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:

create and make in us new and contrite hearts

that we, worthily lamenting our sins

and acknowledging our wretchedness,

may receive from you, the God of all mercy,

perfect remission and forgiveness;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. AMEN

**Adapt words appropriate to age-group and context: -**

Forty days alone,  
a wilderness of thoughts,  
tempting and inviting thoughts,  
which could so easily have distracted you  
from your task, your mission,  
your vision.  
Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned  
to all that had to be done,  
despite a time constraint  
that to our eyes would have seemed hopeless.  
We too live in stressful times.  
Demands are made of our time,  
that leave so little  
for the important things of life.  
We are easily distracted  
in the wilderness of our lives,  
by every call to go this way or that,  
to turn stone to bread  
leap from mountains,  
and do all that would keep us from the truth.  
We listen to the voices of this world,  
and ignore the one who endured all this  
and so much more,  
and emerged triumphant,  
that we might not have to suffer so.  
Forgive us, Father,  
when we get distracted from our task.  
Forgive us those times when we try  
to be all things to all men,  
and fail to be anything to anyone

Taken from <https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Lent.htm#gsc.tab=0>

A collection of alternative and inclusive prayers for Lent can be found here:- <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/lent>

**Links to other resources for further use**

<https://www.archbishopofyorkyouthtrust.co.uk/projects/lent-2024>

<https://shop.alivepublishing.co.uk/product/CALLENT24/walk-with-me-lent-calendars-2024>

**Rooted in the Christian faith, All We Can is an international development and relief organisation, working to see every person’s potential fulfilled.**

<https://media.testsite14.site/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/05102206/AWC-Lent-2024-Colouring-Sheet-Questions-Print.pdf>

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