

*Lenten
Prayer
Service*

THIS IS LENT

Welcome:

Opening Hymn: Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days CBW 482

Sign of the Cross:

Opening Prayer:

Merciful Father, you gave us your only begotten Son. As we pray together during this holy season of Lent, inspire us to works of charity and love. May the penance of our Lenten observance make us your obedient people and lead us to the joy of Easter. This we ask through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Leader: The season of Lent stretches before us with unlimited possibilities to grow closer to our Father and experience his love and mercy. When we pray and talk to God, we build a trusting and loving relationship with him. We have to bring forth our faults with sincere sorrow. We have to believe that he will respond to us as a caring, loving shepherd and will welcome us back.

Reader 1: Matthew 6: 5-15

Leader: To fast is to temper our bodily pleasures and desires with sacrifice. We reduce what we allow ourselves and share the excess denied ourselves with others.

Reader 2: Matthew 6:16-18

Leader: We are obliged to increase almsgiving in order to provide assistance for the needy around the world and in our own neighbourhoods. When we share our treasures, talents and time we give thanks to God for the many gifts he has given us.

Reader 3: Matthew 6:19-24

Leader: After prayer, fasting and almsgiving, what if our human nature becomes weak and we limit our attempts at sacrifice so that we are still comfortable and our offerings are not truly a sacrifice?

Reader 4: Matthew 6: 25-34

Leader: The spirit of God is upon us. We will work to bring the good news through work, action and prayer.

Reflection: Lent: A Time for Change

The practice of having ashes placed on our foreheads developed as a reminder of our death to sin in Baptism. On Ash Wednesday, the priest blesses ashes that come from the palm branches of the previous year. The priest places ashes on the forehead of each person and prays, "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel".

Lent is a time....to renew our baptismal promises by making a special effort to live as children of God.

Lent is a time....to remember Jesus' teaching to forget ourselves and remember others.

Lent is a time....to pray.

Lent is a time....of change and growth.

Lent is a time....for improving the way we live as God's people.

Lent is a time....for preparing for Easter.

Hymn: Whatsoever You Do CBW 717

Prayers of the Faithful:

Response: Spirit of God, fill us with the generosity of your love.

When we come face to face with the challenge of self-giving; when we are asked to go the extra mile, to take the risk of reaching out to another, to offer forgiveness to the heart that rejects us. **Response**

When the world seems bleak, when we walk with sadness written on our soul; when we have days when everything goes wrong. **Response**

When someone needs a simple gesture of thoughtfulness; when a look of love is all that another asks of us, when a good word could cheer. **Response**

When we need the courage and confidence to share our gifts and respond with generosity to the needs of others. **Response**

In those difficult times when fear threatens to drown our trust in you, during those trying experiences when we are tempted to doubt all the ways we have known you. **Response**

Our Father:

Sign of Peace:

Closing Prayer:

Compassionate God, you bless us with the abundance of your mercy and love. In this Lenten season, give us the opportunity to grow in our relationship with you. Help us deepen our commitment to a way of life, rooted in our baptism; to pray more deeply, experience sorrow for what we've done or failed to do and to be generous to those in need. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Father I have Sinned CBW 687