

8 TIPS TO CELEBRATE LENT



Lent is a season of transformation and grace. Here you can find eight things you can do to collaborate with the grace of God.

1. MAKE A SPIRITUAL PLAN

Spiritually, the church invites us to pray, to fast, and to give alms; Matthew 6:1-18, part of which we read on Ash Wednesday, gives us Jesus' teaching on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. In order to be intentional, spend some time developing a plan that includes prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Write a personal vision of who you think God is calling you to become. Put this plan in a visible place like the Bible and share it with someone else.

2. PRAY MORE The desert is a place of solitude and silence. During Lent we learn that God is enough. He can satisfy our deepest longings. During this season, it is good to pick up one or two spiritual practices that can lead you closer to Christ. For example, you might choose to read the daily Gospel, go to Mass one more time in addition to Sunday, pray the rosary daily, etc. We highly recommend that you develop a space of prayer in your house and pray every day with a lighted candle. Like Jesus, find your own EREMO (deserted place or quiet place).

3. BE MORE DISCIPLINED We fast from the excesses to live a simpler and more silent life. Above all, we renounce the things to which we are more attached. We renounce our inner idols. It's a denial for the sake of freedom. Some examples: fast on bread and water on Fridays, limit your intake of media (TV, film, YouTube), limit your use of social media, fast from alcohol, fast from gaming, fast from working too much, fast from unnecessary purchases, etc. You name it! To live in Christ you need to die to your sinful inclinations!

4. LIVE FOR OTHERS The fruits of fasting and prayer should be more love. We seek to gain freedom from our attachments, but it is ultimately a freedom for loving more, for being more available to God and to others. Almsgiving is not about writing a check to a charity but about giving yourself in love to others. So a question to ask is, How can I give more during this Lent? How can I love more? What virtues do I need to develop to become more like Christ? How can I be a better spouse, parent, roommate?

5. PRAY THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS The Fridays of Lent are penitential days. Unite yourself to the passion of Christ during the Fridays of Lent by offering some type of fasting and by praying the stations of the cross, if possible together with your community of faith.

6. FACE YOUR BROKENNESS Lent is a time to discover your inner misery. Do a daily examen every evening, paying attention to the patterns of sin in your life, to discover the root of those sins, and to seek to uproot them. You can use the threefold step of going from the WHAT you do, to the HOW you do it, and the WHY you do it. Once you are Ready, make a good confession.

7. READ A GOOD SPIRITUAL BOOKS *Unbound* by Neal Lozano, *Rediscovering Jesus* by Matthew Kelly, and *7 Secrets of Confession* by Vinny Flynn. Choose one to read and pray with this Lent.

8. PLAN AHEAD TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL THE HOLY WEEK LITURGIES The four days of **Holy Week, March 28–31** (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday) are the most important days of the liturgical year. Block out time to participate in these liturgical celebrations. It's a great way to culminate Lent and start Easter!

LENTEN PLAN

Personal Vision:

PRAYER:

FASTING:

ALMSGIVING:

Find all key dates
for this Lenten
Season here:

