



Lenten Reading Guide 2020
linocut: Variations on a Cross, by Leilani Pierson

The Meaning of Lent

The Season of Lent originated in the early centuries of church history as a time of preparation for Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts until Holy Saturday, the Saturday before Easter. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week, which includes both Maundy Thursday (commemorating the institution of the Lord's Supper) and Good Friday (commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus).

Reminiscent of Israel's forty years in the wilderness and Jesus' forty days of fasting in the wilderness, the Lenten season, not counting Sundays, lasts forty days. Sundays are not included because the Lord's Day, according to church tradition, is never a fast day but always a feast day, a celebration of the resurrection.

Lent is traditionally observed by penitence, sacrificial giving, self-denial, and prayer. We come before God in humility, confessing our sin and total inadequacy, stripping ourselves bare of all pretense. We place our needs, fears, failures, hopes and lives into the hands of God. We confess that our only hope is in Christ, who lived, died, and rose on our behalf.

A Daily Lenten Prayer

While there is no single way to observe Lent, you may find the following format for daily prayer and Scripture readings a helpful guide. It can be followed with family, friends, small groups, or in solitude.

Opening: Consider who Christ is and who you are. The words of this simple, ancient prayer are a good starting place:

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Confession: Meditate on the week’s psalm of lament and confession. Respond to the psalm with your own prayer of lament and confession. You may want to use these prayers of confession as a guide.

“Most holy and merciful Father: I confess to you that I have sinned by my own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what I have done, and by what I have left undone.

I have not loved you with my whole heart, and mind, and strength. I have not loved my neighbors as myself. I have not forgiven others as I have been forgiven.

I have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served me. I have not been true to the mind of Christ. I have grieved your Holy Spirit.

I confess to you, Lord, all my unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of my life, My self-indulgent appetites and ways, and my exploitation of other people, My anger and frustration, and my envy of those more fortunate than me, My intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and my dishonesty in daily life and work, My negligence in prayer and worship, and my failure to commend the faith that is in me,

Accept my repentance, Lord, for the wrongs I have done: for my blindness to human need and suffering, and my indifference to injustice and cruelty,

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward my neighbors, and for my prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from me,

For my waste and pollution of your creation, and my lack of concern for those who come after me.

Restore me, good Lord, and let your anger depart from me; Favorably hear me, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in me the work of your salvation, That I may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord, Bring me with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Almighty God, have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen me in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep me in eternal life. Amen.”

Meditation: Read and reflect on the day’s Scripture Lesson. These lessons are drawn from Genesis to Revelation and survey the history of God’s redemptive work in the world. Take time to reflect on how Christ invites us into God’s great redemptive plan. On Sundays, we focus on texts that describe forty day periods of repentance, waiting or cleansing.

Closing: Seek the presence of Christ in prayer. The following verses remind us who He is.

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1.29)

*“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.”
(Isaiah 53.4)*

*“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”
(1 Corinthians 15.22)*

“Since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10.21-22)

Daily Scripture Readings

Day		Psalm of Lament	Scripture Lesson
Ash Wednesday	Feb 26	Psalm 123	Gen 1.1-2.3
Thursday	Feb 27		Gen 3.1-2.4
Friday	Feb 28		Gen 12.1-9
Saturday	Feb 29		Gen 15.1-6
First Sunday in Lent (March 1) Genesis 7:11-16; 8:6-19			
Monday	Mar 2	Psalm 142	Gen 22.1-19
Tuesday	Mar 3		Gen 50.15-21
Wednesday	Mar 4		Exod 3.1-12
Thursday	Mar 5		Exod 15.1-18
Friday	Mar 6		Exod 20.1-21
Saturday	Mar 7		Exod 40.34-38
Second Sunday in Lent (March 8) Exodus 24:12-18			
Monday	Mar 9	Psalm 38	Deut 9.4-12
Tuesday	Mar 10		Deut 18.15-22
Wednesday	Mar 11		Josh 1.1-9
Thursday	Mar 12		Judg 2.16-23
Friday	Mar 13		1 Sam 16.1-8
Saturday	Mar 14		2 Sam 7.1-17
Third Sunday In Lent (March 15) Deuteronomy 9:13-19			
Monday	Mar 16	Psalm 90	2 Chr 6.12-21
Tuesday	Mar 17		2 Chr 36.15-23
Wednesday	Mar 18		Isa 1.1-11
Thursday	Mar 19		Isa 40.1-8
Friday	Mar 20		Isa 52.13 - 53.12
Saturday	Mar 21		Jer 31.31-40
Fourth Sunday in Lent (March 22) 1 Kings 19:1-18			
Monday	Mar 23	Psalm 25	Joel 2.12-17
Tuesday	Mar 24		Mic 6.6-8
Wednesday	Mar 25		Matt 1.1-25
Thursday	Mar 26		Matt 3.1-17
Friday	Mar 27		Matt 4.1-11
Saturday	Mar 28		Matt 5.1-20
Fifth Sunday in Lent (March 29) Jonah 3			
Monday	Mar 30	Psalm 51	Matt 16.13-28
Tuesday	Mar 31		2 Cor 12.1-10
Wednesday	Apr 1		Phil 3.1-11
Thursday	Apr 2		Col 1.15-23
Friday	Apr 3		Heb 10.1-18
Saturday	Apr 4		Rev 21.1-14
Sixth Sunday in Lent / Palm Sunday (April 5) Matthew 4:1-11			
Monday	Apr 6	Psalm 22	Matt 22:23-46
Tuesday	Apr 7		Matt 24:1-14
Wednesday	Apr 8		Matt 25:1-13
Maundy Thursday	Apr 9		Matt 26:14-29
Good Friday	Apr 10		Matt 27:32-56
Holy Saturday	Apr 11		Matt 27:62-66
Easter Sunday (April 12) Matthew 28:1-20			

A Lenten Great Thanksgiving

The Great Thanksgiving, which we recite together before the table, is a way of expressing gratitude for God's work throughout history. During the season of Lent, our Great Thanksgiving focuses on 40 day imagery throughout Scripture as we travel through the 40 days of Lent.

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

**We remember during this season of Lent
that you brought all things into being and called them good.
From the the dust of the earth you formed us into your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.**

When we turned away from you our love failed, but your love remained steadfast.

For forty days and forty nights rain fell upon the earth,
and you saved Noah and his family on the ark and made covenant with every living
creature on earth.

For forty days and forty nights you spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai,
and gave us your commandments and made us your covenant people.

For forty days and forty nights your prophet Elijah fled in fear to Mount Horeb,
for we killed your prophets and forsook your covenant but still you remained faithful
to us.

**For forty days and forty nights your Son Jesus Christ fasted and was tempted in
the wilderness,**
and by his suffering, death and resurrection you delivered us from slavery to sin and
death and made with us the new covenant by water and the Spirit.

For forty days and forty nights we remember Christ's sacrifice.
Lead us to repentance for sin and the cleansing of our hearts, and with your people on
earth and all the company of heaven, may we praise your name and join their unending
hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**



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