



What is Lent and Why?

Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Easter. Lent is often described as a time of preparation and an opportunity to go deeper in your own spiritual relationship with Almighty God. This means that it's a time for personal reflection that prepares your heart and mind for Good Friday

(crucifixion of Jesus Christ) and Easter (resurrection of Jesus Christ).

What Are the Key Days During Lent?

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. You may have noticed people with a smudged, black cross or dot on their foreheads. The ashes symbolize our grief for the things we've done wrong and the resulting division of imperfect people from a perfect God. It is a time to seek forgiveness of our sins remembering the sacrifice Jesus did for our sins.

Maundy Thursday is the day before Good Friday. It commemorates the night before Jesus died, when He shared the Passover meal with His closest friends and followers. This is a time to feel the humility of Christ as He washed the feet of his disciples.

Good Friday is the day Christians remember Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross. The "Good" reflects how Jesus' death was a sacrifice on our behalf so we can receive God's forgiveness for our wrong doings or sins. On this day we are to also sacrifice time during this day to reflect upon the sorrow of Christ's death.

The time between Good Friday and Easter Sunday is a time often forgotten. But this is a time to deeply reflect upon Almighty God and why His son Jesus Christ gave up His life. It is a time to also reflect upon any sorrow you may have experienced and allow God to heal your grief/sorrow.

Easter Sunday becomes the joyful celebration of Jesus rising from the dead to give us the opportunity of eternal life. While death is a part of human life, Jesus made the way for and individual to have a relationship with God in this life and to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

What Happens During Lent and Why?

The three main things people should focus on during Lent are prayer, fasting (abstaining from something to reduce distractions and focus more on God) and giving/charity.

- Prayer during Lent focuses on our need for God's forgiveness of our misdoings. It's also about repenting (turning away from our known sins) and receiving God's mercy and love.
- Fasting, or giving something up, is a very common practice during Lent. The idea is that giving up something that's a regular part of life, like eating sweets, etc. Fasting should also be a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice. This time can also be replaced with more time connecting with God.
- Giving money or doing something good for others is a way to respond to God's grace, generosity and love. For example, some people spend time volunteering or donate money they would normally use to buy something, like their morning coffee.

It's important to note that doing these things can never make us earn or deserve Jesus' own sacrifice for each of us. People are flawed and will never be good enough for a perfect God until we abide with Him in heaven. Only Jesus has the power to rescue us from our sinful life. Jesus sacrificed Himself to bear the punishment for all our wrongdoings and offers us forgiveness through repentance (surrender to God). Christ was raised from the dead to give us an opportunity to have a relationship with God for eternity.

