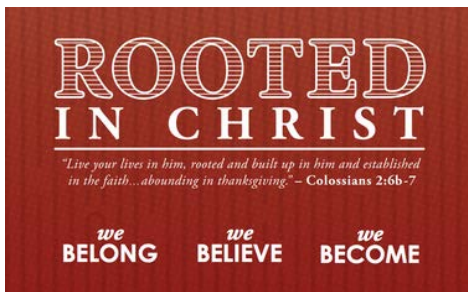


FEBRUARY-APRIL 2021

Nurturing Our Families of Faith

LENT EDITION

Some images have links.



But you must return to your God;
maintain love and justice,
and wait for your God always.

Hosea 12:6



Welcome the Season with Fasting, Praying & Giving

A message from the TCDSB Nurturing Our Catholic Community Team



Welcome to "Nurturing our Families of Faith." This is a newsletter to support the faith journey of students, staff, and their families across The Toronto Catholic District School Board during this Lenten season, and amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

We are grateful for the chance to share this journey with you, and we hope this newsletter will be helpful to you as you live out your faith in these challenging times.



The Lenten Season

As we enter the second Lenten season since the COVID-19 pandemic began, we ponder and reflect on what has transpired since this time last year. While our Lenten observances were interrupted last year, perhaps we will be able to attend Sunday Masses during Lent this year. While we may not have been able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation last year, as we spent those 40 days of contemplation and repentance in isolation from others, perhaps we will be able to receive the healing from this sacrament at some time during the next few weeks. This Lenten season may have greater significance for us this year: perhaps we have suffered loss, hardship; physical, emotional, mental anguish; and these experiences help us to relate to Christ and His suffering.

But we also think of the great and amazing sacrifice which Christ made for us through His suffering, once and for all, and revel in that love which we know is never ending and boundless. We are thankful for this love, and are safe in the knowledge that God will always be there for us.

Pope Francis reminds us, "Fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as preached by Jesus (cf. Mt 6:1-18), enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (fasting), concern and loving care for the poor (almsgiving), and childlike dialogue with the Father (prayer) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity. During this season of conversion, let us renew our faith, draw from the "living water" of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God.

LENT INFOGRAPHICS

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a time of **prayer** and **penance**, when Christ wants to lead us back to our baptismal promises of **dying to sin** and of **living for God**.

WHEN IS LENT?

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and continues until the afternoon of Holy Thursday. It runs for about 40 days.

WHY 40 DAYS? The "40 days" (not including Sundays) of fasting, prayer, and penance before Easter reflect Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO DURING LENT?

1. Turn away from our sins and turn back to God. Detach from habits and tendencies that are contrary to God's will. Lent is a time of conversion.
2. Open our hearts to our Father, so that we may live with Christ for God. Jesus is calling us to be people of praise and prayer, and living signs of his love for all.

"This time of fasting opens the gates of heaven to us. Let us welcome it and pray that when Easter comes we may share the joy of the risen Lord."
LENTEN RESPONSORY

Archdiocese of Toronto
www.archtoronto.org
Text from Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Living Lent"

What are you doing for Lent?

10 IDEAS FOR A MORE MEANINGFUL LENTEN SEASON

1. Give up sin

Show your love for God by keeping his commandments. Turn away from sins.

2. Fast

An empty stomach can lead to more attentive prayer. Give the money you saved on food to others in alms.



3. Pray

Be in constant prayer. Pray for your family and friends, for those who suffer, and for the Church and the world.

4. Do good works

Help those in need. Pray for them and be ready to serve them in their time of need.



5. Give alms

Help the poor and support the good works of the Church. Give cheerfully to God who has given us everything we have.



8. Control desire for possessions

Build up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. Cut down on material possessions, eliminate frills, lessen wants, share yourself – your time and your talents – with others.



7. Do meditative reading

Nourish your faith by spending time in quiet reading and reflection. Prayerful reading of God's word each day will open your heart to the Spirit, and let God's thoughts and ways influence yours.



6. Abstain

Give up meat or other desirable foods during Lent, especially on Friday, the day of Christ's saving death on the cross.

9. Control desire for entertainment

Too much entertainment and other distractions can lead to less or no time for the works of the Lord.

10. Carry out duties in life

Serve God by living out your vocation in love each day. God is calling each of us to be a living sacrifice. Offer your daily life through Christ!

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Text from Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Living Lent"

For more infographics please visit the Archdiocese of Toronto website

We mark our foreheads with ashes to remind ourselves that **we are not of this world** and are made for **eternity with God**.

"For You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in You."
-St. Augustine of Hippo

Where do the ashes come from?

The ashes are made from the **blessed palms** used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year.



WHY THE ASHES?

Ashes are a public sign of our intent to **die to our worldly desires** and **live in Christ**.

As our foreheads are marked with ashes, these words are said: **"Remember, that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."**

Ashes were used as a sign of repentance in the Old Testament:

"Then I turned to the Lord God, to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession" -Daniel 9:3-4

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ARE SUNDAYS PART OF LENT?



Lent runs from **Ash Wednesday** until the **Mass of the Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday)** exclusive

FROM THE GENERAL NORMS FOR THE LITURGICAL YEAR AND THE CALENDAR, 28

Sundays and solemnities are never days of penance and fasting.

These days provide a moment of refreshment in anticipation of the Resurrection. Sunday is the day on which Jesus rose from the dead, therefore we should not be fasting and mourning our sins on this day. Sundays are also not counted in the 40 days of Lent.

While Lenten Sundays are not days of penance and fasting, they are still celebrated differently from the Sundays in Ordinary Time. During Lent, we focus on the **journey towards the resurrection**, whereas outside of Lent, we **rejoice in the resurrection**.

If we gave something up for Lent, can we indulge in it on Sundays? You should not go out of your way on Lenten Sundays to indulge in whatever you gave up for Lent. **However**, you also do not need to actively avoid it, as long as whatever you gave up is not something you shouldn't do or consume in the first place. **Actively avoiding is considered fasting, which is forbidden on Sundays, even during Lent.**

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IMAGES: OSHTAWA'S ST. HEDWIG'S PARISH DURING LENT AND STAINED GLASS WINDOW FROM ST. ANSELM'S PARISH, TORONTO

SYMBOLS AND PRAYERS



Symbols play an important role in remembering the meaning of Lent throughout the season. Praying together as a family helps ground us in God's love and peace.

- [Daily Prayers and Reflections for Children for Lent](#)
- [Fasting, Giving, Praying: 25+ Ideas for Kids and Teens](#)
- [Lenten Prayers](#)
- [Lent Catholic Prayers and Reflections](#)
- [Lent Prayers: Xavier University](#)



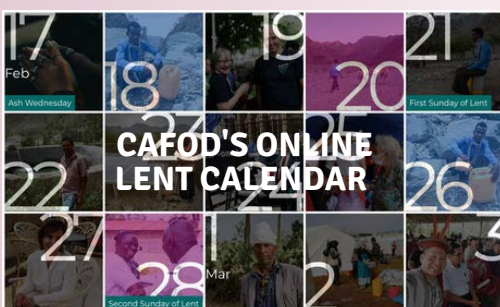
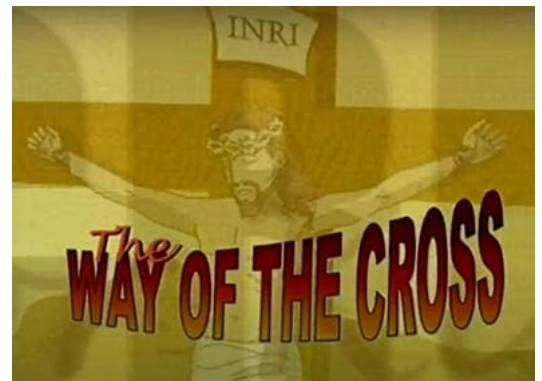
The Sacrament of Reconciliation invites us to reflect on how we are living our life and how we can become better people - our best version that God calls us to be. Consider the following:

- [Examination of Conscience for Children](#)
- [Examination of Conscience for Teenagers](#)
- [101 Practical Fasting Ideas for Lent](#)

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross, is traditionally prayed every Friday of Lent. It can be traced back to the 4th century when pilgrims would visit Jerusalem to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. There are traditionally 14 stations that highlight the Passion of Christ with time for reflection and prayer.

- [Stations of the Cross for Children](#) (brief text)
- [Stations of the Cross](#) by Loyola Press (brief text with images)



LENTEN CALENDARS

Families are invited to explore the [CAFOD online calendar](#) that focuses on justice issues around the world. Each link leads to learning, reflection, prayer and action. The [Loyola Press family calendar](#) offers daily suggestions for Lent. The Sisters of St. Francis offer a [Lenten calendar](#) that focuses on *Fratelli Tutti*.

PRAYING AS A FAMILY

✠ Sign of the Cross

Brief Introduction:

In this season of Lent, we gather together to ask God's forgiveness for any wrong that we may have done. We come knowing that God loves us and never wants to be separated from us. And so let us pray, in praise of his love for each one of us.

Opening Prayer:

Loving God,
You sent us Jesus your Son
to show how great is your love and care for
each one of us.
On this day
give us the courage to face
the things we have done
that separate us from your friendship.
Help us to welcome your love and
forgiveness once more.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 19:1-10

Reflect: God loves us for who we are. God wants us to be the best we can possibly be – but being the best begins with accepting and loving ourselves just as we are, the person God has made us to be. And God is always with us – always loving us and helping us again and again to let go of the things we do that hurt others – calling us to begin again, and to try to be who God wants us to be – showing God's love in the world by how we love and care for one another in our families, in our classrooms and among our friends.

Intercessions

Let us pray for all leaders throughout the world. That they might make God's loving presence more visible to those who suffer among us this Lent.

All: Renew our Hearts, O Lord.

Let us pray for the conversion of our hearts and minds during this Lenten season.

All: Renew our Hearts. O Lord.

Let us pray for the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and the unemployed; for those struggling with depression or addiction, and for all those in any kind of danger.

All: Renew our Hearts, O Lord.

Let us pray for our own needs and intentions.

All: Renew our Heart, O Lord.

Closing Prayer:

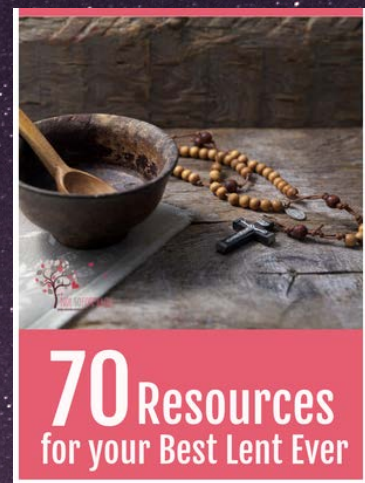
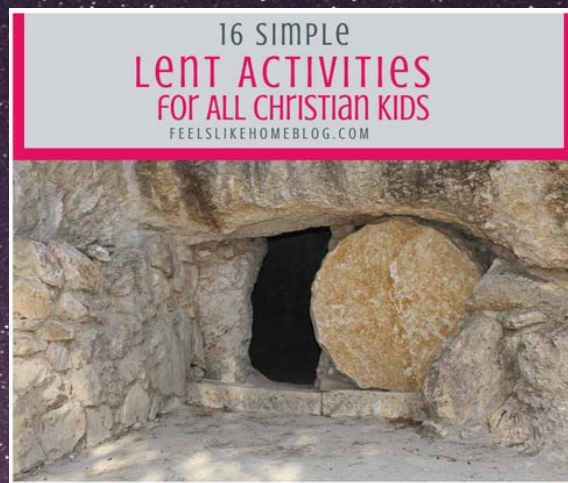
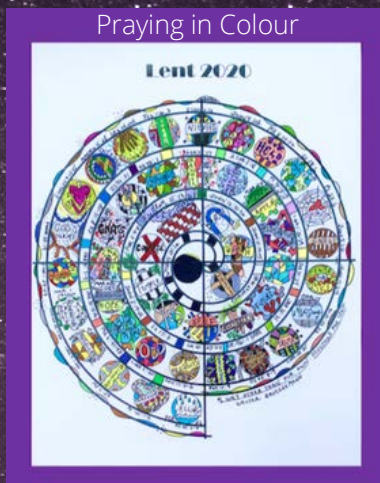
Loving God,
We thank you for your forgiveness this day.
We thank you for your love that is with us every day. May we show this love to all we meet. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

✠ Sign of the Cross



Adapted from *Lenten Celebrations with Children*,
The Diocese of Ossory, and from *The Prayerist*

FAMILY ACTIVITIES



Videos

- [Busted Halo: Lent in 3 Minutes](#)
- [Lego: Ash Wednesday and Lent in 60 Seconds](#)
- [Catholic Kids Media for Lent - Video Series](#)
- [Preparing for Lent \(Fr. Mike Schmitz\)](#)
- [What's the Purpose of Lent \(Fr. Mike Schmitz\)](#)
- [CAFOD: A Lent Prayer for Children](#)

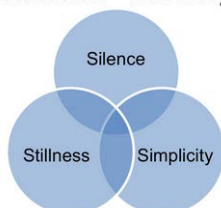
Music

- [Song Prayers for Lent and Holy Week 2021](#)
- [Primary Kids Lent Songs](#)
- [Contemporary Worship Songs for Lent](#)
- [Traditional Catholic Choral Lenten Hymns](#)
- [Promises: TRIBL](#)
- [Be Not Afraid: Catholic Artists from Home](#)
- [Shelter Me: Michael Joncas & Spiritu](#)

WORTH EXPLORING



Christian Meditation – The Prayer of 3 “S’s”



LOYOLA
PRESS.

ONLINE / LIVESTREAM MASSES

Catholic TV

Daily at 12:30 pm EST

St. Michael's Cathedral

Daily at 7:30 am EST
Sunday at 10 am

Salt and Light TV

Daily at 6:30 am, 11:00 am, 3:00 pm & 10:30 pm (all times EST)

Radio Maria

Monday and Thursday at 12:30 pm EST

Daily TV Mass

(Loretto Abbey Chapel)

Archdiocese of Toronto: Day of Confession:

<https://www.archtoronto.org/confession>

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit us at: [Nurturing Our Catholic Community](#),

Contact us at: ncc.team@tcdsb.org



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