

Household of Faith Lenten Worksheet

Parents: Make Lent a time for all in your household to walk with Jesus. Gather everyone and use this worksheet to help you begin this special season together.

If possible, place a purple cloth or paper, a candle and a Bible in the center of your family table to create a prayer space for the season. Any time you are at table, light the candle and share prayers of petition or of gratitude together.

A little about the season of Lent:

Lent began as a time of special preparation for those who were going to be initiated at the Easter Vigil. In the early Church, those who would be baptized, confirmed, and receiving Eucharist for the first time set aside forty days for deeper prayer, fasting, and almsgiving or doing works of mercy and service. As the tradition continued, those who were already Christian also began to observe Lent in order to renew their faith! And so the season of Lent began.

Lent is marked by the color of violet, signifying royalty and penitence. Throughout this season, we are drawn more deeply toward Christ, whose resurrection is victory over all that is not good, right, and holy. Christ is King and Lord of all, so royal violet is a fitting color for the season. We also take time during Lent to recognize how we fall short at times, to say we are sorry, and to resolve to do better in the future. Often, our practice during Lent includes participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The three actions of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (along with loving service of others) still mark Lent as a special time to focus on our relationship with God. This worksheet is designed to help you and all in your household begin the season well. We begin in prayer, mindful of our need for God in our lives, but also aware that others need our time, attention, prayer, service, or resources.

Lent is a time of renewal. When we turn our hearts and minds toward Jesus, we find our lives coming into focus. The special word that describes this is “metanoia,” which means to turn toward God. Often that turning involves turning away from (or fasting from) things that don’t follow God’s ways very well. Our Lenten prayer reminds us of this as we walk with Jesus.

Beginning the Season of Lent with Prayer and Promises

A parent or older child reads this aloud

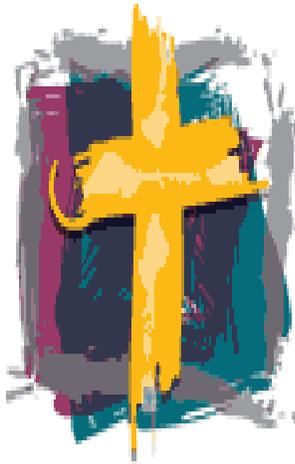
Lent is a time each year in which we turn back to God. Even though we sometimes get busy and put other things first in our lives, Lent reminds us to walk with Jesus in our daily lives. For centuries, Christians have taken time during Lent for prayer, to fast, and to serve and give to others. By making a promise to pray, fast, and grow as followers of Jesus, Lent will be a special season for our family.

Pause for a moment so that everyone will know that it is time to pray. If there is another adult or older child in the household, ask that person to lead the prayer.



Begin with the Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



PRAY: We begin this season and this time of prayer, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Loving Jesus,

You teach us to love, and invite us to grow as people of love by following your example. We begin this Lenten season in prayer, asking you to guide our thoughts and actions:

Our response is ***Be With Us, Lord.***

After each petition, repeat this response.

For open hearts this Lent, we pray...

For willingness to reach out to those in need, we pray...

For patience with each other, we pray...

For understanding when we are angry, we pray...

For strength when we face temptation, we pray...

For gratitude and generosity, we pray...

In the spirit of the season, we gather these prayers in the words Jesus taught us.
Our Father...

A parent or older child reads this aloud

FAST: Often during Lent, we make a resolution to “give up” something. The practice of making a Lenten resolution is tied to the tradition of fasting in order to remember our need for God in our lives. During Lent, we think about one way in which we might fast from something. At times, this fasting may be a “giving up” of something; at other times, the fasting may be an action or attitude we adopt in order to focus more clearly on God’s ways with our lives.

From what will you fast this Lent?

Ask all family members to think about what good action they will take, what they will give up, or what promise they will make about their faith. Take a few moments for everyone to think about their Lenten promise, and invite all family members to write their resolution on the space provided at the bottom of this sheet. (Write the promises for younger children so they are included.)



SERVE: During Lent, we also give of our time or our resources to others. Doing this is a way of following Jesus’ example, and when we serve others we realize the many ways in which we are blessed by God in our daily lives.



Service at Home: Let us begin our service at home. What will each of us do for another in our household this season?

Invite each family member to make a promise to do something special for one other person in your household. Include extended family members in your service and care. You do not need to tell the person what you promise to do! Simply act out of love. At the end of the week, share with each other what you did and why.

Serving the Poor: As a family, set aside time in the coming weeks to participate in a parish or community service project. Or, place a box in your prayer space and invite family members to share money to be given to the poor at the end of the season.

Our promises

Parents: Did you know that you may bless your child? The action of blessing is appropriate by any baptized person. It is a sign of prayer for the person being blessed, and a sign of love and care by the person who prays the prayer of blessing. Make Lent special by blessing your child(ren) each morning or night during Lent, and consider making this a daily, or nightly, tradition in your family!



Prayer for parents to bless their children each morning or night:

Place your hand on your child, or hold him or her in your arms as you pray a blessing using these or similar words.

Oh God, you know how much we love each other here. Thank you for our family, and thank you for all the good we have. I ask you now to bless each of us, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Fourteen ideas for a GREAT Lent in your home

Choose one or two of these activities for each week of Lent. Talk together at supper about how each of you is succeeding or needs to be challenged!

- 1: Pray for your enemies
- 2: Walk, carpool, bike or bus it
- 3: Don't turn on the car radio
- 4: Give \$20 to a non-profit of your choosing
- 5: Take 5 minutes of silence at noon
- 6: Look out the window until you find something of beauty you had not noticed before
- 7: Give 5 items of clothing to St Vincent de Paul or a local charity store
- 8: No complaining today – about anything
- 9: Do someone else's chore
- 10: Eat less and give the leftover money to a homeless shelter
- 11: Forgive someone
- 12: Tell someone what you are grateful for
- 13: Introduce yourself to a neighbor
- 14: Stop in the parish church to pray