



# Lent

## A Time of Preparation

The forty days spent by Jesus in the wilderness can be likened to the season of Lent. It was a time of preparation for his ministry, time in which he confronted the temptation to choose self and not the Father. For us, Lent is a time of preparation for the feast of Easter. It is a time in which we are invited to examine whether the will of God is central to our lives.

Come into a quiet place.  
Bring your Bible.

Light a candle.



Think of a word that is a blessing that you would hope for during this time of Lent – you might pray for peace, good health, or it might be faith, wisdom, courage...

Spend a few moments with your word.

Take note of any feelings, memories or thoughts that this word evokes in you.

Speak your word aloud or whisper it in the silence of your heart.

## Make the Sign of the Cross.

### Prayer

Gracious God, in this season of Lent we listen attentively to your word.

We ask you to bless us with your gifts of discernment and wisdom.

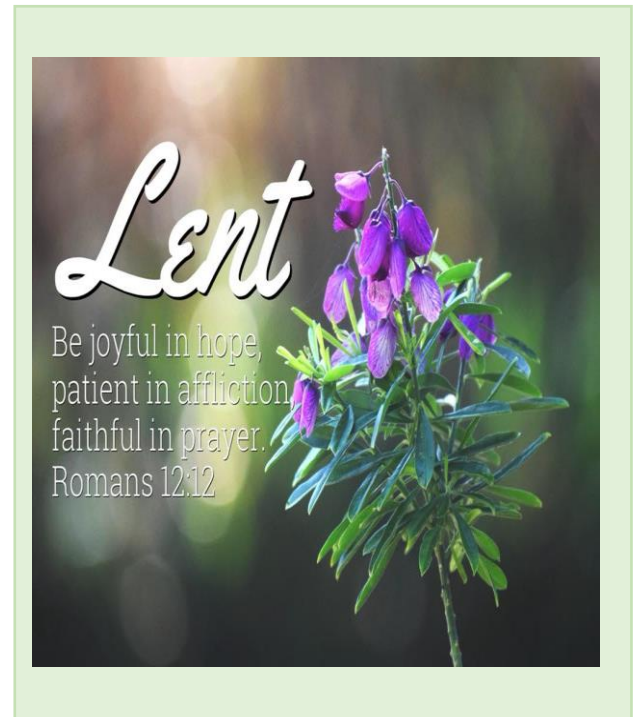
Free us from all our fears and worries.

Eternal source of light, shine brightly in our hearts.

May we always be the Body of Christ, blessed, broken and given

to a world hungry for your truth, compassion, mercy and justice.

Amen.



### Preparing for The Word

Allow God to speak to you through this story.

Immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and smells of this scene. In this gospel story, it is the Holy Spirit who leads Jesus to experience forty days in the wilderness where he is tempted by Satan and thrust in with wild beasts. God does not abandon him. It was only after his time in the wilderness that Jesus was able to begin his public mission, proclaiming that “the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the Good News. Waiting, as Jesus did in the wilderness, requires us to exercise humility, to give up on controlling all life events, to give ourselves up to the will of the Spirit. St Mary of the Cross gave all things to God for God.

### Read

**Matthew 4: 1-11**



## Reflection

- *Jesus' time in the wilderness placed him in a position of vulnerability. How do you think this experience prepared Jesus for what was to come?*
- *What have been some experiences of waiting in your life?*
- *How have these experiences strengthened you?*
- *How have these given you deeper understanding... of compassion, mercy and justice?*
- *When have you experienced times of wilderness in your own life? Were you tempted to give up on God? How did you remain faithful?*



## Response

Call to mind people you know who are in need of God's love.

Loving God, pour your blessing on all who struggle in times of disconnection and isolation. Amen

Loving God, pour your blessing on all who are hungry in body, mind and spirit. Amen

Loving God, pour your blessing on all who call us to be the presence of Christ to them. Amen

Loving God,  
As this season of Lent unfolds,  
you call us to return again and again.

As you invite us to reflect on your love made visible in the person of Jesus, align our lives more closely with you through prayer, fasting and generous giving.

Bless our desire to accompany Jesus' suffering here and now in the crucified people of our world.

With your grace, may we live Lent fully and move with transformed hearts into the abundant life of Easter morning.

Amen.

## Make the Sign of the Cross

### *A Litany for Lent*



We fast from judging others,  
but feast on patience.  
We fast from apparent differences,  
but feast on unity of all life.  
We fast from words that pollute,  
but feast on words that affirm.  
We fast from complaining,  
but feast on appreciation.  
We fast from bitterness and anger,  
but feast on forgiveness and mercy.  
We fast from discouragement,  
but feast on hope.  
We fast from suspicion,  
but feast on trust.  
We fast from idle gossip,  
but feast on purposeful silence.  
We fast from problems that overwhelm,  
but feast on prayer that strengthens.