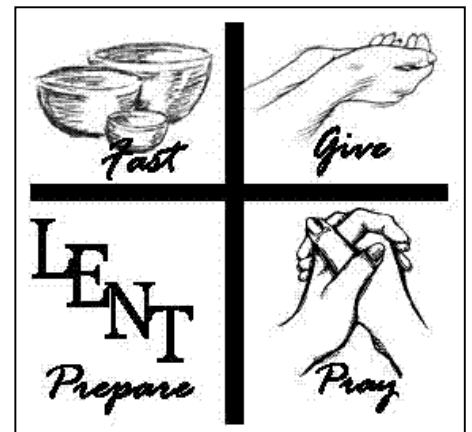


IDEAS for Lent 2022

THESE WERE JESUS'S WORDS to us on Ash Wednesday, setting out our Lenten discipline:



ALMSGIVING ...

“Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So **when you give alms**, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. **But when you give alms**, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

PRAYER ...

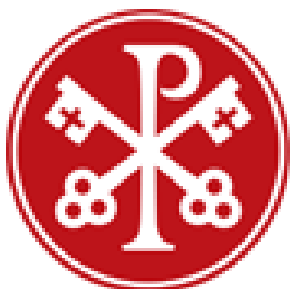
“And **when you pray**, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. **But when you pray**, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

FASTING ...

“**When you fast** do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. **But when you fast**, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.”

(Gospel of Matthew, ch. 6)

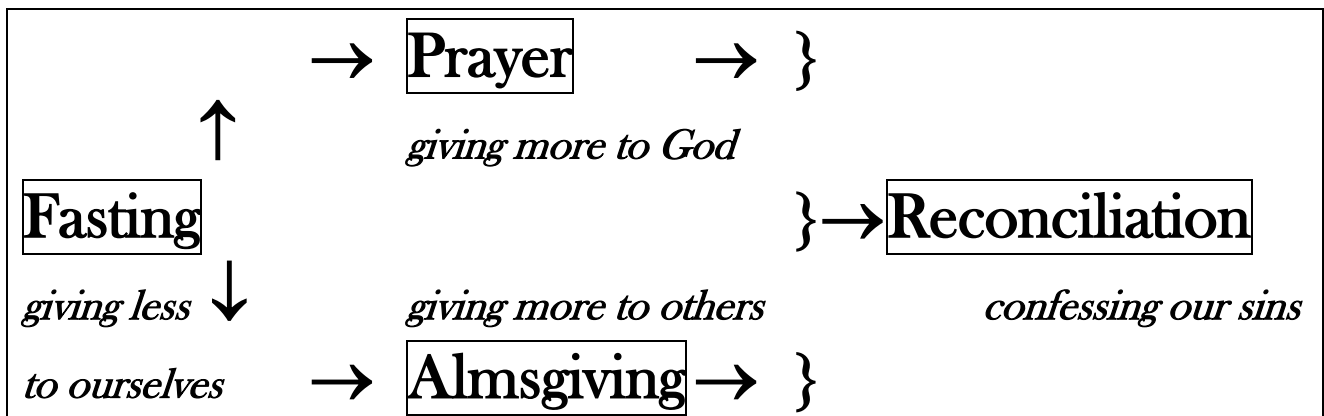
So, in this leaflet I'd like to offer some reflections and ideas for you, for how to keep a good Lent this year, so as to come, refreshed and renewed spiritually, to the great feast of Easter in six weeks' time.



CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY

for London's Universities

Here's my mental picture of what we're up to in Lent. This, surely, is the vision for Lent, to make our Lenten practices have a 'shape':



So, when we fast, giving something up, we gain the *time* to give back to God in prayer, and /or we gain some *money* to help others in their needs. This focus on God and on our neighbour also opens up our hearts to our own frailty before God, and our need for forgiveness. So our Lent is then completed by seeking the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

I. Fasting.

Let's start with fasting. Lent is a time traditionally to 'give something up.' Even in secular society people sometimes seem to 'jump on the bandwagon' and use this time of year for a bit of dieting and self-help with their intake, be it of calorific foods or of alcohol etc. – a bit of a 'detox' so to speak. But our fasting as Christians in Lent has altogether a deeper and more focussed meaning. We began Lent with Ash Wednesday, a day of Fasting and Abstinence from meat. To give up some food and drink, and to give up meat for a day is a sign that we are not dependent on these things: *Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.* So, it is good to give things up; maybe things we should take more moderately anyway. Here are some reminders:

1. **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday** are compulsory days of Fasting and Abstinence from meat: days of Penance, to start and end our Lenten season.
2. Every Friday throughout the year (unless a solemn feast-day) is a day of Abstinence, when we must eat no meat, but you may wish to **give up meat some other day(s) of the week** as well. Wednesday is a traditional 'second' day of the week for penance, so consider avoiding meat on that day too.
3. In Lent we will each have **different ways of 'giving up'** which might be a particular type of favourite food (chocolate, snacks ...) or drink (e.g. alcohol ...). Other possibilities might be giving up some TV, or video streaming, or iPlayer; choosing not to go to the cinema, theatre or concerts; ... or even avoiding some of our trawling FaceBook or other social media.
4. **Making Friday evenings quiet** is something I find really worthwhile – setting aside that time to read and/or pray privately, without the distraction of TV or internet.

5. Make an effort to **arrive early for Sunday Mass**, and after Sunday Mass, as a special act of sacrifice, **keeping silence in church**, so as together to show our respect for the House of God, and for the Sacred Liturgy just celebrated. This immediately has the benefit of letting others stay and pray, making their thanksgiving to Jesus in Holy Communion more fully. Our chatting after Mass can take place happily over tea & coffee.

II. Prayer

None of us can ever say we pray enough! There are always opportunities to pray more often. Here are some ideas:

1. **Worth Abbey retreat, 18th to 20th March.** Wonderful opportunity for 48hrs out of London for a weekend retreat in the country, at the Benedictine Abbey of Worth (West Sussex). Heavily reduced in price by a grant received by Newman House for you. Sign up ASAP at: www.universitycatholic.net/forms
2. Think seriously about **coming to daily Mass**. The greatest expression of prayer is the Holy Mass, so if one can make an effort to get to daily Mass in the week, as well as on Sundays, then one is offering the best possible prayer. Our weekday Mass time (Mon-Fri) is 5.30pm at Newman House.
3. Regular times for quiet **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** in Newman House are: Tuesday 6-9pm; Sundays 6pm-7pm. Simply being present to Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist is a very peaceful and powerful way to pray.
4. **All-Day of Adoration for Peace in the Ukraine:** Wed 9th March, 9am- 5.30pm.
5. The **Stations of the Cross** are a beautiful and fitting devotion for Lent, moving our hearts to be united to the Passion of the Lord in His suffering and death. Each Lent **Friday at 6pm**, after 5.30pm Mass in Newman House, the 'Way of the Cross' is followed. Each week a different set of meditations is used, to bring variety to our reflections on Jesus's path to Calvary. Also, LSE CathSoc hosts Stations of the Cross in the beautiful church of SS Anselm & Cecilia (Kingsway) at 1.05pm Fridays in March.
6. **Newman House Lent booklet** has been produced with reflections and prayer-points for each and every day from the Sunday before Lent until the Sunday after Easter. Please make use of it (available from Newman House)
7. **Apps for Christian Meditation:** why not try out '**Pray as You Go**' (<https://pray-as-you-go.org/>) or '**Examen**' (<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/reimagining-examen-app/>), both from Jesuit spirituality.
8. **CTS racks in the chapel lobby** have a variety of Catholic booklets with a whole host of easy reading on spiritual subjects. If everyone just bought one booklet and read it in Lent then our community would have grown hugely in knowledge and love of our faith!

III. Almsgiving

Giving charitably is the third ‘pillar’ of our Lenten practice as Christians. I’m sure that many of us – if not most – give regularly to charities through the year, and it might seem hard to reach into one’s pocket again, and deeper, come Lent. But we are urged to do so by Our Lord, so that we show care for our neighbour who is in greater need.

1. **CaFOD Fast Day for Lent** will be Friday, 11th March. The idea is to give something up, so that the money saved can be given to CaFOD for the help of the world’s neediest. This year’s campaign focuses on the need for combatting malnutrition. <https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Family-Fast-Day>
2. **Humanitarian Aid for the Ukraine.** In the light of the armed aggression towards the people of the Ukraine, the best way to help with financial support is – as the clergy at the local Ukraine-Rite Catholic Cathedral have told us – to send money via the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/helpukraine> ... See the QR code:
3. You may wish to consider setting up a ‘**Charities Aid Foundation**’ account, into which you pay a regular amount each month, with the option of Gift-Aid added to the account. Then, at any time, you can make a donation to a charity of your choice It’s a wonderful way to save up to give to charity. www.cafonline.org.
4. At the end of Lent, on Good Friday, we will make our annual collection for the ‘**Holy Places**’, the sites of Our Lord’s life, death and resurrection, which are cared for by the most ancient of all Christian peoples, those of the Holy Land. There are great sufferings for many peoples in the Middle East at present, and the Christians of the Middle East are amongst the worst-treated.



IV. Reconciliation – Sacrament of Confession

Having fasted, prayed, and given alms generously, the Lord should be speaking to our heart also in terms of our consciences. The final part of what we must do this Lent is to go to receive the Lord’s forgiveness for our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

1. **Before each Sunday evening Mass** there are Confessions 6–7pm (Fr Philip); and **after each Monday evening Mass** in term time (6–7pm, Fr Ivano). Please make use of these opportunities, as Lent continues.
2. There may also be a **Penitential Service**, when several priests will be available to hear confessions after a brief introductory service. Details & date TBC.
3. **Fr Philip is also often available** at call / by arrangement, to hear Confessions.
4. As Easter draws nearer I will make **other times available, especially in Holy Week**, and these will be advertised. It doesn’t matter where you go, as long as you do go! Every Catholic needs to include Confession in his/her regular practice, so as to grow in holiness as the Lord would wish.

MAY YOU EXPERIENCE THIS YEAR A BLESSED LENT! – Fr Philip