

Lent 2025

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.” - Exodus 20:2

DAILY READINGS

ASH WEDNESDAY WEEK

Mar 5: Lk 13:1-5
Mar 6: Lk 13:22-30
Mar 7: Lk 12:22-34
Mar 8: Lk 12:35-48

FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Mar 9: Lk 10:23-28
Mar 10: Lk 10:29-37
Mar 11: Lk 11:1-4
Mar 12: Lk 11:5-8
Mar 13: Lk 11:9-13
Mar 14: Lk 11:27-28
Mar 15: Lk 11:33-36

SECOND WEEK OF LENT

Mar 16: Lk 17:1-4
Mar 17: Lk 17:5-10
Mar 18: Lk 17:22-37
Mar 19: Lk 18:9-14
Mar 20: Lk 18:15-17
Mar 21: Lk 18:18-23
Mar 22: Lk 18:24-30

THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Mar 23: Lk 18:31-34
Mar 24: Lk 19:41-44
Mar 25: Lk 19:45-48
Mar 26: Lk 20:1-8
Mar 27: Lk 20:9-19
Mar 28: Lk 20:20-26
Mar 29: Lk 20: 27-40

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

Mar 30: Lk 21:1-4
Mar 31: Lk 21:5-11
Apr 1: Lk 21:12-19
Apr 2: Lk 21:20-24
Apr 3: Lk 21:34-36
Apr 4: Lk 22:24-30
Apr 5: Lk 22:31-34

FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

Apr 6: Lk 22:35-38
Apr 7: Lk 22:39-46
Apr 8: Lk 22:47-53
Apr 9: Lk 22:54-65
Apr 10: Lk 23:1-17
Apr 11: Lk 23:18-25
Apr 12: Lk 23:26-32

HOLY WEEK

Apr 13: Lk 19:28-48
Apr 14: Lk 22:1-6
Apr 15: Lk 22:7-13
Apr 16: Lk 22:14-23
Apr 17: Lk 23:33-43
Apr 18: Lk 23:44-49
Apr 19: Lk 23:50-56

EASTER SUNDAY

Apr 20: Lk 24:1-12

When our God reveals himself, his message is always one of freedom...The call to freedom is a demanding one. It is not answered straightaway; it has to mature as part of a journey. Just as Israel in the desert still clung to Egypt – often longing for the past and grumbling against the Lord and Moses – today too, God’s people can cling to an oppressive bondage that it is called to leave behind. We realize how true this is at those moments when we feel hopeless, wandering through life like a desert and lacking a promised land as our destination. Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. Hos 2:16-17). God shapes his people, he enables us to leave our slavery behind and experience a Passover from death to life. Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.

The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey. If our celebration of Lent is to be concrete, the first step is to desire to *open our eyes to reality*... All too many things keep us apart from each other, denying the fraternity that, from the beginning, binds us to one another...

Our Lenten journey will be concrete if...we realize that even today we remain under the rule of Pharaoh. A rule that makes us weary and indifferent. A model of growth that divides and robs us of a future. Earth, air and water are polluted, but so are our souls. True, Baptism has begun our process of liberation, yet there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery. A kind of attraction to the security of

familiar things, to the detriment of our freedom.

In the Exodus account, there is a significant detail: it is God who sees, is moved and brings freedom; Israel does not ask for this...we need to combat a deficit of hope that stifles dreams and the silent cry that reaches to heaven and moves the heart of God. This “deficit of hope” is not unlike the nostalgia for slavery that paralyzed Israel in the desert and prevented it from moving forward. An exodus can be interrupted: how else can we explain the fact that humanity has arrived at the threshold of universal fraternity and at levels of scientific, technical, cultural, and juridical development capable of guaranteeing dignity to all, yet gropes about in the darkness of inequality and conflict.

God has not grown weary of us. Let us welcome Lent as the great season in which he reminds us: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). Lent is a *season of conversion, a time of freedom*. Jesus himself, as we recall each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was driven into the desert by the Spirit in order to be tempted in freedom. For forty days, he will stand before us and with us: the incarnate Son. Unlike Pharaoh, God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters. The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery. In Lent, we find new criteria of justice and a community with which we can press forward on a road not yet taken...

It is time to act, and in Lent, *to act also means to pause*. To pause in

prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan *in the presence of a wounded brother or sister*. Love of God and love of neighbor are one love. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbor. For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause! The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers. This is God’s dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.

“...Indeed, we are experiencing a third world war fought piecemeal. Yet let us find the courage to see our world, not as being in its death throes but in a process of giving birth, not at the end but at the beginning of a great new chapter of history. We need courage to think like this” (*Address to University Students*, 3 August 2023). Such is the courage of conversion, born of coming up from slavery. For faith and charity take hope, this small child, by the hand. They teach her to walk, and at the same time, she leads them forward.

Excerpts from the *Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2024*

Seeking the Forgiveness of Jesus

During Lent, we approach the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation as the way of returning to the Father who restores for us the dignity of our Baptism and the full privilege of being adopted as His children. An integral confession calls us to spend time examining our conscience, not only remembering those material sins which we have committed, but also allowing God's Spirit to probe the depths of our hearts to uncover our unrecognized wounds and unclaimed motives. Discerning why we commit the sins in our life helps us to be open more fully to the redeeming work of Christ through this Sacrament. The most important component of Confession is contrition, sorrow for our sins, which comes only when we make a good and honest self-examination before we enter the confessional.



*Lord Jesus, Son of God,
have mercy on me a sinner.
Grant me the grace to be
renewed during this
observance of Holy Lent.
Armed with prayer, penance,
and almsgiving, may I lay
aside those things which
hinder my search for You!*

PRAYER

Have I prayed as I ought? Has God been at the center of my life? How I have ignored God and His divine inspiration? Have I listened attentively to God's voice in the Sacred Liturgy? Have I been faithful to my obligation for Sunday Mass and Holy Days? Do I prepare myself and those entrusted to my care for Mass? Am I lazy or complacent in prayer? Do I pray for my loved ones and my



enemies? Is my prayer self-centered? Have I explored the rich spirituality of the Catholic Tradition and its many ways of devotion? Do I spend time in prayer before the Most Blessed Sacrament?

PENANCE

Have I made Fridays throughout the year a day of penance? If I eat meat, do I do another act of penance? Do I fast throughout the year? Do I willingly abstain from those unnecessary things which clutter my life? Does noise make me deaf to others and to God? Am I aware of the ways in which my sins make me unworthy of my wonderful vocation as a Christian? Am I

humbled by the love and goodness of God in my life? Do I see my faith as a gift and not a burden? Do I receive Holy Communion worthily? Do I have a sense of entitlement or superiority? Do I exercise my body and mind? Do I live a healthy lifestyle?

CHARITY

Do I give of myself freely and generously to others? Do I forgive those who have harmed

me? Do I give others the benefit of the doubt? Do I judge the motives of others? Am I faithful to my obligations to my family, to my parish, to those in need? Do I give from my surplus or my want? Do I trust that God will reward a cheerful giver? Am I sensitive to the sufferings of others? Do I allow myself to acknowledge the many persons I encounter each day? Do I hold opinions which bring harm to others? Do I make decisions which are contrary to Catholic moral teaching? Do I desire the admiration and praise of others? Do I love myself enough to study and grow in my faith? Have I been a good steward of creation and the created goods entrusted to me?

Lenten Observances

The following are the guidelines for the observance of Lent:

PRAYING. Catholics are encouraged to pray more during Lent, especially with Sacred Scripture. Spiritual reading, such as the lives of the saints, and devotions like the Stations of the Cross and the Holy Rosary are helpful to spiritual growth. Lent is also an ideal time to receive properly the Sacrament of Penance in preparation for the celebration of Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

FASTING. Catholics aged 14 and older are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent. In addition, on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, Catholics aged 18-59 are required to fast, limiting themselves to one full meal and two smaller meals each day not equal to the full meal.

ALMSGIVING. Moved by the sacrifice of Christ and the suffering of humanity, many Christians combine almsgiving with fasting, giving to the poor the money they saved by eating, drinking or buying less as they rely more upon God's abundant grace. The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy provide ample inspiration for other ways to sacrifice time and resources for those most in need of help.