

Living God's Love



A Lent Course for Schools

Lent is often a time to give something up, such as chocolate, or cut down on something, such as spending too much time playing on the X-Box. Lent may also be a time for developing good spiritual habits. One of the best spiritual habits is reading the Bible every day. These resources may help schools do this. Reading Bible passages for Lent in school worship or in the classroom takes a little planning, but it is well worth the effort, because it helps children develop a familiarity with the Bible to help them come to a deeper understanding of what Lent means to Christians.

Choose the right Bible

Choose a translation of the Bible that is age-appropriate for your children. Younger children might be more comfortable with the language of a modern translation, such as a Lion Children's Bible, the New International Children's Bible or Good News Bible. It can be good, however, to explore the richness of other translations, such as the King James Version, which celebrates its 400th anniversary this year.

When does Lent start?

Lent is the period of preparation for the celebration of the greatest Christian mystery - the death of Christ on Good Friday and his Resurrection on Easter Sunday. It is a 40-day period marked by **prayer**, **fasting** and **helping others** (amongst other things). Since Easter Sunday is a **moveable feast**, Lent also begins on a different date each year. **Ash Wednesday**, the first day of Lent in the Western calendar, falls 46 days before Easter Sunday. In 2011, Ash Wednesday falls on 9 March.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it called Ash Wednesday?

Ashes are something that are left when something is burned. For **Christians**, ashes are a symbol of being sorry for things they have done wrong and want to get rid of forever. It is also a reminder that we all come from ashes, and to ashes we all will return.



Living God's Love interpreted by children from schools in St Albans Diocese

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www.livinggodslove.org

Why are ashes marked on the forehead?

For Christians, the marking on the forehead with ash marks the commitment to Jesus Christ and God. Christians want to show God that they were sorry for the wrong things they have done in the past year. Using a mark on the forehead as a sign of commitment is also used in many Middle Eastern cultures where a round, coloured circle is marked on the forehead.

What happens on Ash Wednesday across the world?

Many Christians will attend a religious service where the ashes are blessed by the church leader, and placed on their forehead.

A Lent Course

An excellent way to focus our thoughts and deepen our understanding of the meaning of **Lent** is to turn to the Bible. Sometimes, however, it is hard to know where to start. A **Bishops' Lent Course** for parish group study has been written by the Bishop of St Albans and the Bishop of Bedford, and the Children's Work Advisers have written a Lent course for parish families:

http://www.livinggodslove.org/living_gods_love/lent/families_lent_challenge/. These are under the Living God's Love challenge and explore the three themes Going Deeper into God, Transforming Communities and Making New Disciples. The courses cover six weeks. Schools can also prepare a Lenten Course by looking at the following Bible passages and using the prayers from the parish family course:

Bible Readings and prayers	Theme Values and Virtues	School Worship
<p>Week 1: Matthew 4.1-11 Heavenly Father, your Son stood up to the devil and used your words to help him to be strong: help us during Lent to get to know more about you and discover how you can make us strong too. Amen</p>	<p>The Temptations</p> <p>Trust Commitment Loyalty Forgiveness</p>	<p>Read the story of Jesus' temptation during the week in an age-appropriate Bible</p>
<p>Week 2: Matthew 6.5-21 Lord, you ask us to be truthful: fill our minds with your wisdom, fill our hearts with your love; fill our lives with your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen</p>	<p>Prayer and Priorities</p> <p>Unity Community Reconciliation</p>	<p>Focus on the Lord's Prayer and talk about forgiveness</p>
<p>Week 3: Matthew 5.13-16 As the children of God, let us bear fruit in the lives of those around us. As the household of God, let us be salt in our communities. As people of God, let us be light to the world. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen</p>	<p>Let your Light shine</p> <p>Righteousness Openness Love Loyalty</p>	<p>Explore the Parable of Salt and Light</p>

<p>Week 4: Matthew 25.34-40 God our loving father, help those who are tired, those who are very sad, those who are dying, those who have no friends and feel forgotten by the world. Help us to care for all the people you love. In Jesus' name. Amen</p>	<p>Hungry & Thirsty</p> <p>Hospitality Humility Commitment Love Respect</p>	<p>Talk about caring for others and through others caring about God</p>
<p>Week 5: Matthew 10.1-16 Loving God, you called your disciples to show your Kingdom is very near by the things they said and did: help us also to proclaim the good news of your love so that more people may come to love you and become your followers too. Amen</p>	<p>Making new disciples</p> <p>Commitment Hospitality Love Hope</p>	<p>Following Jesus' instructions to tell people about God</p>
<p>Week 6: Matthew 28.16-20 God of grace and life, you have given us a place in your family as one of your disciples. Help us to follow you faithfully and to know that all who follow Jesus are our brothers and sisters wherever they live. Amen</p>	<p>Spreading the Good News (Gospel)</p> <p>Communication Service Faith</p>	<p>Explain the work the disciples need to do to spread the word of God</p>

Practical ideas - A Lenten Cross

<http://anglicanprayer.wordpress.com/2009/03/02/lent-for-families-a-lenten-version-of-a-jesse-tree/>

Like the Jesse Tree, a Lenten Cross can be made of many materials. Some options are: a banner with Velcro dots for fastening, a wooden cross with small nails or hooks, or a laminated cardboard poster with re-useable sticky putty.

Bible verses and corresponding image or symbol for each day of Lent:

Ash Wednesday Even Now (Joel 2:12-13) *Image:* ashes – as in the sign we receive on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday

2nd Day of Lent (Thursday) Original sin (Genesis 3:1-20) *Image:* an apple, or a small plastic snake

3rd Day (Friday) Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-12) *Image:* two men, one standing with his fist raised

4th Day (Saturday) Noah's Ark (Genesis 6:5-13; 9:8-11) *Image:* picture of Noah's ark

5th Day (Monday) Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22:1-18) *Image:* a lamb

6th Day (Tuesday) Jesus and Abraham (John 8:31-40) *Image:* a chain – symbol of the slavery Christ frees us from

7th Day (Wednesday) Moses and the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-21) *Image:* picture of the two tablets

8th Day (Thursday) The Covenant with Abraham and Moses (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

Image: an outstretched hand

9th Day (Friday) A New Covenant (Luke 22:15-20) *Image:* two hands clasped together

10th Day (Saturday) Two Great Commandments (Matthew 22:34-40) *Image:* notice of the two great commandments

11th Day (Monday) Forty Years in the Desert (Numbers 14:2-4, 10-11, 17-19, 33-34)

Image: small piece of bread to represent manna

12th Day (Tuesday) Forty Days in the Desert (Luke 4:1-13) *Image:* a stone/picture of a city to represent Satan's temptation

13th Day (Wednesday) The Day of the Lord (Joel 2:10-16) *Image:* a trumpet

14th Day (Thursday) Jonas and the Whale (Jonah 1:1 – 4:11) *Image:* a plastic whale or fish, a picture of a large whale

15th Day (Friday) Whom Shall I send? (Isaiah 6:8-10) *Image:* a red coal

16th Day (Saturday) Trust and Rescue (Psalm 22) *Image:* a small globe

17th Day (Monday) Prophetic role of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1: 4-8; 3:12-15) *Image:* a shepherd's staff

18th Day (Tuesday) Story of Elijah (2 Kings 2:9-12) *Image:* a chariot and horses

19th Day (Wednesday) Story of Elisha (2 Kings 4:38-44) *Image:* basket of bread and fishes

20th Day (Thursday) Loaves and Fishes (Mark 6:34-44) *Image:* basket of bread and fish

21st Day (Friday) Gabriel and the Anointed One (Daniel 9:15-24) *Image:* a picture of the Angel Gabriel

22nd Day (Saturday) Anointing of David (1 Samuel 16:1-13) *Image:* a horn or jug of oil

23rd Day (Monday) Anointing at Bethany (Matthew 26:6-13) *Image:* vial of perfume

24th Day (Tuesday) John the Baptist (Luke 1:13-17, 80) *Image:* pitcher of water

25th Day (Wednesday) Prophecy of New Order (Micah 4:1-7) *Image:* a sword and a pruning hook

26th Day (Thursday) Fulfillment of all prophecies (Luke 24:44-48) *Image:* picture of a book, the Scriptures

27th Day (Friday) Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36) *Image:* a tent

28th Day (Saturday) Entrance into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-9) *Image:* small plastic donkey or piece of palm

29th Day (Monday) Zeal for your house consumes me (Psalm 69:6-25) *Image:* a musical instrument

30th Day (Tuesday) Driving the moneylenders from the temple (John 2:13-25)

Image: a knotted piece of rope

31st Day (Wednesday) Judas (Matthew 26:14-25) *Image:* silver coins – to represent Judas' 30 pieces of silver

32nd Day (Thursday) The Innocent Victim (Isaiah 53:1-12) *Image:* a white lamb

33rd Day (Friday) Last Supper (Luke 22:14-20) *Image:* cup and plate

34th Day (Saturday) Agony in Garden (Matthew 26:36-46) *Image:* olives – from the garden of Gethsemane

35th Day (Monday) Denial of Jesus (Mark 14:29-31 and 14:66-72) *Image:* small plastic cockerel

36th Day (Tuesday) Crown of Thorns (Matthew 27:27-31) *Image:* a twig bent in a circle – the crown of thorns

37th Day (Wednesday) Scourging at the Pillar *Image:* a leather strip – the thongs of the whip used when Jesus was scourged

38th Day (Holy Thursday) The Two Thieves (Luke 23:32-43) *Image:* a row of three crosses

39th Day (Good Friday) On the Cross *Image:* a single die, a piece of sponge and a blue strip of cloth

40th Day (Holy Saturday) Death of Jesus (Matthew 27:45-54) *Image:* small stones/gravel/dirt – reminder of the earthquake

Websites for use with older students:

Count your Blessings

Celebrate and give thanks, download your Lent resources today

www.christianaid.org.uk/lent

Exploring God's Mercy

A new Lent course for 2011 by Steven Croft from the Church of England

<http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/section.asp?id=2396543&cachefixer=cf113849745349507>

Websites for use in primary schools:

The Bible in 10 Minutes

<http://www.going4growth.org.uk/downloads/The Bible in 10 minutes.pdf>

Sunday School Lessons (highly recommended)

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/lent.htm>

Barnabas

www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/pages/data.asp?layout=products.htm&title.like=lent