



WORTH THE STRUGGLE

*"Do not grieve, for the joy of
the Lord is your strength."
Nehemiah 8:10*

LENT 2023



WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a period of preparation for Easter and a key part of the Church's year. It is forty days long, echoing the forty days Jesus spent in the desert preparing for His public ministry. It begins on Ash Wednesday 22nd February and continues for six weeks until Easter Sunday.

Lent has traditionally been a time of penance and because Sunday is a day of celebration, they are not counted as being included in the forty days of Lent.

Our Theme:

Our theme this Lent is 'Worth the Struggle'.

There are some times in life where everything feels like a struggle, when we wonder why we are being faced with challenges. Life is hard, and as humans we are far from perfect, but this is the point of Lent. Lent does not shy away from this, Lent forces us to confront our imperfections and to overcome our struggles.

This Lent, we are asked to identify what is most keeping you from God. Then, focus all our prayer and attention on fighting that obstacle.

During this time we are reminded of when Jesus went out into the desert for forty days and wrestled with temptation and evil. We too must use this time to wrestle with our flaws and temptations. We use the unique grace and gifts of this penitential season to give us strength as we draw closer to the Lord through this time.

Finally, we remember the story of Jesus' passion. Jesus overcame death just as light always overcomes darkness. We too will overcome our struggles and learn profound truths about ourselves along the way.

THREE PILLARS OF LENT



IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THERE ARE THREE 'PILLARS' OF LENT.

Prayer: Prayer is our conversation with God. It is through prayer that we find the strength to fast and give to charity. It is through prayer that we develop a closer, more intimate relationship with God. This relationship makes us so grateful for the blessings he has bestowed upon us, that we eagerly give to those less fortunate than us.

Fasting: Fasting is one of the most ancient actions linked to Lent. Fasting rules have changed through the ages, but throughout Church history fasting has been considered sacred. The prophet Isaiah insists that fasting without changing our behaviour is not pleasing to God. Therefore, the goal of fasting is linked with prayer. The pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God, and prayer and fasting together brings us to what Lent is about a deeper experience of God.

Almsgiving: Almsgiving is simply a response by us to God, a response that we have come to through prayer and fasting. It is an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given us, and a realization that it is never just "me and God." Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life and we show this during Lent.

THIS LENT WE WILL FOCUS ON:

This Lent we are focusing on the virtues of Respect and Compassion . It is our role to help pupils.

This half term we don't want to just talk about the virtues, we want to live them! There are three main areas of focus here:

1. Pupil led form time prayer.
2. Charity/ community work.

PUPIL PRAYER

Like in Advent, pupils will lead prayer in form time throughout Lent. Pupils are invited to reflect on the virtues and share their interpretation of them with the form. Pupils can chose to use any medium to lead prayer, examples of good practice include: videos, music, poetry and prayer cards. Pupils can also choose to use the usual prayer during form time, if they wish.

LENT FAYRE

In keeping with tradition at school, we will have our annual Lent fayres during week 5. This year, form groups will be asked to only create one fayre stall. This is to ensure high quality stalls. In addition, this Lent, year groups will be working together to create an extra special fayre, with Yr 7 & 8 together and Yr 9 & 10 together. We hope with two fayres we can create a real buzz in the hall.

This is our main fundraising event this Lent so we must think about how we can make the most of this!

Dates:

- Friday 17th March: Deadline for fayre ideas.
- Tuesday 21st March: HOY only: Deadline for checking fayre ideas and responding to form tutors.
- Day of the fayre: Tutors to ensure that all resources/displays are brought to the Chapel by break.

OVERVIEW OF KEY EVENTS

Throughout Lent	W1	W2
<p>The RE Department will be doing the Stations of the Cross with pupils during lesson time.</p> <p>The PE Department will be leading on the Big Lent Walk Campaign during lesson time.</p>	<p>Wednesday 1st March: Reflection on the Stations. School Chapel 8.05 - 8.20</p> <p>9 St. Mary Form Liturgy</p> <p>Saturday 4th March FLAME - Y10&11 pupils Wembley Arena, London</p>	<p>8th March: Prayer Partners Lunchtime School Chapel</p> <p>9th March: Confessions. Our Priests will be coming into school.</p> <p>Friday 10th March RE Department Mass</p> <p>Friday 10th March Lent Bake Sale.</p> <p>9 St Peter and Paul Liturgy</p>

W3	W4	W5
<p>Tuesday 14th March St. Patrick's Form Mass.</p> <p>Wednesday 15th March: Reflection on the Stations. School Chapel 8.05 - 8.20</p> <p>English Martyrs Form Assemblies.</p> <p>15th March: Prayer Partners Lunchtime School Chapel</p> <p>17th March: Lent Fayre ideas confirmed on sites.</p> <p>9 St. Teresa Form Liturgy</p>	<p>SVP Trip Monday 20th March.</p> <p>Wednesday 22nd March: Reflection on the Stations. School Chapel 8.05 - 8.20</p> <p>Y8 Retreat: 22nd—24th March</p> <p>Friday 24th March English Department Mass.</p> <p>9 St. Patrick Form Liturgy</p>	<p>27th March: Y7 and Year 8 Lenten Fayre</p> <p>30th March: Year 9 and Year 10 Lenten Fayre.</p> <p>31st March: Lent Liturgies</p> <p>31st March: Soup Kitchen both kitchens</p> <p>8 St. Mary Form Liturgy</p>

PRAYER PARTNERS

Every Lent, we hold Prayer Partners in the Chapel. Prior to the event, Liz will work with a group of students training them to lead prayer. Pupils and staff, will all be welcome to join in this special time of prayer at lunch in the Chapel, where pupils will be invited to sit and pray for special intention with a pupil. This is an incredibly powerful experience for all those involved. Please promote this with your classes and come and take part yourself!



LITURGIES

On Friday 31st March, there will be Year group Liturgies in Hall A. The liturgies will focus on the stations of the cross, these are the last 14 events in Jesus' life. It is traditional for Catholics to reflect on this during the season of Lent using music, drama, readings and artwork.

SOUP KITCHEN

There will also be a soup kitchen at lunch on Friday 31st March, with restricted alternative options. Fasting is a key part of Lent for Catholics and it is a chance for both staff and pupils to stand in solidarity with those around the world who are without food.



RECONCILIATION

Lent is a grace-filled season of the Church's life; it is an opportunity to respond to God's invitation to repent and change our lives for the better; a good time to allow our hearts to be healed and transformed by God's mercy in Confession. God never tires of reaching out to us. He is always ready to forgive, and his mercy can also empower and enable us to become more merciful towards others – something that, left to ourselves, most of us find very difficult. All this is God's wonderful work. What is asked of us is the humility to recognise what God is offering us, and an openness of heart and mind to accept it.
Forgiveness and peace.