

Catholic

UPDATE

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Living Out Lent Today

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TAKE FIVE...
This Update shows
many ways you can use
a few minutes to make
Lent come alive.

For the next six weeks, we are journeying through the desert toward the oasis that is Easter and the feast of the Resurrection. This season is an opportunity to step away from familiar routines and see life from a new vantage point. It's a chance to look inside our hearts and outside our comfort zones, a chance to give God the space to reshape us in his image. The more focused we are during the journey, the greater our joy will be when Easter arrives.

ASH WEDNESDAY "WEEK"

Examen

"Examine me, Lord, and test me; search my heart and mind"
(Psalm 26:2).

Ash Wednesday: Is my heart, like that of the Israelites, hardened by sin?

Thursday: What habits and attitudes prevent me from loving God with all my heart, all my soul, my entire mind, and all my strength (Mark 12:30)? What can I do in the next six weeks to change that?

Friday: Who am I called to forgive? What must I change in myself in order to make that forgiveness possible?

Saturday: What Lenten discipline—a sacrifice or a new habit—can help me become what my Father in heaven is calling me to be?

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FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Prayer

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"I do believe, help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24).

Sunday: Be deliberate and intentional about the words of the prayers you sing or speak at Mass today. Pray the meaning instead of just saying the words.

Monday: Create a prayer list and keep it in your wallet. This Lent, when you have five minutes to kill, instead of grabbing your phone, pull out your list and pray for the people on it.

Tuesday: Although the word *prayer* most often evokes thoughts of petition or thanksgiving, the most basic prayer is praise. Take a moment to look around and acknowledge the

wonder of God at work in your world, your family, your community.

Wednesday: In this noisy world, it can be hard to hear the voice of God. Take five minutes to quiet your mind, to silence the thoughts of to-do

lists, logistics, and worries. Simply "be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:11).

Thursday: Most people at one time or another are angry with God but often feel that to express it would be sacrilegious. Today, pray Psalm 13 and note that even when the author is angry with God, he still ends by expressing trust.

Friday: Keep the radio off in the car. Relax into the quiet and make room for "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

Saturday: Today, whenever anger surges or obstacles and inconveniences arise, pray, "Lord, what is your will for me?"

