

Lent 2016

40 Days of Mercy

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>During this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, Pope Francis asks that the Church and her members live out the loving mercy that God has for all of us. Concentrate this Lent on reflecting God’s mercy in your daily life. Focus on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.</p>			<p>February 10 Ash Wednesday Lent Begins</p> <p>Attend Mass and receive ashes today, and be generous when asked to give to the Collection for the Church in Central & Eastern Europe. Pray for peace and the restoration of the Church in that part of the world.</p>	<p>February 11 World Day of the Sick: Visiting the sick is one of the corporal works of mercy. Those who are sick are often forgotten or avoided. In spite of their illness, these individuals have much to offer those who take the time to visit and comfort them.</p>	<p>February 12</p> <p>Today is the first Friday in Lent. Remember to abstain from meat and to reflect on the true nature of fasting (Is 58:1-9a).</p>	<p>February 13</p> <p>Lent is traditionally a time of penance. But did you know it is also a time of mercy, especially this year with the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. Learn more about the jubilee and the importance of mercy!</p>
<p>February 14 First Sunday of Lent Black & Indian Mission Collection “The US Catholic bishops established this Catholic Church charity for the Catholic Missions in 1884 to administer a national collection—the first of its kind in the United States—to support missionary work.” (Black and Indian Mission Office website)</p>	<p>February 15</p> <p>Remember the Church’s simple formula for observing Lent: pray, fast, and give alms. These are the three things that we are encouraged to do to strengthen our relationship with the Lord during the season.</p>	<p>February 16</p> <p>The corporal works of mercy give us a model for how we should treat all others: as if they were Christ in disguise. They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs” (USCCA). This Lent try to do a work of mercy each week.</p>	<p>February 17</p> <p>Catholic Relief Services’ Rice Bowl campaign can help you pray, fast, and give alms during Lent. Rice Bowl is a great way to feed the hungry—one of the corporal works of mercy. Download the Rice Bowl app on iTunes or on Google Play.</p>	<p>February 18</p> <p>For a bit of inspiration to keep you on track during this first full week of Lent—read, listen to, and reflect on the seven penitential psalms that are traditionally prayed during Lent.</p>	<p>February 19</p> <p>Join the US bishops’ call to prayer for life, marriage, and religious liberty this Lent and fast and pray on Fridays for the renewal of a culture of life and marriage and for the protection of religious liberty.</p>	<p>February 20</p> <p>“In the spirit of the Jubilee of Mercy, all of us are called to realize how indifference can manifest itself in our lives and to work concretely to improve the world around us, beginning with our families, neighbors and places of employment.” (Pope Francis, Message for the 2016 World Day of Peace)</p>

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<p>February 21</p> <p>Second Sunday of Lent</p> <p>Penitential practices take many forms: apologizing to an injured party, healing divisions within our families, fasting during the Lenten season, or graciously accepting the menial tasks of life. The purpose of penance is not to diminish life but to enrich it.</p>	<p>February 22</p> <p>Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, Apostle</p> <p>“Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another, compassionate, humble.” 1 Peter 3:8</p>	<p>February 23</p> <p>Give drink to the thirsty: Many people do not have access to clean water and suffer from the lack of this basic necessity. Support the efforts of those working toward greater accessibility of this essential resource.</p>	<p>February 24</p> <p>“The season of Lent has traditionally been a time of prolonged penance for the Christian community. Together, we prepare for the great Easter mysteries by committing ourselves to fulfill our baptismal call to maturity, holiness, service, and community.” (USCCB, 2000, <i>Penitential Practices for Today's Catholics</i>)</p>	<p>February 25</p> <p>“Mercy overcomes every wall, every barrier, and leads you to always seek the face of the man, of the person.” (Pope Francis, General Audience, Sept. 10, 2014)</p>	<p>February 26</p>  <p>Put new meaning into your family's Friday Lenten meals by trying some of the recipes from the CRS Rice Bowl Global Kitchen and eat in solidarity with families in need around the world.</p>	<p>February 27</p> <p>By fasting we are moved to a deeper hunger and thirst for God. In a paradoxical way, we feast through fasting—we feast on the spiritual values that lead to works of charity and service.</p>
<p>February 28</p> <p>Third Sunday of Lent</p> <p>“It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.” (Pope Francis, <i>Misericordiae Vultus</i>, no. 15)</p>	<p>February 29</p> <p>Lent is a special time for those preparing to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). RCIA is a period of learning and discernment for those seeking to become Catholic. Remember the catechumens, candidates, and their sponsors in your prayers this Lent.</p>	<p>March 1</p> <p>Shelter the homeless: There are millions of children and families who are on the move, fleeing from war, illness, hunger, and impossible living conditions, and searching for peace and safety. Learn about how you can help homeless minors.</p>	<p>March 2</p> <p>“The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person.” (Pope Francis, <i>Misericordiae Vultus</i>, no. 12)</p>	<p>March 3</p> <p>St. Katharine Drexel, an heiress of millions, asked the pope for more missionaries . . . and he told her to become one! She left her life of privilege and founded a religious order dedicated to the poor. Have you considered becoming a missionary?</p>	<p>March 4</p>  <p>As spring approaches, include some colorful produce in your meatless Friday meals today and pray for those who work the land, all too often for unjust wages.</p>	<p>March 5</p> <p>“Jesus’ imperative ‘Repent, and believe in the gospel’ (Mk 1:15) makes explicit this connection between authentic discipleship and penitential discipline. Discipleship . . . embraces discipline, a firm commitment to do whatever is demanded in furthering God’s kingdom.” (USCCB, 2000, <i>Penitential Practices for Today's Catholics</i>)</p>
<p>March 6</p> <p>Fourth Sunday of Lent</p> <p>This weekend, the Catholic Relief Services Collection is taken up in many parishes. Learn more about the work of CRS and consider giving a gift to assist in their international humanitarian work.</p>	<p>March 7</p> <p>Today, we remember the two early Christian martyrs, Perpetua and Felicity, who are always mentioned together because of how their lives were intertwined. Read about these saints and what they endured together.</p>	<p>March 8</p> <p>Today is the feast day of St. John of God who gained renown and respect for his devotion to caring for the sick. Pray in his memory today for the protection of conscience rights for health care workers. Find prayers here.</p>	<p>March 9</p> <p>Today is the feast day of St. Frances of Rome, who was born a Roman aristocrat and was known for her great charity. She organized a women's religious order—the Oblates of Mary—and became a member of it following her husband's death. In her honor today, pray for those in consecrated life.</p>	<p>March 10</p> <p>We're about halfway through Lent. Is your CRS Rice Bowl at least half full? Keep dropping in those coins, and remember, giving alms is a work of mercy.</p>	<p>March 11</p>  <p>“Because we are called by Jesus to give our whole selves to the Father, conversion means a radical reorientation of our whole lives toward God's kingdom. We turn away from evil, resolve not to sin, and trust in God's amazing grace.” (USCCB, 2000, <i>Penitential Practices for Today's Catholics</i>)</p>	<p>March 12</p> <p>Remember to set your clocks forward an hour tonight and start the week off right by getting to Mass on time. Losing an hour of sleep can be difficult; make it easier by saying your night prayers and getting to sleep early.</p>

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<p>March 13</p> <p>Fifth Sunday of Lent</p> <p>Today is the fourth anniversary of Pope Francis's election as Supreme Pontiff. Honor Pope Francis today by attending Mass and praying for his intentions.</p>	<p>March 14</p> <p>Visiting prisoners is a work of mercy. People in prison are persons made in the image and likeness of God. No matter what someone has done, they can receive the mercy and forgiveness of Christ.</p>	<p>March 15</p> <p>How is your Lenten prayer going? Remember that Lent is essentially an act of prayer spread out over 40 days. As we pray, we are brought closer to Christ and are changed by the encounter with him.</p>	<p>March 16</p> <p>For the past four years, the Fortnight for Freedom has raised awareness about domestic and international religious freedom concerns. Read about the fortnight, and pray today for religious freedom.</p>	<p>March 17</p> <p>Today is special for Irish everywhere, as they honor their patron, St. Patrick. Even though it occurs during Lent, check to see if your bishop is offering a dispensation from your Lenten fast! Say a prayer to St. Patrick for the strength to keep your fast during the rest of Lent.</p>	<p>March 18</p> <p>On this final Friday before Holy Week, contemplate Christ's suffering by praying the Stations of the Cross.</p>	<p>March 19</p> <p>Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary</p> <p>St. Joseph, the model of humility and one of our greatest saints is known for his silence. Read what Pope Benedict XVI once said about the poignant silence of Joseph.</p>
<p>March 20</p> <p>Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord</p> <p>Read a reflection on how the Palm Sunday liturgy offers us a panoramic view of the Paschal Mysteries.</p>	<p>March 21</p> <p>Holy Week is here. If your Lenten journey has been difficult, remember that willing sacrifice helps us grow. Giving of ourselves in the midst of our suffering and self-denial helps us to love like Christ, who suffered and poured himself out unconditionally on the Cross for love of us.</p>	<p>March 22</p> <p>As we approach Good Friday, remember that burying the dead is a work of mercy. Funerals give us the opportunity to grieve and show others support during difficult times. Through our prayers and actions, we show our respect for life and comfort to those who mourn.</p>	<p>March 23</p> <p>Lent officially ends tomorrow as the Mass of the Lord's Supper begins. Plan to participate in the moving liturgies of the Triduum in your parish.</p>	<p>March 24</p> <p>Holy Thursday</p> <p>The summit of the liturgical year, the Easter Triduum begins this evening and continues into the evening of Easter Sunday. While chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day, unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery.</p>	<p>March 25</p> <p>Good Friday</p> <p>Today, remember the Franciscans who take care of the places where Jesus walked. Remember also the region's living stones—Christian men and women who live in the Holy Land. Please give today to the collection for the Holy Land in your parish.</p>	<p>March 26</p> <p>Holy Saturday</p> <p>As you prepare for the Paschal celebration of Easter, reflect on how well you have lived your Lenten commitment to merciful action during this journey through the desert to the foot of the Cross.</p>
<p>March 27</p> <p>Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord</p> <p>Alleluia! Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen! Celebrate Christ's Resurrection by reading or reciting the Proclamation of Easter, the Exsultet.</p>						