

A Note from the Pastor

Dear Friends:

As we begin this Lenten Season, it is a time of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. To guide our Lenten Activities, I would propose the following suggestions for helping you and your family have a meaningful Lenten season.

Families can make Lenten memories

Families can and should make Lenten memories to last a lifetime! Lent offers opportunities to pass on your faith to your children. Here are some ideas for making Lenten memories:

Pray together: Even if it's just an Our Father or Hail Mary, it unites the family. Attend Sunday Mass together, come to daily mass and Lenten devotions, Pray at meal time, read a few verses of Scripture, pray the Rosary.

Let each family member mention one person or problem that they would like to pray for in a special way at dinnertime.

Take the kids grocery shopping for the poor. Let them help you bring the food to the church for those in need.

Let the children light a candle at church for people throughout the world who are sick, poor, lonely, or hungry.

Sample Lenten food favorites, such as hot cross buns or pretzels. If you're really adventurous, check the internet for recipes and make your own. For example: Pretzels originated in Europe during the Middle Ages. A monk was making unleavened bread for Lent with flour and water because eggs, milk and lard were not consumed as part of the Lenten Fast. He twisted some of the dough into the shape of people praying with both arms folded across their chests. He decided it would be a perfect treat for children learning to say their prayers. He called the treats "pretiola," the Latin word for "little reward."

Boost your Individual Spiritual Life during Lent...

Begin each morning with the prayer: *Lord, I offer you this day, and all that I think, and do, and say.*

Attend daily Mass as often as possible.

Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Make the Stations of the Cross at home or in church during scheduled devotions.

Read Scripture for 10 minutes each day.

Pray the seven Penitential Psalms... [Psalm 6, 31, 50, 101, 129, 142].

Spend some time in quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament on First Fridays.

Abstain from meat for an extra day or two each week.

"Fast" from media distractions [tv, radio, internet, video/computer games, listening to music, etc.]
Listen to cds or radio/tv shows of a spiritual nature... do something to grow in your knowledge of the Faith.

Keep a Lenten journal with your spiritual insights, special intentions, people you want to pray for, hurts and disappointments that you want to offer up, and progress reports on your Lenten resolutions.

If you incorporate one or two of these activities into your daily routine, it will help you not only grow in your spirituality during Lent, but hopefully become a regular practice in your daily routine throughout the year.

Peace, Fr. Jerry