



# Seasons of Holiness

A Parent Newsletter from the National Catholic Educational Association

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## What is Lent?

Lent is a time for preparation. Jesus' resurrection assures our salvation. This is a time for prayer, fasting and alms giving. It is a time to come closer to God through Jesus.

Fasting can be done both by abstaining from heavy meals, including red meats, and by our actions. For example, giving up on gossip and talking good about people is a great way to fast!

Though Lent is a good time to give up things, Lent is not meant to be a "diet." It is not meant to be used as an excuse to lose those extra pounds. But rather, because we give things up, it allows us to gain a closer relationship with God. In other words, as we give up TV to read Scripture or a spiritual book instead, we make time for God. As we make time for God we gain a deeper relationship with God; and because of it, we are receiving our spiritual nourishment as we journey with God and Christ.

So you see, Lent is a time of "gain". It is a time of preparation as we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection and our Salvation.



Today, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent. For the next 40 days, we will journey closer to God as Jesus did when he fasted for 40 days and nights in the desert. It was the nourishment he needed to be able to handle the death that he freely accepted for us. Thus, Lent is a time for nourishment and prayer; a time to seek a deeper relationship with God. A beautiful time for family prayer as together you attend mass and pray at meals. It is a time to reflect on our own individual journeys.

In terms of alms giving, it is also a great time to help others, to work at a kitchen, to visit an elderly, to visit the lonely ... do it with your family.

Use the beautiful Lenten Season to renew your love with God.

## How to Pray the Rosary

Last month, we discussed the evolution of the rosary and briefly outlined the scriptural references. This month, we will focus on its four mysteries: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous.

To begin, the prayers are as follows:

Make the sign of the cross

Say the Apostles' Creed

Say one Our Father

Say three Hail Marys (representing one for Faith, one for Hope, and one for Charity)

Say one Glory Be

Now you are ready to start reflecting on each of the mysteries.

Announce the First Mystery and say one Our Father

As you meditate on each of the mysteries, say ten Hail Marys

Conclude with the Glory Be

Source: [www.legionofmarytidewater.com/prayers/rosary.htm](http://www.legionofmarytidewater.com/prayers/rosary.htm)



As you meditate on each bead, imagine yourself “there”, take the role of any person in that scene or be a bystander.

## *Mysteries of the Rosary* (You can pick any set of mysteries any day.)

### **Joyful Mystery:**

#### **The Annunciation**

Lk. 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the Mother of God.

#### **The Visitation**

Lk. 1:39-56

Elizabeth greets Mary: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

#### **Jesus is Born**

Lk. 2:1-20

The Virgin Mary gives birth to our Lord.

#### **The Presentation**

Lk. 2:22-39

The Blessed Mother presents Baby Jesus in the Temple.

#### **Jesus is found in the Temple**

Lk. 2:42-52.

The Blessed Mother finds Jesus in the Temple.

### **The Luminous Mysteries:**

#### **The Baptism**

Jn. 1:29-34

The heavens open wide and the voice of the Father declares Jesus the beloved Son.

#### **The Wedding at Cana**

Jn. 2:1-11

Because of Mary’s intervention, Jesus changes water into wine and opens the hearts of the disciples to faith.

#### **The Coming of the Kingdom of God**

Mt. 4:17

Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God, calls us to conversion and forgives the sins of all who draw near to Him in humble trust.

#### **The Transfiguration**

Mt. 17:1-8

The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ as the Father commands the astonished Apostles to “listen to him.”

#### **The Institution of the Eucharist**

Mt. 26:26-30

Christ offers his body and blood as food under the signs of bread and wine, and testifies “to the end” His love for humanity, for whose salvation He will offer Himself in sacrifice.

### **The Sorrowful Mysteries:**

#### **The Agony in the Garden**

Lk. 22:39-44

At Gethsemane, Jesus prays as He contemplates the sins of the world.

#### **The Scouring at the Pillar**

Mt. 27:26

Jesus is cruelly scourged until His mortified body could bear no more.

#### **Crowning with Thorns**

Mt. 27:28-31

A crown of thorns is placed on the head of Jesus.

#### **Carrying of the Cross**

Lk. 23:26-32

Jesus carries the heavy cross upon His shoulders to Calvary.

#### **The Crucifixion**

Mt. 27:33-50

Jesus is nailed to the cross and dies after hours of agony.

### **The Glorious Mysteries:**

#### **The Resurrection**

Mt. 28:1-20

Jesus rises glorious and immortal, three days after His death.

#### **The Ascension**

Lk. 24:50-51

Jesus ascends into Heaven forty days after His Resurrection.

#### **Descent of the Holy Spirit**

Acts 2:24

The Holy Spirit descends upon Mary and the Apostles.

#### **The Assumption**

The Blessed Mother is united with her Divine Son in Heaven.

#### **The Coronation**

Mary is gloriously crowned Queen of Heaven and earth.



The Marriage of Cana,  
Maarten de Vos, 1532-1603

## *Family Fun – In honor of St. Patrick’s Day!*



### **Shamrock Ice Cream Sandwiches**

Mmmm! These are yummy, and a great GREEN dessert option for St. Patty’s Day! Just make some green sugar cookie dough (you can cheat, and buy the refrigerator rolls and then mix in green food coloring!), roll out the dough, and cut out shamrock shapes with a cookie cutter, or a pattern. Bake as directed and allow to cool.

Now take some green ice cream (vanilla with food coloring, pistachio, mint chip- whatever you prefer!) and allow it to soften slightly. Spread some ice cream onto the flat side of half the cookies.

Place the remaining cookies, flat side down, on ice cream. Press cookies together lightly. Wrap each sandwich in foil and freeze for at least 2 hours.

Source: <http://mailjust4me.com/play/stpat1.htm>

## *Recommended children’s books for the month:*

Books by Tomie dePaola :  
*The Parables of Jesus* and the  
*Miracles of Jesus* are great books  
for older students.

*Patrick: Patron Saint of Ireland* is a  
wonderful book for all ages.