

Invitation to Observing a Holy Lent at St. Paul's¹

Lent is a 40-day season that invites us to take stock of our lives, and intentionally make space for God. Traditionally, Anglicans “give something up.” This is not meant as punishment. Instead by letting go of something, we create room for deeper awareness, prayer, gratitude, and compassion. The small discomfort of going without can gently remind us that our first need is always for God. When we miss the thing we’ve given up, we can pray and reflect on why we are pursuing this devotion to God.

Giving something up is not about self-improvement. It is about re-centering our lives- letting go of habits that distract or harm us and strengthening habits that draw us closer to God.

Ideas for Giving Something Up (or Taking Something On)

Category	Consider Giving Up...	Or Taking On...	Purpose
Food & Drink	Sweets, takeout coffee, snacking after dinner, alcohol	Simple meals, mindful eating, gratitude before meals	Grow self-control and gratitude; remember those who lack daily bread, <i>stewardship of our bodies</i>
Technology	Social media scrolling, streaming binges, phone use before bed	Screen-free evenings, intentional conversations, tech sabbath	Create space for reflection and real connection, <i>stewardship of our minds</i>
Time & Busyness	Overcommitting, constant multitasking	A daily quiet pause, a weekly walk, Sabbath rest	Practice presence and trust rather than productivity, <i>stewardship of our time</i>
Speech & Attitude	Complaining, gossip, harsh criticism	Encouragement, listening more than speaking, gratitude journaling	Shape a heart that reflects kindness and humility
Consumption	Impulse shopping, online browsing	Buying less, giving saved money away	Detach from excess and cultivate generosity,

¹ All charts in this handout created with the help of Chatgpt

*stewardship of our
treasure*

Spiritual Habits	Neglect of prayer or reflection	Daily Scripture reading, journaling, worship attendance	Intentionally deepen spiritual roots
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The Traditional Lenten Disciplines

The Ash Wednesday Invitation

“I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting and almsgiving and by reading and meditating on the word of God.” (BAS p. 282)

Discipline	What It Means	Practical Ideas
Self-Examination	Honestly reflecting on our lives in light of God’s love and commandments	Use the Ten Commandments as a guide; journal weekly; ask: Where have I loved well? Where have I fallen short?
Penitence	Turning back to God; expressing sorrow for sin and desire to change	Participate in confession; write a prayer of repentance; make amends where needed
Prayer	Deepening conversation and communion with God	Set a daily prayer time; use Morning or Evening Prayer; pray for specific people each day
Fasting	Voluntarily going without something good to focus on God	Skip one meal weekly; fast from social media; use hunger or absence as a prompt to pray
Almsgiving	Giving to those in need as an act of mercy and justice	Support a local charity; donate saved money from fasting; volunteer time
Reading & Meditating on Scripture	Letting God’s Word shape our hearts and minds	Read one Gospel through Lent; follow a daily lectionary; memorize a meaningful verse

Remember: Lent is not about spiritual achievement. It is about returning anew to the love and mercy of God. Start small. Be honest. Trust grace.

May these 40 days become a meaningful path toward the refreshing and deepening of your relationship with God.