

The 7 Deadly Sins

PRIDE: an excessive love of self or the desire to be better or more important than others.

LUST: an intense desire, usually for sexual pleasure, but also for money, power, or fame.

GLUTTONY: over-consumption, usually of food or drink.

GREED: the desire for and love of possessions.

SLOTH: physical laziness, also disinterest in spiritual matters or neglecting spiritual growth.

ANGER OR WRATH: uncontrolled feelings of hatred or rage.

ENVY AND JEALOUSY: sadness or desire for the possessions, happiness, talents, or abilities of another.

One Add-In

The next step in 1-1-1 Lent is to add one thing of God that you haven't been doing to your routine. Because we are all so busy, it's a good idea to not just pick an add-in, but to schedule a regular time when you put it on your calendar so you don't "forget."

Ideas for add-ins are pretty much endless, but some include:

- ▶ Go to Mass, in the middle of the week
- ▶ Attend the Stations of the Cross as a family
- ▶ Read a Gospel
- ▶ Volunteer at a social ministry
- ▶ Get up early to pray



SHUTTERSTOCK

One Give-Up

Giving up something for Lent has been part of the Church almost since the beginning. While giving up sweets and alcohol are time-honored, consider giving up one thing that you really like or enjoy. Just make sure it is something that lets you feel the deprivation and is at least a little bit challenging. Make it difficult but doable.

- ▶ Fast from fault finding and nagging, and fast from a critical tongue or a closed mind.
- ▶ Give up impulse purchases.
- ▶ Give up an unhealthy habit, like smoking.
- ▶ Limit the time you watch TV or surf the web.
- ▶ Give up fast food and donate the money you save.



SHUTTERSTOCK

The Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power and idle chatter.

Instead, grant to me, Your servant, the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love.

O Lord and King, grant me the grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother; for You are blessed now and ever and forever. Amen.

Additional Resources

Books

Running Hard, Finishing Strong: 7 Steps to Building Momentum in Your Spiritual Life, Rick Sarkisian, Ph.D. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2012).

Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God's Will, Fr. Larry Richards. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2011).

The Virtues, Pope Benedict XVI. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2010).

Websites

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

"Lent and Lent Resources," www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-resources/lent/

"Lenten Prayer and Lent Resources," www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-resources/lent/prayer-resources-for-lent.cfm

"Your Guide to a Catholic Lent" *Our Sunday Visitor*, www.osv.com/YourGuideToACatholicLent/tabid/8267/Default.aspx

To view PDFs of additional pamphlets or order bulk copies of this pamphlet, go to www.osvparish.com/pamphlets

Our Sunday Visitor

Bringing Your Catholic Faith to Life

1-800-348-2440 • Fax: 1-800-498-6709 • www.osv.com

By Fr. James Shafer

Copyright © by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

No part of this pamphlet can be reprinted or reproduced in any form.

Inventory No. P1388

Nihil Obstat: Msgr. Michael Heintz, Ph.D.

Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: ✠ Kevin C. Rhoades

Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Oct. 25, 2012

The Scripture citations used in this work are taken from the *Second Catholic Edition of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible (RSV)*, copyright © 1965, 1966, 2006 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

US \$15.95



9 781612 786834

LENT

Keep it Simple



For Review Only. Copyright Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

10/12

SHUTTERSTOCK

"Lent is like a long 'retreat' during which we can turn back into ourselves and listen to the voice of God..."

— Pope Benedict XVI

For Review Only. Copyright Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

Our Lenten Retreat

Lent lies at the very heart of our Catholic faith. Each year, on Ash Wednesday, we begin our Lenten retreat. We are blessed with ashes, reminding us that we are dust, and to dust we will return. For the next 40 days we are led into the desert of our own hearts to look within, face our sins, and ask for God's mercy.

While Lent was originally intended as a time of preparation for those being baptized at Easter, it gradually became a time when all of us get ready to renew our own baptismal promises. It is the season in which we prepare

both individually and as a Church for the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior. It is the season when we reflect on the dying and rising of Christ that has made our salvation possible.

Even more than that, it is the season when we enter into Christ's dying and rising as we seek to purify, cleanse, and nourish our bodies, minds, and souls.

"Lent is like a long 'retreat' during which we can turn back into ourselves and listen to the voice of God, in order to defeat the temptations of the Evil One. It is a period of spiritual 'combat' which we must experience alongside Jesus, not with pride and presumption, but using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God, and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our baptism."

— Pope Benedict XVI



SHUTTERSTOCK

DESIGNPICS

From the Beginning

Lent has been a part of the Church year from the earliest days. At the Council of Nicea in 325, the bishops were already talking about the "40 days of Lent." By the end of the fourth century, St. Cyril of Jerusalem was presenting pre-baptismal instructions called Catechetical Lectures, and Pope St. Leo was teaching that the faithful must "fulfill with their fasts the apostolic institution of the 40 days."

Forty days was chosen as the time of preparation because it was symbolic of the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness before embarking on his public ministry: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished" (Matthew 4:1-2). Forty days also recalls the 40 years that the Israelites wandered in the desert before entering the Promised Land.

Time of Joy

Lent is a time of sacrifice and discipline, but it should not be a time of sadness. Instead it should be a season of great joy. The first Preface for the Mass in Lent clearly reminds us of this:

For by your gracious gift each year your faithful await the sacred paschal feasts with the joy of minds made pure.

As Christians we are stirring up our faith and love for God and each other so that, on Easter, we are ready to meet the risen Lord refreshed and restored.



SHUTTERSTOCK

The best Lent is one in which we enter the season wholeheartedly. All too often people either take on too much or don't take on enough. The solution is to simplify our disciplines, focus our intentions, and concentrate more clearly on our spiritual goals.

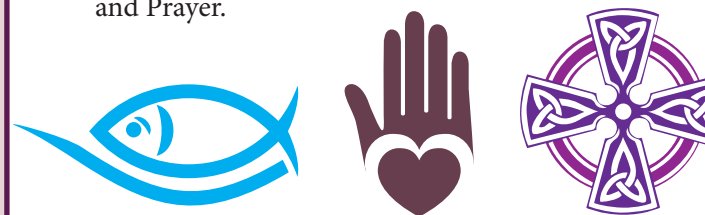


SHUTTERSTOCK

The Big Three

(Matthew 6: 3-4, 6, 17-18)

We aren't just spiritual beings. We are also physical entities, and the way to the soul is through the body. That's why Lenten discipline has historically centered on the "Big Three" of Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer.



SHUTTERSTOCK

FASTING is not just a spiritual diet. By denying our bodies, our physical hunger reminds us of the hunger of our souls for God, our longing for a deeper relationship with Our Lord.

ALMSGIVING teaches us to separate ourselves from material possessions. By freely giving of our money and possessions, we learn to trust the Lord more deeply for our own daily needs.

Finally, an emphasis on **PRAYER** during Lent is a way to stir up our love and ardor by having a deepening conversation with the Almighty. Remember that the light of God's love shines more brightly in the darkness of the recognition of our own sinfulness.

KEEP IT SIMPLE SINNER

**To keep it simple this Lent,
try the 1-1-1 Plan:**

one sin, one add-in, one give-up.

1. Concentrate or focus on one sin or fault that is getting in the way of your relationship with God and with others.
2. Add one positive activity that will deepen your prayer and spiritual life (especially if you think you are too busy to put anything more into an impossibly busy schedule!).
3. Deny yourself something you really like or are attached to.

One Sin

Most of us, if we are honest, know at least one area of sin to focus on during Lent. If you aren't sure, or are having trouble narrowing it down, use the traditional Seven Deadly Sins as a guide. (Contrary to what one may gather from all the emphasis on sex these days, there are six deadly sins besides lust!) In fact, some of the other deadly sins are even deadlier, especially pride, or self-love, which Saint Thomas Aquinas called, "the cause of every sin."

If you need help in identifying which sin to concentrate on this year, ask God in prayer to reveal it to you. If you still aren't sure, ask your family or close friends. Just be sure you are willing to listen to them and accept their assessment.



SHUTTERSTOCK