

February 13 Ash Wednesday

My sacrifice is this broken spirit: you will not scorn this crushed and broken heart. (Psalm 51:17)

Popular understanding sees repentance as gloomy introspection, but in Christian tradition it contains an essential note of hope. The cry of John the Baptist points to a better world, a world in which *“those who have two coats share with those who have none”*.

- Read and meditate on *Luke 3:1-14*.

Thursday 14 February (Valentine, Martyr)

We may have washed off the ashes with which we were marked yesterday, but we cannot wash away the fragility and brevity of life. *“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”* Here is the challenge to make every day count. At the end of the day ask, ‘What have I done to make this a better day for someone else/other people?’

- Contact someone you know who is ill.
- Read and meditate on *Psalms 90:12*

Friday 15 February

Since earliest times Christian tradition has embraced “prayer and fasting.” Fasting is often thought of in terms of self-discipline, which of course it is. But, coupled with prayer, it also strengthens the spiritual life.

- Donate to a local Food Bank.
- Read and meditate on *Matthew 6:17-18*.

Saturday 16 February

“This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24)

Every day is a gift; let’s live in a spirit of gratitude.

- Say “thank you” to everyone who serves you today (e.g. bus drivers, in shops/supermarkets).
- Read and meditate on *Psalms 107:1*

Sunday 17 February Lent 1

Jesus replied, “Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone.” (Luke 4:4)

- Give thanks for all that has nourished you spiritually this week: pray too for all who lack material bread.

Monday 18 February

There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: the first is ‘Wisdom’. Wisdom means living sustainably on our planet, and holistically with all of Creation.

- Try to cut down on use of water.

Tuesday 19 February

The second gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Understanding.’ There is often widespread ignorance of the unjust conditions in which many live. Concern for truth should move us to seek and spread understanding of these.

- Look for a meeting you might attend to discover more about injustice in some part of the world.
- Read and meditate on *Isaiah 1:17*.

Wednesday 20 February

The third gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Counsel’ (Right Judgement). We need to exercise this gift in the face of much which comes to us through the media.

- Research an issue which has been canvassed in a local newspaper.

Thursday 21 February

The fourth gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Fortitude’ (Courage). Can we have courage to speak out for peace, justice and reconciliation?

- Speak to a friend or colleague about UK poverty.

Friday 22 February Lent Fast Day

More than a billion people in the world are malnourished or starving.

- Find out about and support the CAFOD campaign “Hungry for Change.” See www.cafod.org.uk

Saturday 23 February (Polycarp, Martyr)

The fifth gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Knowledge.’ When we learn about situations of injustice, oppression, poverty, what will we do with that knowledge?

- Write to your MP or MEP about an unjust situation.
- Read and meditate on *John 18:37*.

Sunday 24 February Lent 2

[Jesus said] “Yes, I promise you, you shall not see me till the time comes when you say, ‘Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Luke 13:35)

- Give thanks for everything in the past week that has pointed to the coming and presence of Christ.

Monday 25 February

The sixth gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Piety’ (Reverence, Prayerfulness). We must not separate prayerfulness from action.

- Fast from shopping today.
- Read and meditate on *Luke 6:46*.

Tuesday 26 February

The seventh gift of the Holy Spirit is ‘Fear of the Lord’ (Wonder and awe in God’s presence). Do I take my religion for granted and lose all sense of awe?

- Find a poem or a song to help you wonder at God’s love.

Wednesday 27 February

Reconciliation is more than finding agreement between opponents. In the words of the Native American saying,

it is *“walking a mile in the other person’s moccasins.”*

- Pray for reconciliation in a situation of conflict.

Thursday 28 February

- Find out about Church Action on Poverty’s campaign “Close the Gap” (between rich and poor) www.church-poverty.org.uk

Friday 1 March (St. David)

What does it mean to me to be living in one of the richest societies in the world?

- Go without one meal today. Give the cost to charity.
- Read and meditate on *1 John 3:17-18*.

Saturday 2 March (Chad, Bishop)

- Go through your wardrobe and donate any unwanted items to a charity shop.

Sunday 3 March Lent 3

Then [Jesus] said to them, “Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for a man’s life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs.” (Luke 12:15)

- Be thankful for the Our Lord’s warning words.

Monday 4 March

We are in the middle of FairTrade Fortnight.

- Buy a fairtrade item you have not bought before.

Tuesday 5 March

We must not separate humankind from nature; all are one creation, all are “good” in the sight of God.

- Plant some seeds.
- Read and meditate on *Psalms 89:11*.

Wednesday 6 March

“War is an abomination . . . the glory of war is illusory; war brings only misery.” (St. John Chrysostom)

- Pray for a place where there is presently war; for its victims; for those who seek to make peace.

Thursday 7 (Perpetua, Felicity & companions, Martyrs)

- Plan how you could live more simply.

Friday 8 March

- Eat vegetarian for the day.

Saturday 9 March

- Give the car a rest, and go for a walk.
- Read and meditate on *Matthew 6:28-29*.

Sunday 10 March Lent 4

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. (Luke 15:20)

- Give thanks for this picture of God.

Monday 11 March

- Climate change brings huge problems to many developing countries.
- Pray for the people of Bangladesh.

Tuesday 12 March

- Review your giving to charity; have you included less 'popular' ones?

Wednesday 13 March

Debt is widespread in our society and causes much depression.

- Find out about your local Credit Union www.abcul.org
Can you support it by joining?

Thursday 14 March

Small-farmers are facing increasing difficulty with price fluctuations and the terrible weather of 2012.

- Eat a LOAF meal today (Local, Organic, Animal friendly, Fairly traded).

Friday 15 March

- Can you fast from spending today? Who might have need of the money you've saved?
- Read and meditate on *Leviticus 19:9-10*.

Saturday 16 March

"As society becomes ever more globalised, it makes us neighbours but does not make us brothers." (Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*)

- Pray for the growth of a truly human family, without racism, oppression, poverty.

Sunday 17 March Lent 5, (St. Patrick)

All you who pass this way, look and see: is any sorrow like the sorrow that afflicts me. (Lamentations 1:12)

- At this beginning of Passiontide pray for a renewed vision of the love of Christ for all humanity.

Monday 18 March

We are near to the Vernal (Spring) Equinox.

- Turn down the thermostat one degree.

Tuesday 19 March (St. Joseph of Nazareth)

- Make a phone call to a member of your family and 'chew the fat'.

Wednesday 20 March (St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne)

We do not pray or work for justice and peace as isolated individuals but as a 'community of saints', inspired by those who have gone before us.

- Celebrate the Communion of Saints.
- Read and meditate on *Hebrews 12:1-2*.

Thursday 21 March

- Take a walk through part of your parish. Where have

new people come from? What's good about living here? What could be better?

Friday 22 March

- How do you measure a sustainable life? See the example of Blacon www.sustainableblacon.org.uk

Saturday 23 March

Generally we own more 'stuff' than we really need.

- Share surplus goods via Freecycle www.freecycle.org
- Read and meditate on *1 Timothy 6:6*

Sunday 24 March Palm Sunday (Oscar Romero)

"Hosanna! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9)

- Imagine yourself in the crowd, accompanying Jesus into Jerusalem. What are your thoughts? Do you have any misgivings?

Monday 25 March The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary

- Give yourself extra time for prayer and meditation during this Holy Week.

Tuesday 26 March

- Just sit.

Wednesday 27 March

- Visit a lonely or sick friend, taking a home-baked or home-made gift.

28 March Holy Thursday

[Jesus said] "If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet." (John 13:14)

- Think of ways you could "wash other's feet."

29 March Good Friday

After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, "It is accomplished," and bowing his head he gave up his spirit. (John 19:30)

- As you pray before the cross, bring with you the poor of the world and the brokenness of our planet.

30 March Holy Saturday

- Review the reflections you've made and the Actions you've taken this Lent. What changes do you want to make in the light of them?

31 March Easter Sunday

"You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here." (Mark 16:6)

- Where have you found Jesus this Lent?

A LENTEN JOURNEY

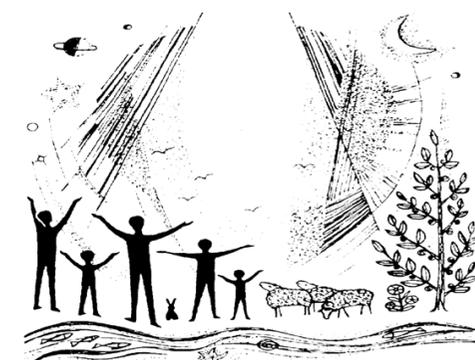
Daily Actions and Reflections



Diocese of Shrewsbury

Commission for Justice,
Peace and
Social Responsibility

www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk



Celebrate
Christ is risen
Alleluia!