





Introduction

Lent is a forty-day season of fasting, prayer, and generosity inspired by Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. Fasting means giving up something good for a time so we can let go of our attachment to comfort, convenience, pleasure, and control.

Fasting involves voluntarily giving up something good. It is a spiritual discipline that helps us resist sin by drawing us closer to God. Fasting teaches us to desire Him more than comfort, distraction, or control.

This Lent, instead of one extended fast, we will practise a series of Rotating Fasts. Each week, we will temporarily set aside a different part of daily life, creating space to notice the habits and patterns that shape us.

Christians have long identified seven core vices also known as the seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth. Through fasting, God invites us to slow down, face these vices, and bring what is hidden into the light.

As each vice is brought into the light, space is created for the growth of its opposing virtue: humility in place of pride, generosity instead of greed, chastity instead of lust, gratitude instead of envy, temperance instead of gluttony, patience instead of wrath, and diligence instead of sloth.

Each fast is also ended intentionally. When it concludes, what was set aside is received again not indulgently, but gratefully. Ordinary goods are restored as gifts, and their return becomes an act of worship. The first piece of chocolate, the warmth of a hot shower, or the taste of coffee reminds us of God's generosity and care.

Before we begin, ask yourself: When did you last feel a genuine physical hunger for God? Sit with that question for a moment. Let it draw your attention inward, helping you examine your spiritual appetites and what you are actually feeding your soul.



How to Use This Booklet

The following pages introduce the practices used throughout: fasting, silent prayer, Scripture reading (Lectio Divina), daily reflection (the Examen) and meeting with your anchor. You do not need prior experience with these practices. Each week includes a fast, daily prayer practices, and reflection questions. Move through the booklet in order and use the sections as needed.

For Scripture reading, a QR code links to a playlist of daily guided Lectio Divina sessions with Scripture and reflection prompts. Alternatively, you may read the listed passage from your own Bible and reflect on it independently.

A guide for the Daily Examen is provided on page 9. The Examen is intended to be used each day, most often in the evening, to review the day and look ahead to tomorrow.

Above all, remember this: return is more important than consistency. When you falter, do not quit. As Teresa of Avila said, "Therefore if you occasionally lapse into sin, do not lose heart and cease trying to advance, for God will draw good even out of our falls..."

Sample Daily Prayer Structures

The practices in this booklet can be arranged in different ways depending on your schedule. The examples below are guides only.

Option 1: Morning prayer — (silent prayer and Lectio Divina, approx. 20 minutes), followed by a brief Daily Examen in the evening (approx. 5 minutes).

Option 2: Prayer across the day — silent prayer in the morning (approx. 10 minutes), Lectio Divina at midday (approx. 10 minutes), and the Daily Examen in the evening (approx. 5 minutes).

Option 3: Evening prayer — silent prayer, Lectio Divina, and the Daily Examen together in one sitting.



What I Am Bringing into the Light?

*Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God. **John 3:21***

We all have patterns of sin and attachment that shape our lives. Some are easy to see, while others are deeply buried. “What I Am Bringing into the Light?” is a brief question which names one area of sin, attachment, or dependency you choose to place honestly before God during Lent.

Changing habits and growing in virtue is a lifelong work. Real transformation rarely happens all at once. Instead of trying to fix everything, begin with one area where you know you struggle. Pay attention to small moments of faithfulness, and receive them as signs of the Spirit’s work. Small acts of faithfulness is how God forms us over time.

Use the following page and set aside a quiet moment to pray and reflect:

- Think of one habit, attachment, or area of struggle you want to bring into the light.
- Describe how being free in this area could help you live more faithfully with God.
- Explain how this freedom could help you love others more deeply, rather than turning your focus inward.

1. Naming What I Am Bringing Into the Light

What is one habit, attachment, or area of struggle I am choosing to place honestly before God this Lent?

2. Growing in Virtue Before God

What virtue might God be inviting me to practise in this area, and how would growing in that virtue reshape my life with God?

3. Turning Outward in Love

How could this growth in virtue free me to love my neighbour?



Practice 1: Silent Prayer

We live amid constant external and internal noise. Competing voices demand our attention, shape our desires, and train us to equate activity with faithfulness. In such a world, learning to hear God can feel unfamiliar and even uncomfortable. Scripture reminds us, however, that God is not always encountered through intensity or spectacle. Elijah did not meet the Lord in wind, earthquake, or fire, but in a sound of sheer silence (1 Kings 19:11–13).

Jesus' encounter with Martha and Mary shows why contemplation has always been central to Christian prayer:

"Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. Martha, distracted by much serving, complained to Jesus. But he replied, "You are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion" (Luke 10:38–42)

Mary is not idle. Sitting at Jesus' feet is the posture of a disciple attentive, receptive, and teachable. Martha's service is not condemned, but her anxiety and distraction are named. Even good activity can quietly replace attentiveness to God. Jesus does not deny the value of activity but places primacy on sitting at his feet and listening before doing.

As we journey through these six weeks of fasting, silent prayer will be a central practice. For many, it will feel awkward or uncomfortable at first, especially as random thoughts will surface. Choose a quiet place, set a timer, sit attentively, and begin with a simple prayer such as, "Speak, Lord; your servant is listening." When your mind wanders, gently return your attention to God.

Silent prayer is not about technique or achieving a feeling. It is, like Mary, choosing to surrender to the one thing that cannot be taken away.



When Your Mind Wanders

Distraction is a normal part of prayer. Even those deeply formed in prayer struggled to keep their attention steady. Teresa of Ávila speaks with honesty about her own experience:

“My mind is so wild that it distresses me to see that it does not remain where I wish it to.”

Distractions take different forms. Some are ordinary thoughts, tasks, conversations, worries, or memories that drift into prayer. These are not bad, but they show how full our inner lives are. Other distractions are more troubling: resentment, pride, lust, or anger. These can also surface when we become still.

When distractions arise, take it as an invitation to pay attention. What repeatedly claims your attention often reveals an attachment, anxiety, or desire that needs to be brought into the light. In this way, distractions can become a form of examination of conscience, an opportunity to confess sin, pray for someone, or hand over a worry to the Lord.

Rather than resisting distraction, learn to redirect it. The apostle Paul speaks of this discipline when he urges believers to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Sometimes this is as simple as praying, “Lord, this keeps pulling at me. Help me to trust You with it.” At other times, it may become a prayer of repentance or a prompt to pray for the person or situation that has surfaced. When received this way, distraction no longer interrupts prayer; it becomes prayer.



Practice 2: Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a slow, prayerful way of reading Scripture that trains us to listen attentively for God's voice. A bible passage is read slowly, often several times, allowing a word or phrase to surface and speak into our life. Depending on your available time, each step may be prayed in as little as 1 minute or continued as long as you feel led.

Guide

Step 1: Prepare

Find a quiet place to prepare your heart for prayer. Take a few deep breaths, and mentally place yourself in the presence of God. It's okay to use your imagination to do this. Begin by asking the Holy Spirit to help you to pray.

Step 2: Read

Read the daily Scripture slowly and thoughtfully.

Step 3: Mediate

Reread the Scripture slowly. Stop when a word or phrase jumps out to you. Reflect on the words that touched your heart. Ask yourself what these words mean to you, and how it makes you feel.

Step 4: Prayer

Have a conversation with God about what you discovered.

Step 5: Contemplate

Rest quietly in God's presence.

Step 6. Journal and Conclusion

Write down your thoughts and prayers in the Journal section. Conclude your time with your favourite prayer, such as the Our Father.



Daily Readings

Week 1

Sunday: Luke 4:1-13
Monday: Luke 6:36-38
Tuesday: Matthew 23:1-12
Wednesday: Matthew 20:17-28
Thursday: Luke 16:19-31
Friday: Matthew 21:33-46
Saturday: Luke 15:1-32

Week 2

Sunday: John 9:1-41
Monday: Luke 4:24-30
Tuesday: Matthew 18:21-35
Wednesday: Matthew 5:17-19
Thursday: Luke 11:14-23
Friday: Mark 12:28-34
Saturday: John 15:9-17

Week 3

Sunday: John 4:5-42
Monday: John 4:43-54
Tuesday: John 5:1-16
Wednesday: John 5:17-30
Thursday: John 5:31-47
Friday: John 7:1-30
Saturday: John 7:40-52

**Listen to the daily readings
on The Centre Podcast**



Week 4

Sunday: John 11:1-45
Monday: John 8:1-11
Tuesday: John 8:21-30
Wednesday: John 8:31-42
Thursday: John 8:51-59
Friday: John 10:22-30
Saturday: John 12:44-50

Week 5

Sunday: John 3:1-8
Monday: John 3:7-15
Tuesday: John 3:16-21
Wednesday: John 3:31-36
Thursday: John 6:16-21
Friday: John 6:22-29
Saturday: John 14:6-14

Week 6

Sunday: Matthew 21:1-11
Monday: John 12:1-11
Tuesday: John 13:21-38
Wednesday: Matthew 26:14-25
Thursday: John 13:1-15
Friday: Mark 15:33-47
Saturday: Hebrews 4:14-5:9

**Read along with passages
on YouTube**





Practice 3: The Examen

In the Examen, we prayerfully review the day to notice God's presence and blessings. We reflectively look at difficult moments, times when we were hurt, made mistakes, or fell into sin. We give thanks for what was good and ask God for forgiveness and healing for where we fell short. After reviewing the day, we look toward tomorrow and ask God to help us recognize the challenges and opportunities that await us and give us the strength as He goes before us.

1. Give Thanks

Find a quiet place. Sit comfortably. Take a few slow breaths and place yourself in God's presence. Thank God for one or two gifts from today. They may be big or small.

2. Pray for Understanding

Ask God for the discernment to see the day clearly and honestly.

3. Review the Day

Slowly review the day, hour by hour. In your mind, walk back through the moments of the day. Notice: (1) Where you were drawn toward life, faith, hope, love, or generosity. (2) Where you felt resistance, impatience, fear, distraction, or self-absorption. Reflect on what you did, said, or thought in those instances. Were you drawing closer to God, or further away?

4. Seek Forgiveness

As you review the day, pause at moments where you fell short, where you spoke harshly, avoided love, acted selfishly, or missed an opportunity to respond faithfully. Ask God for forgiveness.

5. Look Ahead

Turn your attention to tomorrow. Ask God to show you how to live more faithfully in what lies ahead. This may involve a specific action, a change of attitude, or simply a renewed openness to His grace. If I feel called to do so, I make a commitment to God about tomorrow.

End the prayer with the Lord's Prayer or a simple moment of silence.



Practice 4: Anchors

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. **Ecclesiastes 4:9–12***

During Lent, we encourage you to walk this journey with a trusted friend. This person is not there to keep score, but to be a companion who helps you stay honest and grounded when discipline is hard or motivation is low. Lent is not something we do alone. We grow through our relationships with others.

Suggested Questions for accountability:

- Where did you notice God's presence this week?
- Where did you feel resistance, avoidance, or distraction?
- Which practice or fast was hardest to stay honest with?
- Where did you experience grace rather than success?
- What truth do you need to bring into the light right now?
- How can I pray for you this week?
- What would help you return rather than give up?



Week 1: Meaningful Rest

Fast: Establish a consistent bedtime and wake up on the first alarm for the entire week. Remove late-night distractions and offer the discipline of rest to God as an act of trust.

Virtue Formed: Diligence (against Sloth)

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

Sloth is not simply laziness; it is resistance to the good, especially when the good requires discipline, effort, or perseverance. Disordered sleep often reveals sloth not as inactivity but as avoidance: staying up late to be entertained, to escape silence, to avoid responsibility, or the demands of tomorrow.

This week invites us to confront unhealthy patterns of rest and wakefulness. By honouring a consistent sleep rhythm, we practise diligence in choosing what sustains life rather than what numbs or distracts.

Going to bed on time and rising intentionally become acts of trust, acknowledging our limits and resisting both exhaustion and avoidance. Rest received rightly supports prayer, attention, and faithfulness in daily life.

Daily Reflection – Meaningful Rest

- Where did I resist doing what was good for me today, even in small ways?
- How did sloth show itself as avoidance, delay, or choosing ease over faithfulness?
- Where did diligence help me act despite discomfort?



Week 2: Detachment from Possessions

Fast: Limit your spending to essentials only. Set aside the money you would normally spend on non-essentials to give away during the week.

Virtue Formed: Generosity and Contentment (against Greed and Envy)

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

This week invites us to examine how easily consumption becomes a source of comfort, identity, or control. Greed is the belief that having more will make us secure. By fasting from unnecessary purchases, we practise simplicity and learn to receive what we need with gratitude rather than excess. This may also be an opportunity to consider what possessions you could give away or how your life might be simplified by loosening your grip on what you no longer need, freeing resources and space for others.

Any money saved during the week is turned outward, toward our neighbour. What would normally go towards comfort or convenience is given instead, loosening our grip on accumulation and letting our resources serve others.

Daily Reflection - Detachment from Possessions

- Where did I feel the urge to buy for comfort rather than need?
- What did my spending habits reveal about my fears or desires?
- Where did generosity replace consumption?



Week 3: Screen Time

Fast: Limit screen use to essential tasks.

Virtues Formed: Humility, Chastity, Temperance, Diligence (against Pride, Lust, Gluttony and Sloth).

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

Over the next seven days, use your phone only for what is necessary. Avoid mindless scrolling, especially late at night or first thing in the morning. If certain apps encourage habitual or compulsive use, consider removing them for the week.

This fast is meant to reshape our attention. Limiting screen time helps cultivate humility by resisting comparison and self-display, chastity by guarding the eyes and imagination, and temperance by curbing digital excess. It also trains diligence, pushing back against passive escapism and disengagement.

Keep computer use focused on work or necessary tasks, and be intentional about what you listen to. If you choose to watch TV or stream content, do so with others rather than alone. As a household, consider replacing screen time with shared activities that invite presence and connection.

Daily Reflection – Screen Time

- When did I reach for my phone, tablet, or screen this week out of habit rather than necessity? What was I seeking or avoiding in that moment?
- How did limiting screens affect my attention, relationships, or interior life? When did I notice restlessness, boredom, or resistance surface?
- Where did I experience greater presence or freedom, especially when choosing shared activities or silence over scrolling or binging?



Week 4: Embracing Discomfort

Fast: Take cold or lukewarm showers, embracing brief, voluntary discomfort.

Virtue Formed: Humility and Patience (against Pride and Wrath)

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

This week's fast invites us to face our attachment to comfort. In a culture shaped by ease and convenience, even small discomforts can unsettle us. By choosing the physical discomfort of a cold shower, we are, in small ways, preparing ourselves to trust God through the harder moments we cannot control.

Begin showers warm, then gradually lower the temperature for the final portion. Remain present in the discomfort instead of rushing through it. Paul urges us to be "patient in affliction" (Romans 12:12), reminding us that virtue grows not by avoiding difficulty, but by receiving it faithfully.

Daily Reflection - Embracing Discomfort

- When I felt discomfort today, was my first reaction to try to escape, to take control, or to stay present?
- What did my response to discomfort show me about what I expect from comfort, ease, or even a sense of entitlement?
- In what moments did staying with discomfort help me find more patience, lead me to pray, or deepen my trust in God?



Week 5: Resisting Dependence

Fast: Where possible, drink only water for the week. Notice moments of desire or irritability and bring them into prayer.

Virtue Formed: Temperance & Self-Control (against Gluttony & Dependence)

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

This week's fast invites us to step away from a familiar comfort by giving up a favourite drink, coffee, tea, soft drinks, juice, or alcohol. Where possible, limit yourself to water.

As the body adjusts, headaches, fatigue, or irritability may arise. These moments expose how easily we lean on small comforts to get through the day. Rather than pushing through on willpower alone, let them serve as prompts for prayer.

In the wilderness, Jesus faced temptation not by drawing on his own strength, but by anchoring himself in Scripture (Matthew 4:1-11). This fast invites us to do the same: meet, experience discomfort with prayerful attentiveness to God's Word, and renew our trust in Him.

Daily Reflection - Resisting Dependence

- When did I feel irritable, tired, or restless after skipping my usual drink, and what did I do in response?
- When I felt uncomfortable or had cravings, did I rely on habits, find a distraction, or turn to God's Word for strength?
- Where did I notice myself growing in patience, restraint, or freedom as I practised self-control?



Week 6: Hungering for God

Fast: Food (in appropriate and guided ways)

Virtue Formed: Humility and Temperance (against Pride and Gluttony)

Silent Prayer: Spend 10 minutes each day in silent prayer, either in the morning or in the evening before bed.

Lectio Divina: Pray with Scripture daily using Lectio Divina.

Examen: Complete a daily Examen, reflecting briefly on where you noticed God's presence and where you experienced resistance.

Our final fast invites us to practise fasting from food in a prayerful, realistic, and attentive way to our health and circumstances. There is no single required method. Choose a form of fasting that is sustainable.

This may include fasting from food for a full day, skipping a meal, or eating simple meals without snacking. If fasting from food is not possible, choose a meaningful alternative that limits comfort or consumption.

Hunger exposes more than physical appetite; it reveals spiritual hunger as well. Jesus reminds us that "one does not live by bread alone," and in John's Gospel he goes further: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry" (John 6:35). In fasting, hunger becomes a teacher—forming self-discipline, renewing trust in God as sustainer, and helping us receive food once again as gift.

Daily Reflection – Hungering for God

- How did I respond when I felt hunger or limitation this week?
- What did hunger reveal about my habits of dependence or comfort?
- Where did hunger open space for prayer or a deeper awareness of God as sustainer?



Next Steps

As Lent comes to a close, it is worth pausing to notice what these weeks have revealed. Finishing a season like this often brings relief that the intensity has ended, along with uncertainty about the next steps forward.

The real danger now is not failure, but forgetfulness. Practices that have shaped these weeks can quietly slip away, and old patterns of distraction, avoidance, or sin return without resistance.

Rather than trying to keep everything, take time to discern what should continue. Holiness is formed quietly through small, faithful choices made out of sight, choosing the narrow way again and again, in ordinary, unseen moments before God.

If you are unsure what that rhythm should look like, speak with a pastor about forming a simple rule of life for the season ahead, one that is realistic, prayerful, and shaped by what God has already been doing in you.



Examination of Conscience

The following Examination is shaped by the Seven Deadly Sins and is intended as a prayerful reflection on our lives. It invites us to notice patterns of sin, disordered desire, and the ways we have fallen short. It may be practised regularly as part of a weekly rhythm, or returned to whenever we become aware of sin.

This is not an exercise in self-accusation, but in honesty before God. As we name our sins, we are invited to release them, receiving God's forgiveness and healing. As the psalmist reminds us, "Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered" (Psalm 32:1).

Pride

Pride is the root of all sin, placing the self at the centre rather than God.

Reflect:

- Have I resisted admitting my weaknesses or sins?
- Have I judged others harshly while excusing myself?
- Have I been slow to listen and quick to defend myself?
- Have I been unwilling to learn from others?
- Have I reacted defensively when corrected?
- Have I sought recognition, affirmation, or status?
- Have I exaggerated, spun the truth, or curated an image to look better?
- Have I neglected the gifts God has given me out of fear or insecurity?
- Have I failed to publicly identify with Christ out of fear of others' opinions?

Scripture: *Proverbs 16:18; James 4:6; Philipians 2:3-8*

Lust

Lust reduces others to objects rather than seeing them as image-bearers of God.

Reflect:

- Have I allowed my eyes or imagination to wander?
- Have I consumed pornography or sexualized content?
- Have I entertained fantasies that dishonour God or others?
- Have I treated people as means to satisfy my desires rather than as neighbours to love?
- Have I sought intimacy apart from God's design?

Scripture: *Matthew 5:27–30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5; Job 31:1*

Anger

Anger is an undue desire for vengeance that becomes sinful when it seeks control, revenge, or self-justification.

Reflect:

- Have I harboured resentment or replayed arguments in my mind?
- Have I been slow to forgive?
- Have I spoken harshly or acted out of irritation?
- Have I allowed anger to justify sinful words or behaviour?
- Have I complained against God in suffering?
- Have I been impatient with people, family, events, suffering or sickness?

Scripture: *Ephesians 4:26–32; James 1:19–20; Matthew 18:21–35*

Greed

Greed is the excessive love for possessions, trusting in them for security instead of God.

Reflect:

- Have I been overly concerned with comfort or financial security?

- Have I envied what others have?
- Have I been generous with my time, money, and resources?
- Have I avoided sacrificial giving?
- Have I used people to get ahead?
- Have I been careless with debt or obligations?

Scripture: *Luke 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:6–10; Hebrews 13:5*

Envy

Envy is a sadness which resents God's generosity to others.

Reflect:

- Have I resented another's success or happiness?
- Have I spoken negatively to diminish others?
- Have I gossiped, exaggerated, or implied things I don't know to be true?
- Have I failed to defend someone unfairly criticised?
- Have I been glad when others failed?

Scripture: *James 3:14–16; Proverbs 14:30; Romans 12:15*

Sloth

Sloth is a laziness towards God or our neighbour.

Reflect:

- Have I been spiritually passive or complacent?
- Have I resisted God's call to grow, serve, or change?
- Have I been more focused on myself than the needs of others?
- Have I wasted time entrusted to me?
- Have I failed to keep commitments?
- Have I ordered my life in a way that reflects eternal priorities?
- Have I practised healthy rest that serves God's purposes rather than escapism?

Scripture: *Romans 12:11; Hebrews 10:24–25; Revelation 3:15–16*

Gluttony

Gluttony is living for the appetite of food, drink, comfort, or entertainment.

Reflect:

- Have I used food, drink, screens, or comfort to numb stress or boredom?
- Have I lacked self-control?
- Have I prioritised pleasure over discipline?
- Have I been indifferent to the needs of the poor?
- Have I allowed habits to master me?

Scripture: *Proverbs 23:20–21; 1 Corinthians 6:12; Philippians 3:18–19*

Prayer of Confession

We know that we have sinned, Father, against heaven and before you, and are no more worthy to be called your children. But there is forgiveness, mercy, and redemption with you. You will not despise a broken and a contrite heart.

Though heaven is your throne, and the earth your footstool, still you will look to the poor and humble person who trembles at your word. You revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite.

The ones who cover their sins will not prosper, yet those that confess and forsake them will find mercy. You have said that if we confess our sins, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Amen

Matthew Henry



Notes

