

FAITH IN 5

Lent: Week 1

Ages 3-8

- 1. What is the first day of Lent called?** It is called Ash Wednesday. Going to Mass on this day is a great way to start the beginning of Lent! Lent is approximately 40 days and runs from Ash Wednesday through Easter. It is the season when we prepare for Jesus's death on the cross. As we prepare, we might say extra prayers, give more money to the poor or choose not to eat our favorite dessert. There are many things we can do during Lent that will help us focus on Jesus and his sacrifice.
- 2. On Ash Wednesday, the priest places ashes on our foreheads. Do you know why he does this?** On Ash Wednesday, the priest places ashes (the dirt and dust from the previous Palm Sunday's burned palm leaves) on our foreheads and says to us either "Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return" or "repent and believe in the Gospel." These words remind us that we will not be on this earth very long and that we should use this time to love God and grow in our relationship with Him!
- 3. Did you know that during Lent, we no longer say the word "alleluia at Mass?"** Remember during the Mass when we sing/say Alleluia before the Priest reads the gospel passage? Well, that word will not be repeated again until when we celebrate Easter. "Alleluia" is a very happy word- it means to praise or rejoice. And since Lent is not a time for celebration, we don't say it. During Lent we are more serious- there will not be many celebrations, parties or weddings during this time. We also may not sing as many songs or see as many flowers in the Church. Everything is very simple.
- 4. What color does the priest wear during Lent?** He wears purple! Purple represents the season of preparation and penance. **Do you remember what color he wore last week during ordinary time?** That's right, green!
- 5. Do you know why we don't eat meat during certain days of Lent?** During Lent especially, the Church encourages us to abstain (or not eat) meat on Fridays, Ash Wednesday or Good Friday. This is what is known as a spiritual discipline. It allows us to be more mindful (or aware) of what we are putting into our bodies and remembering Jesus the whole time as we do it. Some people choose to "give up" (or abstain from) some of their favorite things for Lent. Something someone might choose to give up is desserts. **Is there anything you think you might want to give up?** Maybe it's a favorite cereal of yours or a favorite sweet. It can be something little that you love and when you choose not to eat it, you are reminded of Jesus. By doing this, we are showing Jesus how thankful we are for Him and His ultimate sacrifice. *(According to the USCCB, Children under the age of 14 are not required to abstain from meat,*

however this conversation may be helpful if they want to join or if wondering why their parents are!

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