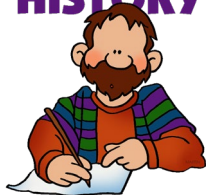


## MAKE THIS LENT A HOLY TIME

### HISTORY



Christians began to fast in preparation for Easter very early in the Church's history. St Irenaeus, who died in 203 AD, wrote to the pope about the different length of time that people spent fasting before Easter. Many of the early Christians believed that Jesus spent 40 hours in the tomb and so some fasted for

40 hours, others for just a single day and others for longer. It seems that it may have been a simple mistake in translation that led to 40 hours becoming 40 days. But we also know that Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert before he began his work for God. By the end of the fourth century Christians were fasting for 40 days before Easter and we still do this today.

For the  
Teacher

## HOW CAN WE MAKE THIS LENT A HOLY TIME?

During Lent we are asked to spend more time doing three things. We are asked to Pray, Fast and Give!

**FAST:** How many times have you been asked the question; *what are you giving up for Lent?* We can also choose to do something positive rather than give something up. For many years every Friday was a fast day for all Catholics and no meat was eaten. Friday was the day chosen because Jesus died on Good Friday. More and more Catholics are now reviving this tradition.

Perhaps, this Lent we could consider choosing to make Friday a **Meat-Free day** in our homes. If we don't eat meat, then perhaps we could make Friday a **Fast from a Treat Day** instead.

**PRAY:** When we pray, we are helping our friendship with Jesus to grow stronger. Take time to revise traditional prayers during the weeks of Lent. Create a **Prayer Sheet** for each week and share it with your class to encourage prayer at home.

**Week 1:** Sign of the Cross, the Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.

**Week 2:** Our Father

**WEEK 3** Act of Sorrow, The Confiteor  
Include the Morning Prayer & Night Prayer.

**Week 4:** Pray a decade of the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary each day to honour Mary our Mother in preparation for the celebration of Mother's Day on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

**Week 5:** Teach the response to the Stations of the Cross and pray three of the Stations each day.

**GIVE:** The Trocaire Box is one of the most recognised symbols of Lent and is traditionally the focus of our giving during Lent. There are resources available on [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org).

Encourage your class to make a Trocaire Box for their home if they do not get one from their parish this year.

Explore other ways of giving during Lent.