

Lent with Our Lady

A Program of Lenten Observance with
(and by) Our Mother



*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
My spirit rejoices in God my Savior:
For he has looked upon the lowliness of his handmaid:
Behold, all generations to come will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
And holy is his Name.*

Luke 1:46-49

Lent with Our Lady: Overview

Rethinking Lent

I know, I know. How can it be a *real, bona-fide* Lent without giving up the chocolate or stashing away the remote for 40 l-o-n-g days?

Leave it to Our Blessed Mother. She's been thinking about Lent, too.

Here's the thing. With Jesus soon to leave home for 40 days in the desert, Mary will have a spare room – *His* room. (And no one to cook for.) So, she would be overjoyed to have us come stay with her, and share some precious Mother-daughter or Mother-son time together. Lovingly, as only the best of mothers can, Mary invites each one of us to be her guest for 40 incredibly wonderful, enriching and transformative days. (And she'll have someone to cook for.)

Ready to pack a few things?

Check out the Benefits!

All those willing to accept Our Lady's invitation to spend time with her can eagerly look forward to abundant blessings and graces, including:

- 1.) To Jesus thru Mary. Grow closer to Jesus with the aid of the one who knew Him as no other ever could – with the heart of a mother.
- 1.) To Jesus thru Mary. Supercharge your life in Christ and community with prayer, works, mini-pilgrimages, and more!
- 1.) To Jesus thru Mary. (If you're seeing a pattern here it's because there is no greater benefit or blessing than being with Jesus and His – and our – Mother). With Mary's help, make this Lent uniquely ours, tailored to our particular spiritual needs, hopes; strengths.
- 1.) To Jesus thru Mary. Don't sweat the “stuff” that might never have helped you grow closer to Jesus, i.e., yes, that chocolate confection is perfectly ok!

Day-by-day

Our Lady's program uses:

- 1.) a one-page, front and back calendar starting with Ash Wednesday and continuing through to, and including the Octave of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday and the Feast of the Annunciation.
- 2.) a host of activities, from praying your favorite psalm to setting a good example, designed to help us grow closer to Jesus – one day at a time (See Sections 1 through 6 for possibilities.) Substitute for suggestions on the calendar or add some to your daily Lenten journey.

Putting It All Together: Between Easter and Divine Mercy

Spend a little time with the Risen Jesus telling Him about the really special time spent with His – our – Mother.

Section 1 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: PRAYER

*The Rosary

For an RCIA candidate

The Divine Mercy Chaplet (www.marian.org)

*The Morning Offering

*An Act of Faith, Hope and Love

*The Angelus and Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

A litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

*An act of Consecration to Our Lady

A favorite psalm

*An Act of Contrition

*The Lord's Prayer, deeply, slowly

*The Guardian Angel prayer

*Grace before, and Thanksgiving after, meals

From your heart

For a special intention

The Divine Office – The daily readings prayed by our priests also known as the Hours of the Church

Vocations Prayer

Respect Life Prayer

Special: offer to be a “prayer buddy” with a friend, so that no matter where you each happen to be, you are united in saying the same prayer at the same time.

Special: Starting on Good Friday and ending on Divine Mercy Sunday, pray the Divine Mercy Novena (marian.org)

Remember to be polite: all prayers asking for help should be followed up by prayers saying thank you.

Add your own ideas below!

*www.EWTN.com

Section 2 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: WORKS

*Attend daily Mass

Attend Miraculous Medal (or other) Novena

Live a beatitude (see Matthew or Luke)

Offer your time, talent or treasure in support of a parish activity / outreach program

Offer your time, talent or treasure in support of a charitable organization

Participate in Operation Rice Bowl

*Perform a Corporal Work of Mercy (list)

*Perform a Spiritual Work of Mercy

EWTN – Act of Spiritual Communion

Help make rosaries

Check out the USCCB (or other) website and learn something new about our Catholic faith – and share what you learned with a friend!

*Light a votive candle for a Holy Soul in Purgatory

Request a Mass for a living family member or relative, or other intention

Consciously set a good example – especially for youth (hold the door, return a shopping cart to store)

Study the life of a saint and try to imitate them in at least one way

*Make an Examination of Conscience and go to Confession

Count at least 5 blessings (and remember to say thank you)

Celebrate God in Creation (marvel at the sunrise, wade in a stream, walk in the woods, savor an apple, search for shooting stars, trace the rings of a tree, listen to a cat purring . . .)

Make a point of thinking about your Guardian Angel, ask their help, tell them how very much you appreciate them

*Make a Holy Hour during Eucharistic Adoration

*Devote 15 or more minutes meditating on Our Lord's Passion

Attend Stations of the Cross

Take up the Offertory gifts at Mass

Add your own ideas below!

**Do this more than once*

Section 3 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: MUSIC AND ART

Sing a hymn from the Lenten repertoire (even if only in the shower)

Listen to sacred song, inspirational music, Marian hymn

Prayerfully contemplate a religious work of art (painting, sculpture, statue, carving, etc)

Sing during Mass or Stations

Play seasonal melody on a musical instrument

Recite a religious / inspirational work

Add your own ideas below!

Section 4 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: READING

Psalm of Trust 30 or 31

Psalm of Contrition 34 or 51

Psalm of Sorrow 86 or 130

Isaiah: Suffering Servant 49: 1-7 or 50: 4-9 or 52: 13-15 or 53: 1-12

St. John's Gospel: The Last Supper Discourse 17-19

St. Paul's letter to the Philippians 2: 1-11

One or more Synoptic Gospel accounts of the Passion – Matthew, Mark or Luke

St. Faustina, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*

St. John Paul II, *The Threshold of Hope*

St. Therese of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*

Or books by these authors

Mother Angelica

Barbara Canale

Anne Costa

Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC

C.S. Lewis

Max Lucado

Fr. James Martin, S.J.

Thomas Merton

Henri Nouwen

Add your own ideas below!

Section 5 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: WRITING

Write to a friend about your stay with Mary – reflect on and relate some of her many virtues kindness, patience, gentleness, love, a good listener . . . As you do, think about how you can imitate Mother in one or two of these.

Write a postcard to Jesus while he is in the desert

Journal about your day-by-day Lenten activities and experiences

Scripture and tradition tell us that Jesus encountered certain people as He made His way to Calvary – and His Crucifixion:

His Mother

Simon of Cyrene

Veronica

the women and children crying for Him

Mary Magdalene

the Disciple He loved

even His aunt (His mother's sister)

I must think that each one of these was deeply, deeply moved by their meeting with the Man of Sorrows. ***Choose one person and contemplate what went through their mind and heart from that day forward, and indeed, the rest of their life.*** Share your thoughts with a friend.

Add your own ideas!

Section 6 of 6: Day-by-day Calendar Ideas: MINI-PILGRIMAGE

To the Central New York Marian Center, 5180 West Taft Road, North Syracuse

Visit the Sacred Heart Apostolate in The Catholic Shop, 201 E. Laurel St. (off State St.). Say a prayer to the Sacred Heart in The Catholic Shop Prayer Room

Stop in and explore in detail a church you've never visited before. This is a Holy Thursday tradition.

One day visits to National Shrine of Divine Mercy, Auriesville, other

Make the Stations of the Cross

To the St. Marianne Cope Museum, North Townsend Street, Syracuse

Make a virtual visit online to Jerusalem, Fatima, Rome, Paris

Read or study about a place of pilgrimage such as Guadalupe, St. Michael's cave

Share with others any pictures / postcards / mementos / literature / stories you might have from a pilgrimage you once made

Add your own ideas below!