

LENTEN
M·I·C·R·O
PRACTICES



ABOUT LENTEN MICROPRACTICES

Lent is a 40 day season of preparation for the resurrection of Jesus. We mark this time as different through our actions. The days are counted from Ash Wednesday through the Saturday before Easter. Sunday's are not counted in Lent's 40 days.

We begin by being marked with ashes as a reminder of the uncertainty of human life. We continue throughout the 40 days by making room in our hearts and lives for Christ's resurrection.

In this booklet, you'll find a new practice to guide you each day on your journey. Some practices can be done on the spot, some during the day, and others will take some time and/or preparation.

Traditionally, there are three pillars of Lent: praying, fasting, and alms giving, which come to us from Matthew 6:1-18. The practices in this booklet rotate through these themes, along with additional practices that don't fit neatly in one of those categories ("more").

Engage with the practices when and how you can. There is no right or wrong way to do them. You are no more or less holy by doing them all or only a few. Feel free to adjust the practice of the day to better fit yourself or the members of your household.

Bonus Tips:

- + Read the daily practice in the morning so you have a chance to engage with it during the day.
- + Set an alarm on your phone as a reminder.
- + Review the day's practice at dinner.
- + Mark your favorite practices to make a regular part of your faith life.



DAILY EXAMEN - DAY 1 - ASH WEDNESDAY

PRAY

This prayer technique was developed by St. Ignatius Loyola over 400 years ago. At the end of the day, **use these five steps to review your day and prepare for the next.**

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.

PRAYER RHYTHM - DAY 2

PRAY

Pick something that happens regularly - like brushing teeth, taking a walk, or washing dishes. **Say a prayer every time you do this action.**

SIMPLIFY - DAY 3

FAST

What is overcomplicated in life that can be simplified?

What are the simplest meals you can eat? Rice and beans is a simple, nutritious meal found in most cultures around the world that would make a great lunch or dinner.

GIVING JAR - DAY 4

GIVE

Designate a giving jar where loose change can go. At the end of Lent, give the collected change to the church or another organization. You can also set an intention to give to it regularly.

BIBLE READING - SUNDAY 1

MORE

Read one chapter in your Bible today.

QUIET TIME - DAY 5

PRAY

Spend 10 minutes today in silence and prayer.

Is that easy or hard for you?

LET GO - DAY 6

FAST

It is human nature to hold on to resentment and grudges.

Today practice letting go of resentment and open your heart to new possibilities.

CLEAR OUT - DAY 7

GIVE

Donate personal possessions such as clothes, books, shoes, to live a second life. Take time to figure out what is essential and what is extra.

START SEEDLINGS - DAY 8

MORE

Plant seeds in small jars and place them in the light. Let them be physical reminders that we partner with God in creation.

FINGER PRAYER - DAY 9

PRAY

Use your fingers to guide your prayer.

- Thumb:** Those close to you.
- Pointer:** Those who point the way.
- Tall finger:** Those in authority.
- Ring finger:** Those who are sick, poor, in need.
- Pinky:** Your own needs.



UNPLUG - DAY 10

FAST

Unplug as much as you can - perhaps even the wifi router!

Make room for connection with those close to you.

NOURISH - SUNDAY 2

GIVE

Cook a meal for a friend or neighbor. We never know what people are going through, and even a simple meal can make a big difference in someone's life.

GOD SIGHTINGS - DAY 11

MORE

At the end of the day ask yourself **"Where did I see God today?"** Make a list.

PRAYER WALL - DAY 12

PRAY

Use a large piece of paper or sticky notes to **write or draw prayers of joy and concern.** Visit the wall regularly and continue to pray for the prayers that have been posted.

PRESS PAUSE - DAY 13

FAST

Press pause on videos, shows, movies, and streamed content.

What can you fill this time with instead?

SAVE + SHARE - DAY 14

GIVE

Buy one or two extra non-perishable foods each week at the grocery store or set aside 10¢ a meal. At the end of Lent, share what you've saved to help feed others.

LEARN A SONG - DAY 15

MORE

Find a psalm or a hymn text that is meaningful to you.

Write out the words, learn more about the song, and read/sing it throughout the day.

ON THE MOVE - DAY 16

PRAY

Be intentional about silencing your phone and radio when in the car alone. Instead, use that quiet time to talk to God.

BE INCONVENIENCED - SUNDAY 3

FAST

Cut out a modern convenience that you use regularly (digital devices, microwave, coffee maker, etc.) for the day. How does this change your daily activities?

A NEW GIFT - DAY 17

GIVE

Find a new charity or organization to support that energizes you. Share their mission with friends and family.

SAINTLY FRIEND - DAY 18

MORE

Read about one of the saints. We have many mothers and fathers who have come before us with inspiring stories. Learn about some saints at bit.ly/Saintly-Friend. You can also scan the QR code to the right to access the link.



PRAYERFUL ENCOUNTERS - DAY 19

PRAY

Pray for others you encounter in your day—whether you know them or not. Did you pray for someone unexpected?

BUY LESS - DAY 20

FAST

When we can buy with the click of a button, it's easy not to pause and think. **Take a day to refrain from purchasing anything unless it's truly needed.**

SUSTAIN - DAY 21

GIVE

Write a note of thanks to those who work to keep us healthy (doctors, nurses, etc.). Your words of thanks and appreciation will sustain them through difficult times.

COLOR - DAY 22

MORE

We can connect with God when we're doing something that doesn't use our full concentration like coloring. **Color a mandala or search out other meaningful coloring pages.**

SILENCE - SUNDAY 4

Find a quiet place, close your eyes and let your thoughts go. As they come to you, imagine that they are floating by you on a river. Let them go.





SPEAK KINDNESS - DAY 23

FAST

Refrain from gossip and other unkind words. **Only speak what is positive today.** Bonus: add a quarter to a giving jar if you say something negative.



SAY THANKS - DAY 24

GIVE

We receive help from others in big and small ways all the time. Who has helped you along the way? **Write a letter of thanks to someone who has made a difference in your life.**

MEMORIZE - DAY 25

MORE

What scripture do you want to hold close to guide you today and in the future? Write it out and repeat it throughout the day. You can even set a timer on your phone as a reminder.



DIFFICULT PRAYERS - DAY 26

PRAY

In Matthew 5:43, **Jesus tells us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.** A simple but transformative reminder for yourself is: God loves my enemies the same as God loves me.



TRADITIONAL FAST - DAY 27

FAST

Partake of only one full meal today. Some food is permitted at breakfast and around midday or in the evening—depending on when you choose to eat your full meal.

GIVE TIME - DAY 28

GIVE

Schedule time for serving others during Lent. It doesn't matter whether the project is big or small, it matters more that you share your time.

MUSIC DAY - SUNDAY 5

Spend your day singing and listening to religious music.

After all, "when you sing you pray twice."

(Quote attributed to Augustine.)

MORE



FOLDING PRAYER - DAY 29

PRAY

Fold paper cranes (or other origami) and pray for someone. If you are able, give them what you created. Follow the link bit.ly/Folding-Prayer (or scan the qr code) for some easy origami instructions.



GO GREEN - DAY 30

FAST

How can you reduce your waste today? Find ways to use cloth instead of paper products, reusable instead of single-use products, purchase items with eco-friendly packaging.

APPRECIATE - DAY 31

GIVE

Leave a note in your mailbox or some treats on the front porch for the folks who bring the mail and deliver packages. It's easy to take for granted how the world can be shipped to our doorsteps and not stop to notice all those who make it happen.

ACT OF KINDNESS - DAY 32

MORE

Perform a random act of kindness for another person today.

If you need ideas for what to do check out randomactsofkindness.org.

JESUS PRAYER - DAY 33

PRAY

Recite the Jesus prayer 10 times, either in one sitting or throughout the course of the day: “Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” For children, it can be as simple as “Jesus loves me and my neighbor.”

DETACH - DAY 34

FAST

Set aside what you find yourself attached to for the day. It could be your phone, books, video games, etc. What space does this open up for you?

A BREAK - PALM SUNDAY

GIVE

Who do you know who needs a break, and how can you give them one? You could offer a run to the store, babysitting, sweeping/shoveling, or even a small gift card.

BE UNCOMFORTABLE - DAY 25

MORE

Growth happens in places where we are uncomfortable, and it's easy to stay in the places of comfort. **Push yourself to find new opportunities to live your faith, especially if it means doing something new.**

CHURCH STAFF - DAY 36

PRAY

Lent and Holy Week are especially busy times for church staff.
Pray for their well-being.

WONDER - DAY 37

FAST

Take a break from having all the answers. Spend the day noticing, wondering, and questioning the world around you.

SUPPORT - DAY 38 - MAUNDY THURSDAY

GIVE

Support a local school or teacher with a note, goodies, or supplies. You can go to donorschoose.org to support specific school projects.

PRACTICE GRACE - DAY 39 - GOOD FRIDAY

MORE

Practice grace in everything you do today. Extend some to your family if they irritate you, to the slow people in your checkout line, or to the cars that pull out in front of you. Notice where you need grace extended to you, too.

PRAYER WALK - DAY 40

PRAY

Walk around your neighborhood and pray for what you see, hear, touch, and smell.

PRESENCE - EASTER SUNDAY

MORE

Reach out to someone in your church or neighborhood who could use a call or visit. This might include an elderly church member, a stay at home parent, someone who has recently lost their job, or someone who is grieving.

REFLECT

What practices have been meaningful for you?

How can you incorporate them into your daily life now that Lent is over?

How have you been changed by engaging with these practices over the last six and a half weeks?

