

St. Andrew's Xrossing



"Where Family and Faith Come Together"

LENT 2026

Welcome to LENT – The Road to Easter!

The word "Lent" originates from an Old English term meaning "to lengthen." In the Northern Hemisphere, this season aligns with spring, when the days grow longer and new life blossoms. Just as the physical light increases, Lent serves as a spiritual preparation for the celebration of Christ's Death and Resurrection at Easter.

Spanning forty days—from Ash Wednesday to the evening of Holy Thursday—this season draws us toward the light of Christ. The Church encourages us to grow through three core practices: prayer, penance, and almsgiving. These practices have both personal and communal dimensions. Individually, we simplify our lives through meditation and self-restraint; communally, we gather for the Eucharist, the Stations of the Cross, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Ultimately, the Lenten journey leads us to the promise of new life. Each step brings us closer to the Paschal Mystery and the hope of the empty tomb. Though we silence our "alleluias" for these forty days, they return with joy as we proclaim our central faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again!



Wishing you a holy and meaningful journey as we walk with Jesus toward the cross.
Deacon Brian

"The Faces of Easter" – Godly Play

This Lent, we invite your children to step into a sacred journey through "The Faces of Easter," a cornerstone of Godly Play curriculum. This multi-week series uses beautiful wooden plaques to help children visualize the "mystery" of Jesus' life—from his quiet birth to the wonder of the empty tomb.

The Journey Through Seven Faces

We will explore the pivotal moments that shaped the man who changed the world:



The Birth: Witnessing the wordless child born to Mary and Joseph.
The Lost Boy: Finding a young Jesus in the Temple, discovering his "Father's house."
The Baptism: Hearing the voice from heaven name him the "Beloved Son."
The Desert: Walking through the 40 days of discovery and preparation.
The Healer & Parable-Teller: Seeing the Kingdom of God through his miracles and stories.
The Last Supper: Joining the table where Jesus offers the bread and the wine.
The One who Was Easter: Experiencing the power of the Resurrection and how he "still is" with us.

When: **EVERY Sunday at 9:10 am**

Where: **"Godly Play" Sunday School Room**

Come and wonder with us as we follow the faces of Jesus toward the light of Easter.

"What is Lent?"



Lent is a 40-day season of preparation for the mystery of Easter, a time to realign our lives with God. By fasting from what separates us or adopting Christ-like practices, we honor a tradition that historically prepared believers for baptism. Because faith is a lifelong journey, each Lent offers fresh insight as Jesus' life, death, and resurrection continue to shape our spiritual walk.

Lent prepares us for Easter! It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends the Saturday before Easter Sunday—a period of just over 40 days. During this time, we reflect on Jesus' sacrifice. Though he was God's Son, Jesus became human and gave his life to free us from the power of sin and death (as Paul explains in Philippians 2:5-11).
In remembrance of his sacrifice, we also choose to give things up. Some people fast from food, TV, or video games to focus more on talking with and thinking about Jesus. It is a small way to show our love and gratitude.

To help your family join in, we are sharing the following resources:

- Children's Lenten Calendar
- 40 Days of Lent Coloring Counter
- Lenten Family Calendar
- Stations of the Cross for Young People
- My 40 Crosses of Lent Calendar
- Daily at Home Lenten Activities for Families



Check out the ***Family Fun Lenten Activities on pages 3, 4, and 5 of this newsletter!***

We pray these experiences create meaningful moments as your family prepares for Easter.



Mark your Calendars for:
"Cookie Church"

Ash Wednesday, February 18th at 4 pm

Maundy Thursday, April 1st at 4 pm



Brainstorm for Lent

Prayer: What needs (for myself, my family and the world) can I pray about during Lent?

Fasting: What can I give up this Lent to remind myself that God is the most important thing in my life?

Almsgiving: How can I share what I have with the poor this Lent?

My Prayer for Lent

Jesus, thank you for always being with me. Please teach me how to hear you in my heart, and how to love others like you. I love you, Jesus. Amen.



Crown of Thorns Activity

A great Lent and Mission activity, that is *so inexpensive and easy* to make, you can make them with your whole classroom! *[They're also great for at home, but easy enough for a classroom environment]*



HOW IT WORKS: Every child makes the Crown of Thorns and take it home at the beginning of Lent.

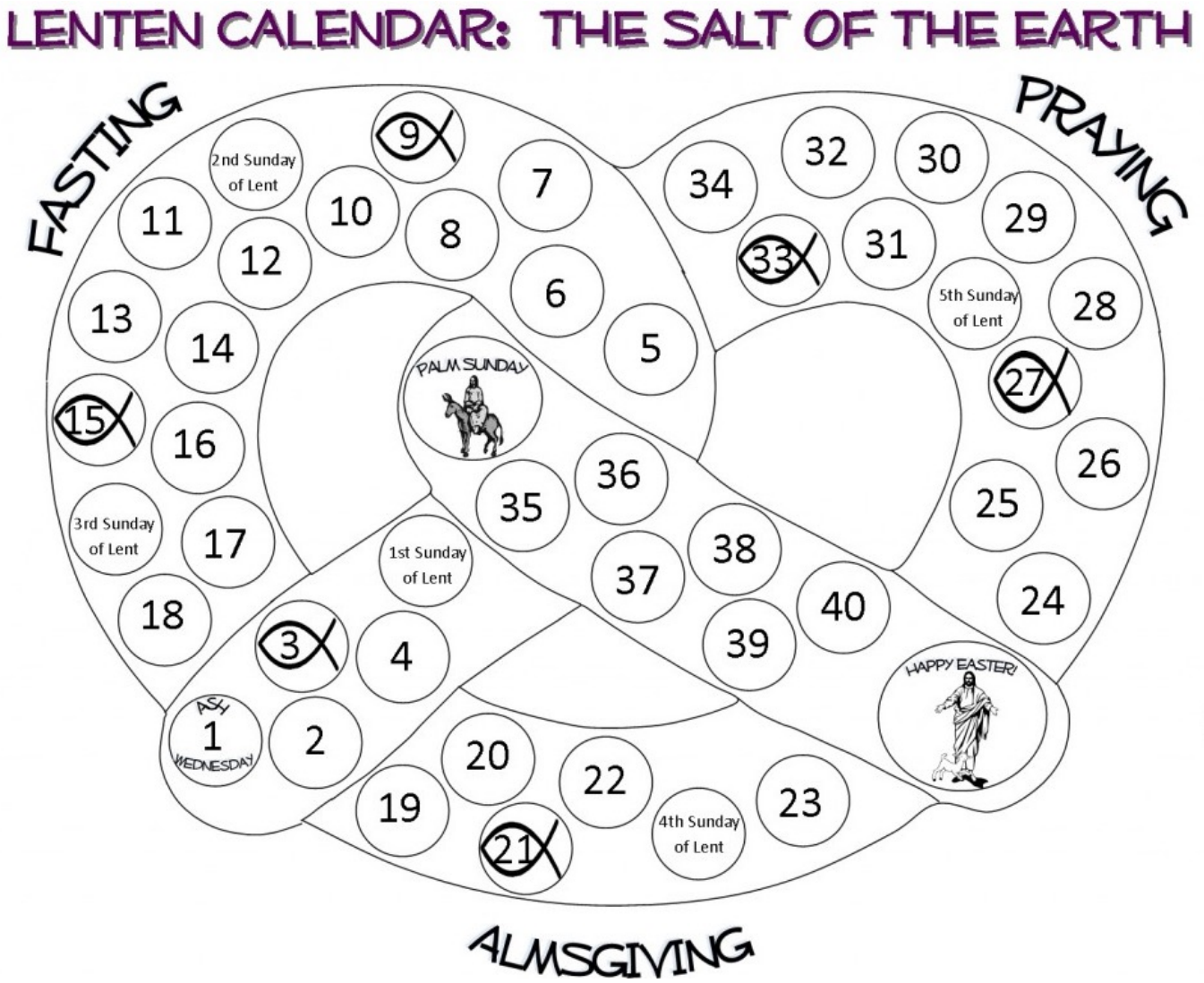
Each time that child does a good deed or makes a sacrifice during Lent, they may remove a thorn from the crown to help Jesus! **Students can remove TWO thorns if they make a special sacrifice for the Missions.**

What you will need:

- Cheap Play-Doh [red, yellow, blue]
- Toothpicks (cut in half)
- Small paper plates

Instructions are simple!

After mixing the Play-Doh to make a brown color, distribute to the children, with 40 half pieces of tooth picks and a paper plate. Let each student get creative in creating their thorns. Allow each student to take their crown home and don't forget to make one for your classroom.



Pretzel Prayer

"A young monk baked the first pretzel - making a Lenten bread of water, flour, and salt, forming the dough into the prayer position of the day and baking it as a soft bread. These little breads were shaped in the form of arms crossed in prayer and were called bracellae (Latin, 'little arms'). Among the Germans the word became 'bretzel.' These pretzels were a common Lenten food throughout the Middle Ages in Europe, and became an all year round snack, in its original shape only in the last (19th) century."
(from bustedhalo.com/life-culture/pretzels-and-lent)

Make Pretzels!

Make your own pretzels or purchase them pre-made

Ingredients:
1 package of yeast
1 ½ cups of warm water
1 Tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
about 4 cups of flour
1 egg (optional)
Extra salt for the tops - large salt works best

Steps:
Mix the yeast, water, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the flour and knead the dough until it is smooth. Shape into the form of arms crossed in prayer and place on a baking sheet.
Brush the dough with a beaten egg to give it a shiny finish (optional).
Sprinkle the top with salt and bake in a 425 degree preheated oven for 15 minutes.
(recipe from catholicicing.com/pretzels-for-lent/)

As you enjoy your pretzels, fold your arms in the shape of a pretzel and say a prayer, thanking God for everyday things in our lives that remind us of God!

Whole-wheat recipe: sallysbakingaddiction.com/30-minute-whole-wheat-pretzels
Gluten-free recipe: www.kingarthurbaking.com/recipes/gluten-free-soft-pretzels-recipe

Lent Sacrifice Jelly Bean Jar

Create a meaningful Lenten Sacrifice Jelly bean Jar for your family by incorporating colorful jelly beans that represent various types of sacrifices and good deeds. This interactive activity fosters a visual representation of the positive actions and sacrifices made during the Lenten season.



1. **Black Jelly Beans** - Nightly Prayers: Earn a black jelly bean by dedicating time to say your prayers in the evening before bedtime. This sacrifice reflects the importance of communing with God before resting.



2. **Purple Jelly Beans** - Acts of Kindness: Add a purple jelly bean for every act of kindness and generosity. Encourage your family to perform thoughtful deeds throughout Lent, promoting a spirit of compassion and love.



3. **Red Jelly Beans** - Sacrifices for Others: Earn a red jelly bean by making sacrifices for the well-being of others. This can include giving up personal comforts or going out of your way to help someone in need.



4. **Green Jelly Beans** - Gratitude Moments: Express gratitude by earning a green jelly bean for recognizing and appreciating the blessings in your life. This encourages a positive mindset and appreciation for God's gifts.



5. **Blue Jelly Beans** - Learning and Growing: Add a blue jelly bean for each effort made towards personal growth and learning. This can include reading the Bible, engaging in spiritual reflection, or learning a new prayer.



6. **Yellow Jelly Beans** - Acts of Service: Contribute to your Sacrifice Jar with a yellow jelly bean for every act of service performed. Encourage your family to actively serve others in their community or church.

7. **White Jelly Beans** - Fasting and Abstinence: Earn a white jelly bean through acts of fasting or abstaining. This represents self-discipline and a conscious effort to draw closer to God through sacrifice.



8. **Pink Jelly Beans** - Family Unity: Strengthen family bonds by adding a pink jelly bean for activities that promote unity and togetherness. This can include family prayers, shared meals, or quality time spent together.

As Lent progresses, witness the jar filling up with a vibrant display of your family's collective efforts. On Easter, celebrate the culmination of your sacrifices by enjoying the jelly beans you've earned, savoring the sweetness of the shared journey towards a greater good. May this Lenten Sacrifice Jar become a cherished tradition, reminding your family of the joy found in selfless acts and drawing you closer to God.