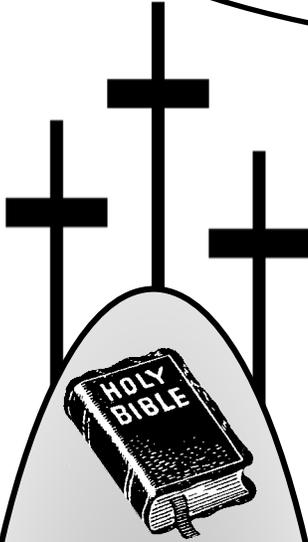


# LENT

## First Week of Lent—2017



\*Spend time reading and sharing the impact of Scripture with your family.

\*For the readings of the day visit [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings)

### Scripture to Share:

#### Psalm 51: 3-4

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.

#### Joel 2: 12-13

Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart for I am gracious and merciful.

#### Matthew 5: 43-45

Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you."

### Who or what is a Lent?

Derived from the word *lencten*, which is Anglo-Saxon for springtime, Lent is the 40-day season of preparation prior to Easter which begins on Ash Wednesday.

### Lent Around the World:

([www.OSB.com](http://www.OSB.com), Our Sunday Visitor)

Different nations and cultures throughout the world observe Lent with diverse traditions and customs. Here are a few:



**Denmark:** The last Sunday before Lent begins is called "Fastelavn." Jam-filled donuts are eaten, children dress up in costumes and candy is handed out.

**England & The British Isles:** The arrival of Lent is marked by making pancakes while also holding pancake races. The British Isles also have one of the most beloved Lenten customs of eating hot cross buns to symbolize the Cross.

**Goa, India:** Catholics have their own version of Carnival with three days of music, dancing and feasting, culminating in a Mass on Ash Wednesday. Notably, the Indian Catholics have traditionally been joined by Hindu and Muslim neighbors in the festivities.

**Italy:** Bottles of holy water are traditionally passed out during Lent for use in blessing homes.

**Bermuda:** Families fly kites made with wooden sticks on Good Friday to represent both the cross that Jesus died on and his Ascension into heaven.

**Slovakia:** On Palm Sunday, called Kvetna, or Flower Sunday, after the morning Mass, children in villages gathered behind a maypole and went through the town singing a song about Christ journeying to Jerusalem.

Does your family have customs and traditions that are rooted in your ethnic background? If not, take some time with your child to learn about what cultural practices from your ethnic background are popular during Lent.

### Family Activities:



- \* Pray and Fast for an end of violence both in our communities and our nation.
- \* Organize a volunteer day at your parish. Spend time visiting shut-ins, your local nursing home or making improvements to your neighborhood.
- \* Pick a scripture passage from this week and as a family spend time reading this passage and discuss what it means in your daily life.
- \* Remove something from your calendar and have a family night.