



**SHOW ME THE WAY**

**ANTIOCH MIDWEEK LENT GUIDE**

# Introduction to Lent

Lent is a 40-day journey where we slow down, follow Jesus toward the cross, and make space for God. It's a season to notice what's happening inside us, to trust God when life feels hard or confusing, and to remember that He is always with us - even in the 'in between' moments.

During this Lent journey, we walk with Jesus toward the cross - guided not only by the stories of the Gospels, but also by the Psalms, the very prayers that shaped His own heart and language with God.

## **Consider the following as you embark on your journey together:**

- What could you, as a group, give up or take up together during this season in order to deepen this journey and nourish your inner life?
- You may also want to take a moment and create a listening space for individuals who may want to share something personal that they are choosing to give up or take up, if they feel comfortable doing so.
- The group could also commit to praying for one another during this time.

Feel free to light a candle now and sit in silence for two to three minutes, while each person reflects on what you've shared and on what God may be inviting them into next.

Close with prayer as you dedicate this journey to the Lord. May this guide invite you as a group to:

- Slow down;
- Breathe again;
- Hold space for vulnerability;
- Grow closer to Jesus;
- Find healing, honesty and hope.

Pray the following 'grace' each day for the duration of the Lent journey: 'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'

# Preparation Week - Beloved Dust

## CHECK-IN

- What was the best moment of your day?
- If your energy today was a phone battery percentage, what “%” would it be?

## READ

Read the following Scripture prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.

“...for you are dust, and to dust you will return.” - Genesis 3:19

## REFLECT

Lent is a 40-day journey where we slow down - on purpose. We remember Jesus’ suffering, and we let our imagination place us close to Him, seeing what He saw, feeling what He felt. Early Christians used these 40 days to prepare their hearts for Easter - usually through simplicity, sacrifice, and letting go.

In a world shaped by:

- overloaded schedules
- burnout
- social media pressure
- fear of failure
- comparison
- questions about identity and purpose
- and constant noise

Lent becomes a sacred pause - a place where God whispers: You are dust... but you are ‘beloved’ dust. Ash Wednesday reminds us of two truths:

1. Life is fragile
2. God is faithful

## **DISCUSS**

- What has been your experience of Lent or Ash Wednesday before - if any?
- What are you hoping for in your Lent journey this year?
- Is there something you want to lay down (a habit, distraction, fear) or pick up (a practice, prayer, healthy rhythm)?
- How can the group pray for you as you start this journey?

## **PRAY**

'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'

# Week 1 - The Descending Way

Jesus' way of humble love

## CHECK-IN

- What influenced your mood or energy the most today? (workload, people, sleep, social media, finances, etc.)
- If you had to summarise your first Lent week with a word or image, what would it be?

## READ

Read this Psalm prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.

“Lord, my heart is meek before you.

I don't consider myself better than others.

I'm content to not pursue matters that are over my head-  
such as your complex mysteries and wonders-  
that I'm not yet ready to understand.

I am humbled and quieted in your presence.

Like a contented child who rests on its mother's lap,

I'm your resting child and my soul is content in you.

O people of God, your time has come to quietly trust,  
waiting upon the Lord now and forever.” - Psalm 131:1-3

We are invited to come with the posture of the Psalm writer... with Jesus as our example. Look at the following passage where Jesus washes feet.

Ask someone in the group to read John 13:1–17 out loud.

## REFLECT

Jesus, fully aware of His power and identity, kneels with a towel and a basin. The strongest Person in the room chooses the lowest posture. In a generation shaped by,

- hustle culture
- self-promotion
- chasing significance
- pressure to 'build your brand'
- fear of being overlooked

Jesus shows a completely different way: The way down is the way to love. Like Peter, we often resist receiving help, admitting that we need something; allowing God or others to serve us, losing control or appearing weak. But Jesus says: Let Me love you first. Lent begins with receiving, not achieving.

## **DISCUSS**

- What part of the foot-washing story hits you the hardest - and why?
- Why do you think it's hard for our generation to receive love, rest, or help?
- Where do you see modern "foot washing" - acts of humble service - in real life?
- What is one small, practical act of humble love you can offer someone this week?

## **PRAY**

'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'

# Week 2 - The Selfless Way

Letting go of false strength

## CHECK-IN

- What from last week's Lent journey stayed with you?
- Where did you sense God's nearness in the past few days?

## READ

Read this Psalm prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.  
"Happy are those whose strength comes from You...

As they pass through the dry valley,  
it becomes a place filled with springs...

They go from strength to strength." – Psalm 84:5-7

Ask someone in the group to read Luke 22:54–62 out loud.

## REFLECT

Peter follows Jesus 'from a distance.' He wants to be close, but fear pulls him back. Many of us know this tension:

- Wanting faith, but fearing judgment
- Wanting intimacy with God, but feeling unworthy
- Wanting courage, but choosing comfort

Around the fire, Peter is confronted with himself. Three denials. And then - the look. Not a look of shame. Not 'I told you so.' But a look that says: I know you fully and I love you still. Peter's tears are not failure. They are awakening. They are the beginning of transformation.

## DISCUSS

- What moves you most in Peter's story - his fear, his denial, or Jesus' look?
- What does Jesus' look teach you about His character and His heart toward you?
- Where in your life does God invite you to drop the masks and be seen honestly?

## PRAY

'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'

# Week 3 - The Obedient Way

Choosing God's heart in the middle of struggle

## CHECK-IN

- What gave you life this week and what drained you?
- How was it for you to walk with Jesus in His suffering this week?

## READ

Read the Psalm prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.

"I waited patiently for the LORD;  
he turned to me and heard my cry.  
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,  
out of the mud and mire;  
he set my feet on a rock  
and gave me a firm place to stand.  
He put a new song in my mouth,  
a hymn of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear the LORD  
and put their trust in him.  
Blessed is the one  
who trusts in the LORD,  
who does not look to the proud,  
to those who turn aside to false gods.  
Many, LORD my God,  
are the wonders you have done,  
the things you planned for us.  
None can compare with you;  
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,  
they would be too many to declare.  
Sacrifice and offering you did not desire-  
but my ears you have opened-  
burnt offerings and sin offerings[d] you did not require.  
Then I said, "Here I am, I have come-  
it is written about me in the scroll.  
I desire to do your will, my God;  
your law is within my heart."

I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;  
I do not seal my lips, LORD,  
as you know.”  
- Psalm 40:1-9

Ask someone in the group to read Luke 22:39–43 out loud.

## **REFLECT**

Jesus feels the full weight of what is coming. He is not emotionally detached. He is not pretending. He is overwhelmed. He is honest. He prays: “Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will, but Yours be done.”

Life with Jesus is a journey: Not denying fear, but surrendering fear. Not escaping suffering, but trusting God inside it. Not controlling outcomes, but yielding to Love. An angel strengthens Him - not by removing the struggle, but by carrying Him through it.

## **DISCUSS**

- Where in your life are you praying a similar prayer: “God, please take this cup away”?
- Where do you feel torn between your will and God’s will?
- What might “kneeling” look like in that situation?

## **PRAY**

‘Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen’

# Week 4 - The Suffering Way

Jesus enters our deepest pain

## CHECK-IN

- What surprised you this past week?
- What word or picture describes your week?

## READ

Read the Psalm prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from my cries of anguish?

My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,  
by night, but I find no rest.

Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;  
you are the one Israel praises.

In you our ancestors put their trust;  
they trusted and you delivered them.

To you they cried out and were saved;  
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm and not a man,  
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

All who see me mock me;  
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

“He trusts in the LORD,” they say,  
“let the LORD rescue him.

Let him deliver him,  
since he delights in him.”

Yet you brought me out of the womb;  
you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast.

From birth I was cast on you;  
from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to help.

- Psalm 22:1–11

Ask someone in the group to read Mark 15:29–39 out loud.

## **REFLECT**

Jesus is misunderstood, mocked, misjudged, and left alone. His cry - “My God, why have You forsaken Me?” - echoes the raw honesty of human suffering. These are the moments we often hide:

- Depression
- Burnout
- Heartbreak
- Family pain
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Feeling unseen

But Jesus doesn't hide His pain. He speaks it. And the one who sees the truth of His identity is not the crowd, not the religious leaders - but a Roman soldier, an outsider. Sometimes God speaks clearest, through unexpected people, in unexpected places, even during pain.

## **DISCUSS**

- Where in your life have you felt misunderstood, overwhelmed, or alone?
- How do Jesus' words of abandonment help you be honest with God about your own pain?
- Have you ever seen God show up in an unexpected way - or through an unexpected person?

## **PRAY**

'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'

# Week 5 - The Surrendering Way

Resting in the Father's hands

## CHECK-IN

- What colour describes your emotional state today?
- What word or metaphor sums up your Lent week?

## READ

Read this Psalm prayerfully and notice what word or phrase stands out.

In you, LORD, I have taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.

Turn your ear to me,  
come quickly to my rescue;  
be my rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress to save me.

Since you are my rock and my fortress,  
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,  
for you are my refuge.

Into your hands I commit my spirit;  
deliver me, LORD, my faithful God.

My times are in your hands;  
deliver me from the hands of my enemies,  
from those who pursue me.

Let your face shine on your servant;  
save me in your unfailing love.

- Psalm 31:1-5;15-16

Ask someone in the group to read Luke 23:44-46 out loud.

## **REFLECT**

Jesus' final words are not defeat, they are trust. Not collapse, but release. Not giving up, but giving over. He entrusts Himself fully to the Father, even as everything around Him collapses. We often hold tight to:

- Control
- Outcomes
- Expectations
- Timelines
- The pressure to 'figure out your life'

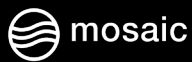
Jesus shows another way: a surrender rooted in love, not fear.

## **DISCUSS**

- What does it mean to you when Jesus says, "Into Your hands I commit my spirit"?
- Where in your life do you long for that kind of deep rest and trust?
- What does the sentence 'My life is in God's hands' invite you into right now?

## **PRAY**

'Lord, we ask for the grace to help us to notice Your presence and love in our lives. Amen'



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