



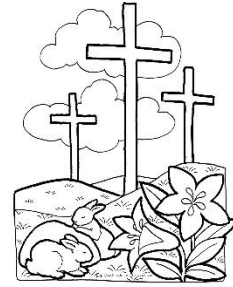
Lent- What's it all about? By Bethany Spirituality Leaders.

Think about these questions:

Why do Christians celebrate Lent?

How long does Lent last?

Why do people give things up for Lent?



What is Lent?

Lent is a Christian festival, when Christians prepare for Easter, the most important event.

How long does Lent last?

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, Wed, March 5th –and lasts for 40 days, until Thurs, 17th April

The day before Lent starts is called Shrove Tuesday, 4th March. We call this **Pancake Day**. This day was a chance to use up the foods Christians would not eat during the time of Lent.

Festivals take place in many cities all over the world, including Mardi Gras in New Orleans (USA), Carnival in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Venice (Italy). People dress up, wear masks, parade and dance in the streets in the Festivals.

Why do we celebrate Lent?

During the 40 days of Lent, Christians remember the time when Jesus went into the desert to fast and pray. He needed to practice self-control before beginning his work to help God. In our busy lives we can eat too more food than we need, spend more time than we need on screens, which only makes us happy for a short time. Lent can be a time to a time to stop what we are doing, to pray, and to prepare for what lies ahead for us.

Why do Christians give things up in Lent?

Lent is a time when Christians pray, fast and give to others. It is a time they turn away from things that distract them and focus on the great hope and future God has planned for each person. Some Christians give up foods they really enjoy such as cakes or chocolate, or they choose to do something positive to make a difference to others during this time.

When is Lent over?

Lent ends at Easter when Christians remember Jesus dying and coming to life again for our sins. The last week of Lent begins with **Palm Sunday**, which celebrates the day Jesus entered Jerusalem and the people lay down palms at his feet. The last day of Lent is the day before **Easter Sunday** when we eat lots of chocolate!

Lent Challenge!

During this time up to Easter, what will you do each day?

... Pray every day for others?

... Give up something you enjoy until Easter?

...Give to others?



For ideas, see our **Lent challenge sheet**.