

11th February 2021

I can summarise the events around Lent.

Using your own knowledge and the information on the following slides, create an A4 piece of work that explains the events around Lent. You can write in paragraphs, you can include pictures and text boxes etc.



Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar.

Why 40 days?

40 is a significant number in Jewish-Christian scripture:

In *Genesis*, the flood which destroyed the earth was brought about by 40 days and nights of rain.

The Hebrews spent 40 years in the wilderness before reaching the land promised to them by God.

Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the ten commandments on Mount Sinai.

Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry.

Most Christians regard Jesus' time in the wilderness as the key event for the duration of Lent.

Why is it called Lent?

Lent is an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. Lent is observed in spring, when the days begin to get longer.

The colour purple

Purple is the symbolic colour used in some churches throughout Lent, for drapes and altar frontals.

Purple is used for two reasons: firstly because it is associated with mourning and so anticipates the pain and suffering of the crucifixion, and secondly because purple is the colour associated with royalty, and celebrates Christ's resurrection and sovereignty.

The last week of Lent is called Holy Week.

When is Easter?

Easter Day is always on a Sunday but the date varies unlike Christmas, which is always on 25 December. Many years ago Christians decided that Easter Day always be on the Sunday following the first full moon after the first day of Spring, around 21 March. This means that Easter can be as early as 22 March or as late as 25 April.

In fact not only is Easter a movable feast but it happens on different dates depending on where in the world you live. The reason for this is that in western churches such as in the UK, America and Australia, we use the Gregorian calendar rather than the Julian calendar used in eastern churches.



Shrove Tuesday



The long build up to Easter is called Lent. The day before Lent begins is called Shrove Tuesday. 'Shrove' means being forgiven for wrong-doings. It happens on a different date each year depending on when Easter is. This year Shrove Tuesday is on 25 February, 2020.

Another name for Shrove Tuesday is Pancake Day. Long ago this was a day for feasting and having a good time. People went to church to confess the bad things they had done and would be 'shriven' or forgiven before the start of Lent. As rich foods such as eggs were forbidden during Lent, one way of using them up would be to make pancakes.

Many people make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and in some parts of the UK run in pancake races. This custom grew up because of a legend dating from 1445. On Shrove Tuesday one woman was still making pancakes as the church bells rang. Rather than be late she took her frying pan and pancake with her.

One of the most famous pancake races is held in Olney, Buckinghamshire where women over 18 years of age, wearing a skirt, apron and head covering, have been competing for hundreds of years. They have to toss their pancake on the start line and again at the finish to prove they haven't lost it.

In France and the United States Pancake day is called Mardi Gras which means 'Fat' or 'Grease Tuesday'.

When is Lent?

Lent lasts for 40 days (not including Sundays). It is the time when Christians prepare for Easter by thinking of the things they have done wrong. It is a solemn time which reminds them of the time in Jesus' life when, after giving up his work as a carpenter, he began to teach people about God. Jesus prepared for this by spending 40 days without food alone in the desert.

Lent used to be a time for fasting or going without food as Jesus had done. Nowadays many people give up a favourite thing they enjoy like sweets and often give money to charity.

The colour purple is linked to Lent. In some churches the altar is covered with a purple cloth, the pulpit has a purple 'fall' and the vicar's garments are purple.



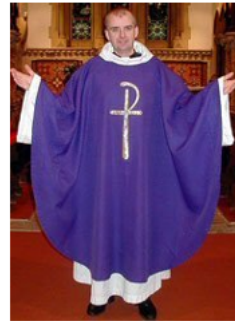
The Pulpit Fall



Front of the Altar



Vicar's Purple Stole



Vicar's Lent Chasuble

Purple is chosen for two reasons. Firstly, it is the colour associated with mourning and so it helps Christians think about the sadness of Jesus' death. Secondly, the colour purple is linked to royalty and so it celebrates Christ's coming as a King.

The first day of Lent is **Ash Wednesday**.

Lastly, just for a bit of fun. If you had to give something up for Lent (40 days) what would be the hardest thing for you?

Try to think of a food item and a non-food item.

