

# Just LENT 1

## Our Prayer

Loving God,  
in this season of Lent  
you call us to act justly,  
love tenderly  
and walk humbly with each other  
so that we can build  
your Kingdom of justice and peace,  
your Kingdom of love and truth,  
your Kingdom of holiness and grace  
in our world today. AMEN

## Sunday Scripture Link

1st Sunday of Lent  
Genesis 9: 8-15  
1 Peter 3: 18-22  
Mark 1: 12-15

**Theme:**  
**Flood and Desert**



- In this Sunday's first and second readings you will notice mention of a flood.
- Flood in the Bible connects with danger and disaster, but our first reading assures us that God will never destroy the earth.
- Jesus is in the wilderness of the desert in the Gospel and he emerges from this experience proclaiming Good News from God.
- The early Christians realised that the flood of God's grace, which flows from Jesus' desert experience, is positive because it is about our Baptism.

“There is no life without water. We cannot survive without it. Sometimes we call Planet Earth, the Blue Planet. Salt water accounts for 97.5 per cent of all water in the earth; the remaining 2.5 per cent is fresh water. This 2.5 per cent sustains human life on earth – our life. In a real sense it is the foundation of all human civilisation; however, because it seems to be in such abundance, we appear to take water for granted. While fresh water is a global concern, it is always a local issue. Most people drink from the well in their own yard. In the past one hundred and fifty years, with the significant industrialisation of society and of agriculture, the demand for fresh water has increased exponentially, and the effects of vastly increased urban living can be seen in our rivers, lakes and oceans.”

#2.1 The Cry of the Earth, The Cry of the Poor  
Archbishop Dermot Farrell

**SEE** What effects of flooding are you noticing in our country and world?

**DISCERN** How much water does your household use for cooking, bathing and cleaning?

**ACT** What could you do differently this Lent to preserve water?

# Just LENT 2

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## Sunday Scripture Link

2nd Sunday of Lent  
Genesis 22: 1-2,9-13, 15-18  
Romans 8: 31-34  
Mark 9: 2-10

**Theme:**  
**Homelessness**



- In the first reading this Sunday we hear about the sacrifice of Abraham.
- When we look at the life of Abraham it is clear he made many sacrifices in his life. He wandered in the desert for many years trying to find a home.
- The Gospel refers to Peter suggesting that three tents are set up.
- Tents are symbolic of God's permanent presence among us, but today our towns and cities have people sheltering in tents because they are homeless.
- We as a Christian community are challenged to help them find a safe, permanent home, where they can truly feel God's permanent protecting presence.

“*There is no social or moral justification for homelessness, but we can find solace and meaning in the Incarnation... The Son of God came into this world as a homeless person... The Son of God knew what it was to start life without a roof over his head.*”

*"We can find no social or moral justification, no justification whatsoever, for lack of housing. There are many unjust situations, but we know that God is suffering with us, experiencing them at our side. He does not abandon us."*

*2015 visit to Catholic Charities in Washington D.C.  
Pope Francis*

**SEE** What impact is homelessness having on your family?

**DISCERN** How can our households and parishes respond practically to the homelessness crisis?

**ACT** What homelessness projects could you get involved with?

# Just LENT 3

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## Sunday Scripture Link

3rd Sunday of Lent  
Exodus 20: 1-17  
1 Corinthians 1: 22-25  
John 2: 13-25

**Theme:**  
**Poverty & Cost of Living**



- We know this Sunday's Gospel story well and often ask ourselves 'Why did Jesus get so angry?'
- The animals in the story were sold so that those on pilgrimage could make their symbolic sacrificial offerings to God.
- Jesus realised that the poor were being manipulated by the money changers.
- He replaced all of this by the sacrifice of his own body, given for others.
- Many believed in him because he was on the side of the poor, the lost, the disadvantaged, the downtrodden and wanted to set them free from oppression.
- Followers of Jesus are called to do likewise; to be on the side of the poor.

“The needy generally “practise the special solidarity that exists among those who are poor and suffering, and which our civilization seems to have forgotten or would prefer in fact to forget... Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community. It means that the lives of all are prior to the appropriation of goods by a few. It also means combatting the structural causes of poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, the denial of social and labour rights. It means confronting the destructive effects of the empire of money”.

#116 Fratelli Tutti  
Pope Francis

**SEE** What are you noticing about the cost of living?

**DISCERN** How can you live more simply so that others can simply live?

**ACT** What lifestyle changes can you make this Lent?

# Just LENT 4

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## Sunday Scripture Link

4th Sunday of Lent  
2 Chronicles 36: 14-16, 19-23  
Ephesians 2: 4-10  
John 3: 14-21

**Theme:**  
**Racial Justice**



- Today's Gospel reminds us that Jesus came into the world not just to save some people but all people.
- This salvation is freely given to every generation no matter the colour of our skin.
- The second reading reminds us that all human beings are 'God's work of art' created to live the good life of God.
- It is not because we are from a particular place or country or family that God saves us. It is simply because God is generous with his mercy and shares his grace with all.
- This helps us to remember that all people are equal in the eyes of God

“Every brother or sister in need, when abandoned or ignored by the society in which I live, becomes an existential foreigner, even though born in the same country. They may be citizens with full rights, yet they are treated like foreigners in their own country. Racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting.”

#97 Fratelli Tutti  
Pope Francis

**SEE** What changes in Irish society are you noticing?

**DISCERN** How are people from other cultures integrated into parish life?

**ACT** What could you do to celebrate racial diversity in the parish?

# Just LENT 5

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## Sunday Scripture Link

5th Sunday of Lent  
Jeremiah 31: 31-34  
Hebrews 5: 7-9  
John 12: 20-33

## Theme: Migrants & Refugees



- Like St Patrick, the people of Israel were enslaved. They were migrants in a foreign land. Just like Patrick, their experience was harsh, as was their return to their homeland.
- This is still the experience of many migrants today.
- When we allow the Law of God's love to be our driving force then we realise that we are all God's people.
- This is why we need to take the Gospel message into our hearts. This Lent we are called to die to old ways of thinking and embrace the seeds of new life within us and around us.

“Here we perceive the deeper roots of the migration crisis that touches many regions of the world. It is not only because of war that people flee their land. The flight to more prosperous regions is also due to the lack of hope in being able to have a life that offers an acceptable level of freedom, well-being and dignity in their own country. The ‘tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from growing poverty’ is profoundly linked to ‘environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to [and sometimes cynicism in the face of] such suffering’ (Laudato Si’, 25).”

p35 *The Cry of the Earth, The Cry of the Poor*  
Archbishop Dermot Farrell

**SEE** What are you noticing about migrants and refugees in our towns and cities?

**DISCERN** How can our parishes be places of welcome and support?

**ACT** What one action could be implemented to make a difference?

# Just LENT 6

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## Sunday Scripture Link

*Palm Sunday*  
Mark 11: 1-10  
Isaiah 50: 4-7  
Philippians 2: 6-11  
Mark 15: 1-39

**Theme:**  
**Peace**



- The Palm Sunday liturgy always begins with a joyful celebration acclaiming Jesus with Hosannas. In every parish we recall this as we wave our branches high.
- These branches, from the tree of the Olive, signified peace and Jesus came into the gates of Jerusalem as a messenger of peace.
- We know that the same crowds who shouted 'Hosanna' were quick to change and, in the Gospel, are shouting 'Crucify him!'
- This year we too are called to listen like Jesus to the voices in our world where violence is alive and bring to this the only remedy for war; the peace of Christ.

“ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem  
May those who love you prosper  
May there be peace inside your walls  
and safety in your homes.  
For the sake of my relatives and friends  
I say to Jerusalem, 'Peace be with you.' ”

*Psalms 122: 6-7,8*

**SEE** What effects of war are you noticing in our world?

**DISCERN** How can you work for peace at home, in our country and in our world?

**ACT** What can you do to become a builder of peace?

# HOW TO USE *Just* LENT

## Our Prayer

Begin by remembering you are in the presence of God and pray the prayer either alone or in a small group.

## Sunday Scripture Link

Take some time to slowly read the Sunday readings with a time of silence between them.

Allow a word or phrase to speak to you personally.

Readings can be downloaded from [www.catholicireland.net/readings](http://www.catholicireland.net/readings)

**Theme:**  
***A focus for the week***

Each week there is an image connected to the theme. If you are in a small group, you can share how the image speaks to you personally.

- This is a reflection on the Sunday readings to help you enter into the theme.
- You can also share your thoughts on this.

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*This key quote will help to develop the theme and reflect more deeply on it.*

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**SEE** This invites you to notice.

**DISCERN** This invites you to consider how this relates to your life.

**ACT** This is an invitation to think about a positive action you can take