

Make 2004 Lent Meaningful

Do you recognize the symbols of the Lenten season?



The secret symbol of the early Christians.



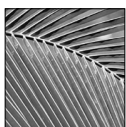
Symbol for wine served at the Last Supper.



Symbol for bread served at the Last Supper.



Symbol for deepening our devotion to Christ.



Symbol that marks the beginning of Holy Week.

Lent is one of the oldest observances in the annual Christian calendar. Like all Christian celebrations, Lent has changed over the years, but its purpose has remained the same: self-examination and penitence, demonstrated by self-denial and acts of compassion, in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

Here are some suggestions for making your Lenten observance meaningful and enriching.

- **Put Lent on your daily activity calendar.** This year the Lent season starts on Feb. 25 (Ash Wednesday) and ends with Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 10.
- **Set a concrete goal** to spend approximately 10 minutes everyday to reflect, pray, and make decisions to move in new directions. Instead of saying, "I'm going to spend time reflecting daily," say "At 6:00am, Monday through Saturday, I will sit down at my desk for 10 minutes to read and reflect."
- **Use a daily Lenten devotional.** To help make this Lenten season especially meaningful for you, we're making available *Countdown to the Cross*. You can pick up a complimentary copy today from your church office. For individual copies, please call 1.800.334.7626, ext. 5129.
- **Join others in Lent.** Participate in the Lenten activities of your parish or small group. Lead daily evening Lenten devotions with your family. Share your learnings during Lent with friends.
- **Focus on taking action.** Engage in acts of mercy and charity. Make a gift in compassion for hungry people living in poverty. Use a *Hope Chest* to collect weekly offerings. Send your gift to: ERD, PO Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101. Get your *Hope Chest* from your church office.



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Our Lenten Offering for the Poor

The Lenten season is one of the most holy times in the church year.

Lent is a time for creating a space in your life that Christ can come and fill. Lent can become a time when material things are put again in their proper place. It can become a time of self-examination and a time to identify with God's priorities for the world.

You may have chosen to "give up" something for Lent as Christians throughout centuries have done. You may also want to "give" something at this time.

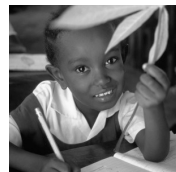
Lent is a time to engage in acts of generosity, charity and mercy, especially toward people who are poor and hungry. In ministering to them, we minister to Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:40).

Today, as the assembled family of God, we observe Lent by taking an offering for hungry children and families around the world who are living in conditions unimaginable to most of us in this country.

- Desperately poor families in our world struggle to survive. Nearly 1 billion people go to bed hungry every night. Everyday some 29,000 children die of hunger or hunger-related diseases.
- In the developing world, only 50 percent of children have access to clean drinking water. The others have only dirty, unsafe water to drink — killing millions of children annually.

Make your Lent count. Please give generously for today's offering to help save lives around the world.

Or, you can make a tax-deductible contribution directly to Episcopal Relief and Development, PO Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101.



Through your giving, you can be the hands, feet, and heart of Christ for a hungry world. Your giving helps Episcopal Relief and Development to find long-term solutions to people who are hungry, while caring for the immediate problem of hunger. Find out how you can help at www.er-d.org.

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