

Guidance

There are two stations for reflection set out. In two roughly equal groups please spend some minutes at each of them and then we will all join together for prayer in the centre, followed by the liturgy of ashes below.

At the end of the time of reflection we will pray together:

Merciful God, you call us each by name and you invite us on a journey; a Lenten journey of faith and trust leading towards you. Help us to experience Lent as an important time of the year when we are shaped by you and grow closer to you. You sent us your Son, Jesus, and we ask you to help us learn from His example of endurance even through temptation and suffering. We are sorry for the ways in which we have hurt one another and wandered from your path. Guide us as we live, that we may experience your forgiveness and share your gift of peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

As each person comes forward to be anointed with ashes they will be blessed with the words:

“Receive this cross as a sign of God’s love for you in Christ and your desire to follow him”



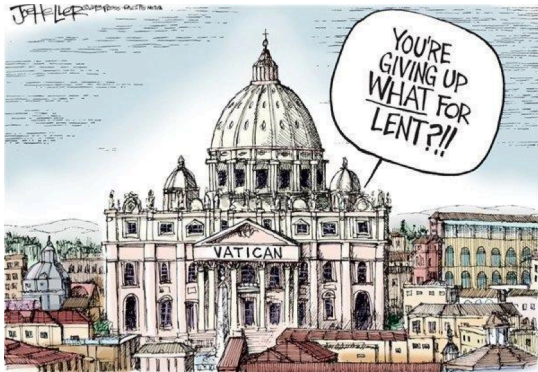
Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, is a 40 day (not counting Sundays) period of preparation for Easter. It has its roots in the temptation experience of Jesus as he was about to start his public ministry. Tonight we ask ourselves how we might use this time of preparation to shape us.

‘Come and See’

John 1:35 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God!’ **37** When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. **38** Turning round, Jesus saw them following and asked, ‘What do you want?’ They said, ‘Rabbi’ (which means ‘Teacher’), ‘where are you staying?’ **39** ‘Come,’ he replied, ‘and you will see.’ So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon. **40** Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. **41** The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ). **42** And he brought him to Jesus.

In what direction are you heading? Is there another direction in which Jesus might lead you as he led these first disciples? Think and pray about what this might mean for you.

Laying Aside



John 12:31 'Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. **32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' **33** He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Lent is the journey with Jesus as he makes his way to the cross. As you think about how you are living your life as a disciple in today's world, in what ways might you change it to identify with Jesus in his sufferings, at least during Lent?

Taking up



John 13:12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. **13** 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. **14** Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. **15** I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. **16** Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. **17** Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.'

Is there some activity or cause that would be appropriate for you to take up as 'foot washing'? Prayerfully consider what you might do. Remember that 'Come and See,' our local daily Lenten devotion is available to help you reflect on this.