



Come back to me

The season of Lent begins this week on Ash Wednesday. This is the period of 40 days of preparation as we approach the great Christian feast of Easter. The focus of this preparation falls into three distinct areas. They are prayer, fasting and alms-giving (fundraising for charity). We rejoice in God's loving mercy: always ready to welcome us back, if we have turned away.

Monday 24th February



From the Sunday Gospel: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemies.' But I tell you, love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. If you do this, then you will be true sons of your Father in heaven. Your Father causes the sun to rise on good people and on bad people. Your Father sends rain to those who do good and to those who do wrong. If you love only the people who love you, then you will get no reward. Even the tax collectors do that. And if you are nice only to your friends, then you are no better than other people. Even people without God are nice to their friends. So you must be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Pause for thought:

Who do you find difficult?

Take a moment to pray for this person.

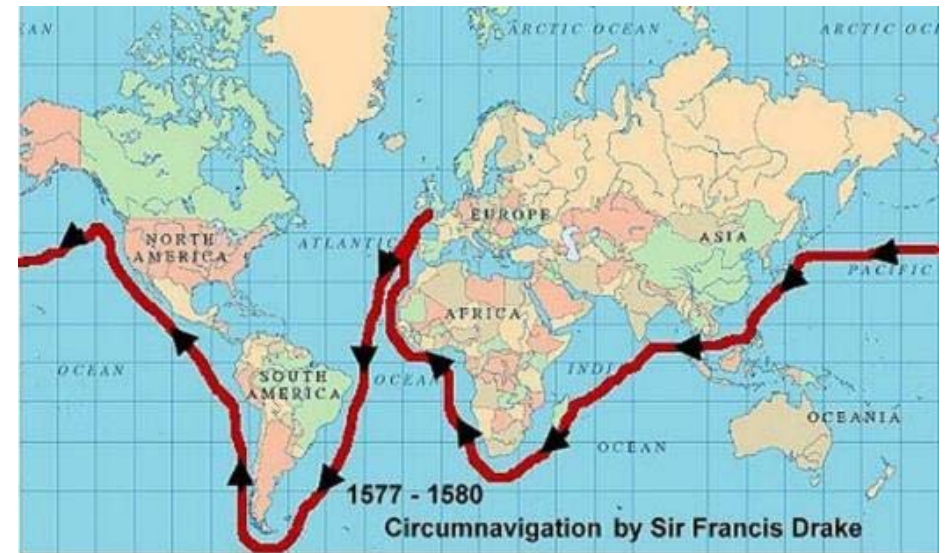
Maybe in Lent you could try to reach out to him or her.

Words of the Day

Prefix: **circum-** meaning **around**

Monday 24th February: circumnavigate

- Sail or travel all the way round
- *The satellite circumnavigated the earth*
- Go around or avoid
- *He helped her to circumnavigate the muddy pathway.*



Monday 24th February



A challenge set by Pope Francis: Give up gossip! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6N4EblInQs>



Pause for thought:
Do you gossip?
Take a moment to pray for
the last person you gossiped
about.





Tuesday 25th February

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for it is from your goodness that we have this day to celebrate on the threshold of the Season of Lent.

Tomorrow we will fast and abstain from meat. Today we feast.
We thank you for the abundance of gifts you shower upon us.
We thank you especially for one another.

As we give you thanks, we are mindful of those who have so much less than we do.

As our feasting fills us with gratitude
so may our fasting help us
to be more attentive to hear the cry of the poor.

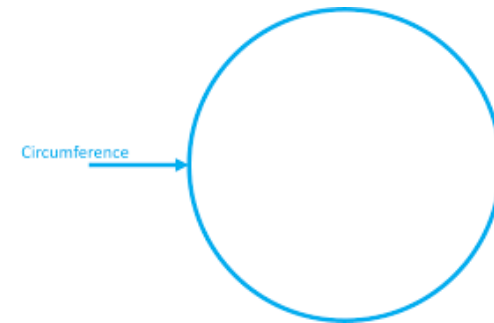
May our fasting turn our hearts to you
and give us a new freedom for
generous service to others.

Be with us in our Lenten journey. Amen.



Tuesday 25th February: circumference

- The enclosing boundary of a curved geometric shape, especially a circle.
- *A rope two inches in circumference.*





Tuesday 25th February

Prayer for Shrove Tuesday

God of feasting,
we give you thanks
for the richness of life.
Bless us as we celebrate the joy
of being your people.
Send your Spirit to dance
and sing with us.
As we enter the Season of Lent,
may it, too, be a celebration of life:
of an inward journey of contemplation and wondering,
of learning and exploring.
And in all of this,
may we grow closer to Jesus,
to one another, and to you.
Amen.



Shrove Tuesday is also called Fat Tuesday because on that day a thrifty housewife uses up the fats that she has kept around for cooking, but that she will not be using during Lent. Since pancakes are a standard way of using up fat.



Wednesday 26th February

Ash Wednesday <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1mjuy1NA0>



What are your hopes for Lent?

Wednesday 26th February: circumvent

- Find a way round an obstacle.
- *If you come to an obstruction in a road you can seek to circumvent it.*



Wednesday 26th February



Ash Wednesday

Today, ashes are thumbed onto our forehead as a sign that we are human, fragile, and will sometimes get it wrong.

They are also an invitation to turn away from sin and believe in the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ who loved us to the end.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, forty days of reflection and action: prayer, fasting from what's not good for us and almsgiving.

The colour is violet. The volume is turned down, the Alleluia is put away, the Gloria is unplugged. Time to go deeper.

We pray and fast and give alms to the needy so that we can come closer to God and our neighbour, to the presence of love that is never far from us.

Dear Lord, may we be open this Lent to your love, so that we may know
We are reconciled to you, that we are friends.





Thursday 27th February



Loving God,

As we begin this season of Lent, teach us to use the time wisely. Let us be reawakened to new possibilities in our lives. Help our prayer life to grow in depth and meaning. May we be generous with our fund-raising efforts on behalf of young people and families in our community who need our support. Let us find a way to improve ourselves during Lent so that we may truly live out our FCJ values.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Idea: Use your phone as least as possible today.

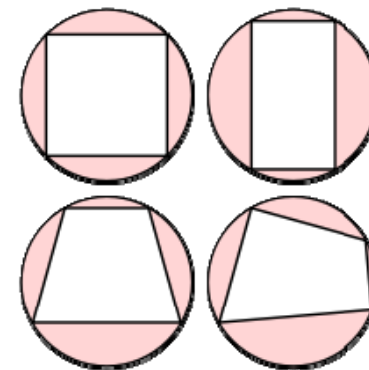
Thursday 27th February: circumscribe

- Restrict within limits

OR

Geometry: draw (a figure) round another, touching it at points but not cutting it.

- *If a hexagon is circumscribed about a circle the lines joining opposite vertices meet in one point.*



Thursday 27th February



Give up harsh words: use generous ones.

Give up unhappiness: take up gratitude.

Give up anger: take up gentleness and patience.

Give up pessimism: take up hope and optimism.

Give up worrying: take up trust in God.

Give up complaining: value what you have.

Give up stress: take up prayer.

Give up judging others: discover Jesus within them.

Give up sorrow and bitterness: fill your heart with joy.

Give up selfishness: take up compassion for others.

Give up being unforgiving: learn reconciliation.

Give up words: fill yourself with silence, and listen to others.

Friday 28th February

We ask you God to walk with us through this season of Lent.

As we find ourselves challenged,
remind us of our inner strength and give us hope.

As we struggle to engage in acts of charity,
remind us to think of the dignity of others and to act justly.

When we know we have moved away from your
companionship, remind us that you are waiting to
welcome us back.

Inspire us to be generous;
encourage us to be gentle;
and strengthen us on our journey.

Amen.

idea: Don't eat meat today



Friday 28th February: circulatory

- Relating to the circulation of blood or sap.
- *The circulation system.*



Friday 28th February

Be silent and place yourself in God's loving presence. Think about the good things that have happened this week and give thanks.

Look back over your week. Where have you felt joy and what has been difficult and challenged you? How have you started Lent?

In the quiet of your heart, tell God about your experiences. Give thanks for who you are.

As you look ahead, with what spirit will you enter next week?

Ask God to help you.

