

Advent (Dec) Start of Church Year 4 weeks before Christmas	Christmas 1 week	<b>Lent (Feb)</b> <b>6 weeks of conversion</b>	Triduum 3 Days	Easter Sunday	Easter Season 7 weeks after Easter
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### Word Origin:

From the Anglo-Saxon word *lengten*, means spring (Modern Catholic Dictionary, John Hardon, SJ). The word lent is also from Teutonic, the spring season. It has been used from the Anglo-Saxon period to translate the more significant Latin term *quadragesima* (French *carême*, Italian *quaresima*, Spanish *cuaresma*), meaning the "forty days", or more literally the "fortieth day". This in turn imitated the Greek name for Lent, *tessarakoste* (fortieth), a word formed on the analogy of Pentecost (*pentekoste*), which last was in use for the Jewish festival before New Testament times.

### Origin of Custom:

Some of the Fathers as early as the fifth century supported the view that this forty days' fast was of Apostolic institution. The best modern scholars are almost unanimous in rejecting this view, for in the existing remains of the first three centuries we find both considerable diversity of practice regarding the fast before Easter and also a gradual process of development in the matter of its duration (Eusebius - Hist. Eccl., V, xxiv). NOTE: There are two authoritative sources of revelation: Tradition and Scripture & we DO NOT dismiss the teachings of the Fathers (Tradition). Scholars are not authoritative. Just because there were a diversity and development does not address that the Apostles did not institute this in some form. The rule is we never dismiss the teachings of the Fathers.

### Duration of the fast:

In determining this period of forty days the example of Moses, Elias, and Christ must have exercised a predominant influence, but it is also possible that Christ lay forty hours in the tomb that also influenced the practice.

### Nature of the fast:

Great divergence in its practice. For example, the historian Socrates (Hist. Eccl., V, 22) tells of the practice of the fifth century (400s): "Some abstain from every sort of creature that has life, while others of all the living creatures eat of fish only. Others eat birds as well as fish, because, according to the Mosaic account of the Creation, they too sprang from the water; others abstain from fruit covered by a hard shell and from eggs. Some eat dry bread only, others not even that; others again when they have fasted to the ninth hour (three o'clock) partake of various kinds of food".

### Purpose:

To repent and return to God. In the Old Testament, recall the story of Jonah and Nineveh and the king of Nineveh's edict (Book of Jonah, circa 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC – go over the story). See Psalm 51 – “a clean heart create for me, O God.” Realization and awareness of our sinfulness and desire to change is a key to this season.

### Holy Days during Lent:

- Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent in Western Christianity (Clean Monday is the first day for the Eastern Orthodox).
- Laetare Sunday is the fourth Lenten Sunday, which marks the halfway point between Ash Wednesday and Easter.
- Passion Sunday is the fifth Lenten Sunday, also known as marks the beginning of Passiontide.
- Palm Sunday is the sixth Lenten Sunday, starts the beginning of Holy Week, the final week of Lent immediately preceding Easter.
- Spy Wednesday commemorates Judas spying on Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane before betraying him.
- Lent ends with the start of the Triduum

### Triduum (the three days which comprise one celebration):

- Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday) is the day we commemorate the Last Supper shared by Christ with his disciples.
- Good Friday follows the next day, on which Christians remember His crucifixion and burial (only day in the year when there is no Mass).

- Holy Saturday

#### **Easter Vigil:**

- End of Triduum
- Celebrate the rising of Jesus from the dead and the usual day to welcome the Elect (new Catholics) into the community.

#### **Scrutinies (3 Sundays - Rites of healing and strengthening) 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent:**

Mainly for the "elect" (catechumens become "elect" after the Rite of Election – beginning of Lent). We are all in need of conversion throughout our lives (the main point of the season of Lent), so we join with the "elect" in look at our lives and pray for the grace to overcome the power of sin that infects our hearts. The scrutinies exist to heal us of the effects of original sin (inherited from Adam/Eve) & personal sin (what we do or fail to do).

#### **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) Document:**

“141 The scrutinies, which are solemnly celebrated on Sundays and are reinforced by an exorcism, are rites of self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose. The scrutinies are meant to uncover” and “heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out” and “strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. For the scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. These rites, therefore, should complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.”

“143 In order to inspire in the elect a desire for purification and redemption by Christ, three scrutinies are celebrated. By this means...the elect are instructed gradually about the mystery of sin, from which the whole world and every person longs to be delivered and thus saved from its present and future consequences and their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water (Samaritan woman – *first*), the light of the world (man born blind – *second*), the resurrection and the life (Lazarus raised from the dead – *third*). From the first to the third scrutiny the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation.”

On Original Sin & its Effects...

Eastern Fathers - as the consequence of Adam's sin, human beings inherited corruption, possibility, and mortality, from which they could be restored by a process of deification made possible through the redemptive work of Christ.

Western Fathers - St. Paul's letter to the Romans really taught that all human beings sinned “in Adam” (Rom 5:12) and that concupiscence, suffering, and death were a consequence of the Fall. Liturgical practice confirms the Church's belief that all inherit Adam's sin and must be transferred from the power of darkness into the kingdom of light (Col 1:13).

Site for events of the Church Year: (<http://www.smart.net/~mmontes/ec-cal.html>)