



IVAN KRAMSKOY, CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS, 1872

Forty Days, Forty Paintings

A LENTEN CALENDAR
FROM ASH WEDNESDAY TO HOLY SATURDAY

<https://jesuschrist.pictures>

How to Use This Calendar

ONE DAY, ONE PAINTING, ONE THING TO DO

Lent is forty days of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday, in memory of the forty days Christ spent in the wilderness. This calendar gives each of those days a great painting.

Each day follows the Gospel read at Mass that day. The weekday readings of Lent are the same every year, so this calendar can be used year after year. On the few days when the Gospel has no great painting, the picture comes from the first reading instead.

Every morning, look at the painting for a minute, read the verse beneath it, and take the last line with you: one small thing to do that day. In the evening, fill in the little circle if it is done.

Pray

a quiet time each day, the Our
Father said slowly

Fast

one thing given up, one hour
given back to God

Give

a coat, a meal, a call, a kindness
to the least

Sundays are not counted in the forty days. Each still has its own painting, for the Gospel of the day: the Temptation, the Transfiguration, the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, Lazarus, and the entry into Jerusalem.

Scripture is quoted from the King James Version. The third, fourth and fifth Sundays use the Gospels of Year A, which may be read every year. Many of these paintings, and the stories behind them, are on our website.

Ash Wednesday and the Days After



DAY 1 · ASH WEDNESDAY

El Greco, Saint Dominic in Prayer

Pray in Secret

When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret. MATTHEW 6:6

- ☐ Choose one quiet place and one fixed time for prayer, and keep them for the forty days.



DAY 2 · THURSDAY

El Greco, Christ Carrying the Cross

Take Up Your Cross

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. LUKE 9:23

- ☐ Name the cross you already carry, and carry it today without complaint.



DAY 3 · FRIDAY

El Greco, The Penitent Magdalene

Then Shall They Fast

The days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. MATTHEW 9:15

- ☐ Fast from one thing you reach for without thinking, and give that time to God.



DAY 4 · SATURDAY

Caravaggio, The Calling of Saint Matthew

The Call of Levi

And he left all, rose up, and followed him. LUKE 5:28

- ☐ Christ called a man counting his money. Ask what he is calling you to leave on the table.

For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

GENESIS 3:19, THE WORDS OF ASH WEDNESDAY

The First Week of Lent



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Ivan Kramskoy, Christ in the Wilderness

Into the Wilderness

And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days. MARK 1:12-13

○ Sundays are not counted in the forty. Rest, and sit a while with Christ in his silence.



DAY 5 · MONDAY

Michelangelo, The Last Judgment

Unto the Least of These

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. MATTHEW 25:40

○ Do one hidden kindness for someone who cannot repay you.



DAY 6 · TUESDAY

Fra Angelico, The Sermon on the Mount

The Lord's Prayer

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. MATTHEW 6:9

○ Pray the Our Father slowly, one line at a time, as if for the first time.



DAY 7 · WEDNESDAY

Pieter Lastman, Jonah and the Whale

The Sign of Jonah

For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. LUKE 11:30

○ Nineveh turned back at one word. Name one habit you will turn from this week.



DAY 8 · THURSDAY

William Holman Hunt, The Light of the World

Knock, and It Shall Be Opened

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. MATTHEW 7:7

○ Ask God today, plainly, for the one thing you need most.



DAY 9 · FRIDAY

After Rubens, The Reconciliation of Jacob and Esau

First Be Reconciled

First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. MATTHEW 5:24

○ Take the first step toward someone you are estranged from: a call, a letter, a prayer.



DAY 10 · SATURDAY

Vincent van Gogh, The Good Samaritan

Love Your Enemies

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. MATTHEW 5:44

○ Pray by name for someone who has hurt you.

The Second Week of Lent



SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Raphael, *The Transfiguration*

The Transfiguration

And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow. MARK 9:3

- Remember one moment when God's light broke through in your life, and give thanks for it.



DAY 11 · MONDAY

El Greco, *Saint Martin and the Beggar*

Give, and It Shall Be Given

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. LUKE 6:38

- Give something warm today: a coat, a meal, an hour of your time.



DAY 12 · TUESDAY

Sandro Botticelli, *The Madonna of the Magnificat*

He That Humbleth Himself

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. MATTHEW 23:12

- Let someone else have the last word, and the better seat.



DAY 13 · WEDNESDAY

Carl Bloch, *Christ in Gethsemane*

The Cup

Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? MATTHEW 20:22

- Offer God the hardest hour of your day, as Christ offered his cup.



DAY 14 · THURSDAY

Bonifazio de' Pitati, *Dives and Lazarus*

The Rich Man and Lazarus

There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores. LUKE 16:20

- Notice who is at your gate: the person you usually walk past.



DAY 15 · FRIDAY

Friedrich Overbeck, *The Selling of Joseph*

Joseph Sold by His Brothers

And sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver. GENESIS 37:28

- Joseph forgave the brothers who sold him. Forgive one old wrong today.



DAY 16 · SATURDAY

Rembrandt, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

The Prodigal Son

But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran. LUKE 15:20

- Go to confession this Lent, and let the Father run to meet you.

The Third Week of Lent



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Annibale Carracci, Christ and the Samaritan Woman

The Woman at the Well

Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. JOHN 4:14

- Tell Christ the truth about your life, as she did, and listen for his answer.



DAY 17 · MONDAY

John Everett Millais, Christ in the House of His Parents

No Prophet in His Own Country

Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. LUKE 4:24

- Look again, with fresh eyes, at someone you think you know too well.



DAY 18 · TUESDAY

Pietro Perugino, The Delivery of the Keys

Seventy Times Seven

Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? MATTHEW 18:21

- Peter asked how often to forgive. Forgive once more than you think you can.



DAY 19 · WEDNESDAY

Rembrandt, Moses with the Ten Commandments

Not to Destroy, but to Fulfil

I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. MATTHEW 5:17

- Read the Ten Commandments slowly tonight, and examine your conscience.



DAY 20 · THURSDAY

James Tissot, The Possessed Man in the Synagogue

The Finger of God

But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. LUKE 11:20

- Ask Christ to drive out the one fear that keeps you from him.



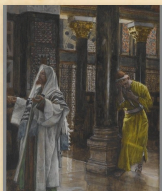
DAY 21 · FRIDAY

Heinrich Hofmann, Christ and the Rich Young Ruler

The First Commandment

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. MARK 12:30

- Give God the first minutes of your morning, and your neighbour your next kind word.



DAY 22 · SATURDAY

James Tissot, The Pharisee and the Publican

The Pharisee and the Publican

God be merciful to me a sinner. LUKE 18:13

- Make the publican's prayer your own, again and again through the day.

The Fourth Week of Lent



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

El Greco, Christ Healing the Blind

The Man Born Blind

One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. JOHN 9:25

○ Laetare Sunday: the halfway mark. Rejoice, and ask Christ to open your eyes.



DAY 23 · MONDAY

James Tissot, The Healing of the Officer's Son

Thy Son Liveth

Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word. JOHN 4:50

○ Pray for a sick child or a worried parent, and trust the word as he did.



DAY 24 · TUESDAY

Bartolome Esteban Murillo, Christ Healing the Paralytic

The Pool of Bethesda

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. JOHN 5:8

○ Visit or call someone who is ill or alone.



DAY 25 · WEDNESDAY

Fra Angelico, The Last Judgment

The Dead Shall Hear His Voice

The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. JOHN 5:28

○ Pray for your dead by name, and for the souls no one remembers.



DAY 26 · THURSDAY

Rembrandt, Old Woman Reading

Search the Scriptures

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. JOHN 5:39

○ Read one chapter of a Gospel today, slowly, with a pencil in hand.



DAY 27 · FRIDAY

Albrecht Durer, Christ among the Doctors

Teaching in the Temple

How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? JOHN 7:15

○ Learn one thing about your faith that you could not yet explain to a child.



DAY 28 · SATURDAY

Henry Ossawa Tanner, Nicodemus Visiting Jesus

Nicodemus

Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? JOHN 7:51

○ Nicodemus came by night and spoke up by day. Speak up for someone who is not there.

The Fifth Week of Lent



FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Duccio, The Raising of Lazarus

Lazarus, Come Forth

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. JOHN 11:25

- Bring to Christ what seems dead in you, and wait for his voice.



DAY 29 · MONDAY

Guercino, Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery

Go, and Sin No More

He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. JOHN 8:7

- Put down the stone: say nothing unkind about anyone today.



DAY 30 · TUESDAY

Peter Paul Rubens, The Brazen Serpent

The Brazen Serpent

When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he. JOHN 8:28

- Look at a crucifix for one long minute, as Israel looked at the serpent and lived.



DAY 31 · WEDNESDAY

Catacomb of Priscilla, The Three Hebrews in the Furnace

The Fiery Furnace

Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. DANIEL 3:25

- Ask for the courage to stay faithful where it costs you something.



DAY 32 · THURSDAY

Rembrandt, The Sacrifice of Isaac

Abraham Saw My Day

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. JOHN 8:56

- Give back to God something you hold too tightly.



DAY 33 · FRIDAY

Rembrandt, Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem

Jeremiah

But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one. JEREMIAH 20:11

- Bring God your discouragement honestly, as Jeremiah did.



DAY 34 · SATURDAY

Giotto, Christ before Caiaphas

One Man Should Die

It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people. JOHN 11:50

- Tomorrow Holy Week begins. Decide now which hours you will give to it.

Holy Week



PALM SUNDAY

Peter Paul Rubens, Christ's Entry into Jerusalem

Hosanna

Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. MARK 11:9

- ☐ Keep your palm from Mass where you will see it all week.



DAY 35 · MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Johannes Vermeer, Christ in the House of Martha and Mary

The Anointing at Bethany

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus. JOHN 12:3

- ☐ Give Christ something costly this week: your time, your money, or your pride.



DAY 36 · TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Leonardo da Vinci, The Last Supper

One of You Shall Betray Me

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. JOHN 13:21

- ☐ Ask with the apostles, Lord, is it I? and answer honestly.



DAY 37 · WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Giotto, The Kiss of Judas

Thirty Pieces of Silver

And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. MATTHEW 26:15

- ☐ Judas sold him for silver. Name what you would be tempted to trade him for.



DAY 38 · HOLY THURSDAY

Jacopo Tintoretto, Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet

The Washing of the Feet

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. JOHN 13:14

- ☐ Do one humble service for someone at home, without being asked.



DAY 39 · GOOD FRIDAY

Diego Velazquez, Christ Crucified

It Is Finished

He said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. JOHN 19:30

- ☐ Keep silence from noon to three, and venerate the Cross.



DAY 40 · HOLY SATURDAY

Caravaggio, The Entombment

The Tomb

And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre. MARK 15:46

- ☐ Wait in the silence with Mary. Tonight the Easter candle is lit.