



Lent 2026

“Return to Me with All Your Heart” (Joel 2:12)

“Return, Renew, Rise.”



Prayer • Fasting • Almsgiving



📍 St Ann's Catholic Church
Kingston Hill KT2 7LX

February 18 - April 5 2026



Journeying Together Through Lent

Dear Parish Family,

Lent has come to us once again as a sacred invitation. The Lord speaks gently to each one of us: **"Return to me with all your heart."** (Joel 2:12)

Lent is not about becoming religious in appearance. It is about becoming real before God. In the busyness of life, we easily lose our centre. We chase temporary goals, short-term achievements, and passing comforts. *Lent invites us to pause, to realign, and to fix our eyes once again on what truly matters - eternal life, lasting virtues, and a heart rooted in Christ.*

"Seek first the kingdom of God." (Matthew 6:33)

This season is a journey we take together as a parish family. **No one walks alone.** Parents, children, elders, youth - all of us are invited to grow. Lent is not only for adults; it is also a time to teach our children the values that endure: prayerfulness, sacrifice, generosity, forgiveness, and gratitude. These are not temporary disciplines - they are lifelong virtues.

**Faith does not control us. It forms us.
It does not restrict us. It refines us.**

A sculptor looks at a rough rock and sees a hidden statue within. With patience and purpose, he chisels away what is unnecessary. The stone may feel the strike of the chisel, but slowly the beauty emerges. In the same way, Lent allows God to shape us.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God." (Psalm 51:10)

Let this Lent be a time of renewal.
Let us walk through the desert with Christ.
Let us stand at the Cross with courage.
Let us wait in silence on Holy Saturday.
And together, let us rise with Him at Easter.

May these forty days help us rediscover who we truly are - beloved children of God, being shaped for eternity. Let us journey together.

With prayer and blessing, **Fr James Raj**





WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a sacred season of forty days of preparation for Easter.

It mirrors:

- The 40 days of Jesus in the desert (Matthew 4:1–11)
- The 40 years of Israel in the wilderness
- Moses' 40 days on Mount Sinai
- Elijah's 40-day journey to Horeb

The Church gives us this time to become more come closer to God and become better.

"Behold, now is the favourable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)

WHY 40 DAYS?

From Ash Wednesday (18 February 2026) to Holy Saturday (4 April 2026) There are 46 days. But the six Sundays are not counted because every Sunday is a "little Easter." So the actual fasting days total 40.

THE THREE PILLARS OF LENT

PRAYER

Prayer deepens relationship. *"Very early in the morning... Jesus went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35)*

Types of Prayer during Lent:

- Silent prayer
- Scripture meditation
- Rosary
- Eucharistic Adoration (Tuesday 6.15 pm, Saturday 11.15 am)
- Stations of the Cross (Friday 7.20 pm)
- Daily Mass (Refer the Newsletter)





THE THREE PILLARS OF LENT ...

FASTING

Fasting is not dieting. It is reordering the heart.

"Man shall not live by bread alone..." (Matthew 4:4)

Church Requirements:

- Ash Wednesday – fasting & abstinence
- Good Friday – fasting & abstinence
- Every Friday – abstinence

Different Forms of Fasting:

- Food fasting
- Fasting from social media
- Fasting from anger
- Fasting from gossip
- Fasting from unnecessary spending
- Fasting from noise



True fasting: *"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness..." (Isaiah 58:6)*

ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is love made visible. *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40)*

Forms of Almsgiving:

- Financial support
- Time given to someone lonely
- Encouragement
- Service in parish
- Forgiveness





THE JOURNEY OF HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is the summit of Lent.

Palm Sunday – We **walk** with Jesus.

Holy Thursday – We **sit** at His table.

Good Friday – We **stand** at the Cross.

Holy Saturday – We **wait** in silence.

Easter – We **rise** with Him.

The 40-Day Lenten Action Journey

"Return to me with all your heart." (Joel 2:12)

Lent is not a season of a sacred invitation.

Forty days to return.

Forty days to simplify.

Forty days to become light again.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God." (Psalm 51:10)





How to Use This Booklet

Each day:

- Read the short scripture
- Reflect for two minutes in silence
- Perform one of the simple actions
- Offer a prayer

WEEK 1 – RETURN *“Return to me with all your heart (Joel 2:12)*

18th Feb – Ash Wednesday (18 February) *Remember that you are dust...” (Genesis 3:19) Action: Begin with humility. Forgive someone in your heart.*

19th Feb - *“Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)*

Action: Spend 5 minutes in silence.

20th Feb - *“Love your enemies.” (Mt 5:44) Action: Pray for someone difficult.*

21st Feb - *“Follow me.” (Luke 9:23) Action: Do one hidden act of kindness.*

WEEK 2 – SIMPLIFY *“Man does not live by bread alone.” (Matthew 4:4)*

Daily actions:

- Reduce screen time.
- No unnecessary purchases.
- Call a lonely person.
- Speak gently.
- Eat simply.
- Pray before every meal.

WEEK 3– RECONCILE *“Father, I have sinned...” (Luke 15:21)*

Daily actions:

- Examine conscience daily.
- Book Confession.
- Heal a relationship.
- Write a gratitude message.
- Offer Mass for someone.
- Fast from anger.





WEEK 4 – SERVE *“Whatever you did for the least...” (Matthew 25:40)*

Daily actions:

- Support parish project.
- Give to charity.
- Visit elderly.
- Help at church.
- Encourage youth.
- Volunteer quietly.

WEEK 5 – DETACH *“Unless a grain of wheat falls...” (John 12:24)*

Daily actions:

- Surrender one worry.
- Pray the Rosary slowly.
- Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament.
- Let go of one habit.
- Reflect on death and eternal life.

WEEK 6 – WATCH & WAIT *“Stay here and keep watch with me.” (Mt 26:38)*

Daily actions:

- Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament.
- Read one Passion Gospel slowly (Matthew 26–27, Luke 22–23, etc.).
- Practice intentional silence for one hour during the week.
- Thank someone who has sacrificed for you.
- Offer a small hidden sacrifice without telling anyone.
- Pray for the whole parish community by name in your heart.



LENT & HOLY WEEK TIMETABLE – 2026



ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, 18 February (Mass with distribution of Ashes)

Mass Timing: 10 am and 7.00 pm

EVERY FRIDAY IN LENT 2026

(20 Feb, 27 Feb, 6 Mar, 13 Mar, 20 Mar, 27 Mar)

Mass – 7.00 pm & Way of the Cross – 7.20 pm

MOVIE EVENING - 10TH MARCH AT 7.30 PM: *PASSION OF THE CHRIST*

PALM SUNDAY

Sunday, 29 March: 10.30 am – Solemn Procession and Mass

HOLY THURSDAY

Thursday, 2 April - Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper at 5.00 pm

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, 3 April

2.15 pm – Way of the Cross (Outdoor) & 3.00 pm – Solemn Passion Liturgy

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, 4 April - 8.00 pm – Solemn Easter Vigil (Begins after nightfall)

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, 5 April - 10.30 am – Easter Day Mass

*"Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,
looking to Jesus." (Hebrews 12:1–2)*