

ST. MARK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

LENTEN LETTER 2019



Lent begins quite late this year on Wednesday, March 6. The earliest possible date for Ash Wednesday is February 4, while the latest date is March 10. Ash Wednesday falls 46 days before Easter Sunday and it varies because Easter is based on the lunar cycle rather than being a fixed date. Whichever way you cut it, Lent is still 40 days and 40 nights. If you include the Sundays, which are always feast days and are not considered days of fasting, there are 46 days and nights until Easter.

Lent isn't one of those seasons when you can talk about what a happy time we are going to have in the days and weeks ahead. It includes the major Fast Days of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The entire season of Lent is to be observed as "a time of special acts of discipline and self-denial". Lent comes at a time of the year where some of us suffer from a lack of sunlight. SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is a type of winter depression that affects an estimated half a million people every winter between September and April. It's sometimes called the "Winter Blues". Add to this a Lenten discipline and we can really have our hands full.

Our journey through Lent is a far cry from what Jesus experienced during his forty days in the desert. And yet, we are bombarded with distractions, interruptions and temptations that can take us off the path of our Christian journey. At St. Mark's I hope our journeys will be guided by our time of worship and the understanding our reliance on God. Theologically, the movement from the darker time of Lent to the light of Easter is one that we go through each year. We know that Lent does eventually end and Easter brings with it a season of light and celebration. To my mind we can't have one without the other. Everyone needs to search out in our hearts and minds what the meaning of Christ in our lives. It is only then that we can celebrate knowing how much we depend on God for what we have.

As we move through March into April, I hope that this Lent is a time in the Christian year where we can find some time to "take stock" and give thanks to God.

Yours in Christ,

The Venerable Peter Scott +