

Lent



40 days (excluding the 6 Sundays)
Called "The Great Fast" in other languages

- Starts on Ash Wednesday
- Shrovetide (Sunday-Tuesday before Ash Wednesday)
- Focus on simplicity and 3 historic pillars: fasting, praying, alms giving (Sermon on the Mount)
- A time for new converts to be catechized before baptism on Easter
- Instituted as a fast from before the Council of Nicea

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing you have made and
forgive the sins of all who are
penitent:

Create and make in us new and
contrite hearts, that we, worthily
lamenting our sins and
acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of you, the God of all
mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;

through Jesus Christ our Lord, who
lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and
ever.

Collect for Ash Wednesday

Color: Purple
penitence, remembrance, royalty,
and spiritual wealth.
(Rose- 4th Sunday of Lent- Promise
of Easter coming!)

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

The days are shortening- the autumn Equinox coming
before Easter.

Late Summer blooms:

- Spur Flower (*Plectranthus*) blooms in March - purple flowers, indigenous to South Africa
- *Amaryllis belladonna*, the Jersey lily, belladonna-lily, naked-lady-lily, or March lily (native to Cape of South Africa)
- *Tibouchina mutabilis* (Australia "Glory Bush", native to Brazil) blooms in South Africa in late Feb and early March with pink and purple flowers

Spur flower (Plectranthus)

Over 350 species occur in the Southern Hemisphere (Sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar, India, Australia etc)

48 species in South Africa, some endemic.

In the mint family

a "not always unpleasant smell" if crushed, reminds us of the bitter-sweetness of Lent, or 2 Corinthians 2:15-17 New Living Translation (NLT)

"To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume."

Heart-shaped leaves, remind us of our penitent hearts, and our remembrance of how Christ's suffering gives us new hearts.

Purple color reminds us of lent, and the color of penitence.



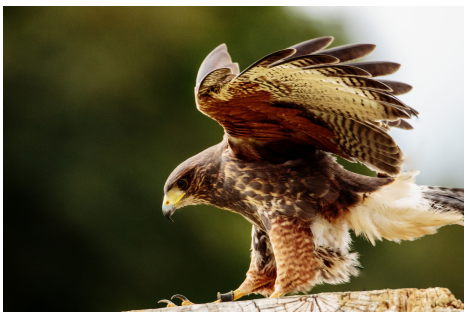
Birds which leave us in March

Yellow-billed kites

European Roller

White Storks

Kestrels



Many of these birds migrate from the Southern Hemisphere to the North, starting in March. You may see them in the sky as they leave on their long journey.

The journey through this Great Fast to Easter is a long one. The God who watches over these birds will watch over you. The instructions for giving, praying, and almsgiving in Luke are followed by Jesus reminding the disciples not to worry - God cares for the birds and cares for you.