



In scripture 40 represents a period of change. In the Book of Exodus, the Israelites make the transition from slavery to freedom during their forty years in the desert. In the New Testament Jesus goes out into the desert for forty days and nights to fast and to pray, making the transition from obscurity in Nazareth to embracing his saving mission.

Often people give up things for Lent. This is a fantastic thing to do. It teaches us about self-discipline and helps us to focus on the needs of others. Another approach is to DO something for Lent. This year Jesuit Missions is urging everyone to get active and try at least some of the forty suggestions made below.

1. Get informed! Read at least one news article each day about social justice and environmental issues. A good starting point is to go onto the Jesuit Missions website!
2. Try something new! Volunteer at a local charity for a day!
3. Don't buy it! Often we get hung up on material possessions. So, we are suggesting don't buy that chocolate bar, that new pair of trainers, those cosmetics. Instead, donate the money that you would spend to charity.
4. Do buy it! See what Fairtrade and environmentally friendly products you can start using.
5. Get up half an hour earlier and go to morning Mass or stop by your local church to pray
6. Turn off social media for a day and spend time with friends and family!
7. Walk, don't drive! Save the planet by doing little things and try doing them often!
8. Write! Write to your MP/MSP to express your views on social justice issues. Decisions are made by those who show up! Suggested issues to write about could include protecting aid money to developing countries and the ensuring of the UK's commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement.
9. Take time each day to read the day's scripture readings. Read slowly, imagine yourself as present in the scene. Have a proper conversation with the Lord about what's happening in your life.
10. Fast. This time honoured practice is a way of becoming more aware of our dependence on God by doing without. It can also help us to become aware of those who have less than we do and promote solidarity with the poor. (If you are fasting make sure that you take fluids and that your form of fasting is appropriate to your age and health.) Or, organise a sponsored

fast for Jesuit Missions in your school or place of work. It is always easier to do difficult things when you join in solidarity with others.

11. Organise a rich man/ poor man meal in your school or workplace. [Details on our website.](#)
12. Take a look at the online resource EcoStream to learn more about what is happening in the Jesuit world to help care for creation. <http://ecosj-stream.ecojesuit.com/>
13. Count your carbon footprint <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>
14. Take a walk in the park. Reconnect with nature.
15. Plant something! Start a flower garden or a veg patch. Care for them and watch them grow!
16. Invite a speaker in to your school or place of work to discuss current social justice or environmental issues. The Jesuit Missions Team is always available.
17. Visit the place of worship of another World Faith or Christian denomination
18. Reduce meat consumption
19. Where possible cycle or travel by public transport to school or work!
20. Do a sponsored event for Jesuit Missions Lent Appeal! How about a stationary cycle, a day-long silence, a penny mile, a fancy dress event, face painting, bake sale, abseil, hill walk, dance-athon, or pancake breakfast?
21. Take the time to have a conversation with someone who is homeless
22. Make a journey without using your phone or headphones
23. Have a conversation with someone new
24. Be brave! Apologise to someone you have hurt
25. Try doing 10 mins of exercise per day – walk, run, swim or try Yoga, pilates or Tai Chi
26. Prepare packed lunches for your family one day, instead of buying them
27. Take a few moments to sing a hymn or inspiring song
28. Have a no printing week – try to read more online and avoid all printing
29. Embark on a voyage of discovery – Find a country you know nothing about and read up on it
30. Cook up a vegan desert!
31. St Joseph is the patron saint of workers, travelers and immigrants. On the Feast of St Joseph (19th March) take an opportunity to reflect on the dignity of work and pray for those who face challenges gaining employment because of language, ethnicity, displacement or discrimination
32. Take the 4 min shower challenge for a week!
33. Have a no-heating evening at home? Be brave!
34. Borrow a book from your local library instead of buying one at the bookshop
35. Catch up! Telephone a friend who you haven't spoken to in ages
36. Follow St John XXIII's advice and read something inspirational each day. <https://www.pathwaystogod.org/> or <http://www.sacredspace.ie/daily-prayer> are good starting points?
37. Take time to do something special for your mother for Mothering Sunday (Sunday March 31st). Prepare a special breakfast or dinner, organise afternoon tea or an indoor picnic, create a beautiful handmade card or a basket filled with some of her favourite things.
38. Do something creative – write a poem, paint a picture, embroider, draw. It may sound a little different, but being creative helps us to slow down and see the world with new eyes.
39. Declutter your life! Do a spring clean of your room or house. Clear out what you don't need or haven't used in the last year. Give serviceable items to charity.
40. Pray for the repose of the soul of Fr Victor Luke Odiambo SJ who was murdered in South Sudan in November and pray for all those Jesuits and their co-workers who have lost their lives promoting justice and peace



A Prayer for Lent

Lord, God each spring you renew the earth, life flowing forth from the darkness of winter.

You remind us that You make all things new.

This Lent, as the days lengthen and we prepare for the Resurrection of your Son at Easter give us insight and wisdom to discern your will, the perseverance to stay with that which is difficult, discipline to do the better thing and hope that by entering into your plan of salvation we may be born to new life with Jesus.

Help us to grow in awareness of our sisters and brothers around the world and of the earth, which you have created, so that we may truly bring your Good News to those we meet.

Amen

