

THE LENTEN SENSE MARATHON

History

The Lenten Sense Marathon began in 2002 as a way to reinvigorate the season of Lent. It accomplished its goal of helping participants to be more closely united to the suffering of Jesus during Lent and to experience His risen joy more fully during the Easter season. Because of the intensity of the program, the participant is regularly calling to mind Jesus' suffering. Then during Easter, the participant is regularly calling to mind Jesus' resurrection because of the return of all of the small joys that were given up for the Lenten season. The LSM has grown and spread over the past 5 years, bearing good fruit in the spiritual lives of those who participate.

What is Lenten Sense Marathon & how does it work?

The Lenten Sense Marathon is designed to help the faithful grow closer to the suffering Jesus during the season of Lent. It is unique in two ways:

1. The individual makes sacrifices for each of the 5 senses, thereby experiencing Lent on a variety of levels
2. The individual adds on sacrifices as the season of Lent progresses, taking on more sacrifices and growing closer to the cross of Jesus as Holy Week and the Triduum approach.

Some of the ideas are also fresh and creative, and having a new approach to Lent can help it to be as penitential of a season as possible.

Before Ash Wednesday, complete the chart below. Fill in two sacrifices for each of the five senses and also list an extra practice that you will do once it is drawn. Sacrifices may be things you give up or holy practices to take on. You may use or adapt any of the ideas listed or create your own. The idea is to pick things that are very REAL challenges for YOU! Once you have your chart completed, make 11 slips of paper and on each one, write a category (ex. sight 1, sight 2, hearing 1, hearing 2, etc.). Throw all 11 of the categories (slips of paper) into a cup or an envelope where you will keep them throughout all of Lent. On the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday (Mardi Gras), draw one slip out of the cup. Read what category is on that slip, and now refer back to the chart you already completed. What sacrifice did you write in the box for that category? This is the sacrifice you will begin on Ash Wednesday. This is the sacrifice you will make for the entire Lenten season. Every four days, you draw another category out of the cup, and you add on each sacrifice as it is drawn. Note: *do not trade* one sacrifice for the next; simply take on an additional sacrifice every four days. By the time it is Holy Thursday, you will be doing all 11 sacrifices! The schedule for when to begin a new sacrifice is below. It is recommended to draw the category the night before you begin it...that way you know in advance what sacrifice begins the following morning.

Ash Wednesday – sacrifice #1 begins

Sunday of the first week of Lent – sacrifice #2 begins

Thursday of the first week of Lent – sacrifice #3 begins

Monday of the second week of Lent – sacrifice #4 begins

Friday of the second week of Lent – sacrifice #5 begins

Tuesday of the third week of Lent – sacrifice #6 begins

Saturday of the third week of Lent – sacrifice #7 begins

Wednesday of the fourth week of Lent – sacrifice #8 begins

Sunday of the fifth week of Lent – sacrifice #9 begins

Thursday of the fifth week of Lent – sacrifice #10 begins

Monday of the Holy Week of Lent – sacrifice #11 begins

Holy Week until *after* the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday = all 11 sacrifices!

Because each person fills out his/her own chart, groups of people can participate together and just have one person draw the categories. What is written in each box will vary from person to person, but the same "categories" can begin at the same time. (For example, a family of nine might have one person draw "Taste 1" out of the hat. The whole family begins "Taste 1," but one person might have given up chocolate, another coffee, and still another cheese. The category is the same for all, but the sacrifices are specific to the individual.)

As far as the "Sunday rule," that is up to each individual participant and God.

Optional ending

As an "added bonus" ending, some people choose to do an all-liquid fast for the Sacred Triduum. This means you fast from all solid foods from Holy Thursday until after the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday. If one of your Taste categories was giving up certain types of beverages, you are allowed nutritious beverages back into your schedule as part of the liquid fast. Instead of solid food, you may have juice, malts, fruit smoothies, shakes, soups without chunks of food, milk, or those protein shakes or instant breakfast shakes that Carnation, Slimfast and others make.

When it ends

After the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday, you may end the Lenten Sense Marathon and celebrate! And do celebrate! Jesus is alive! All of the suffering you have endured during Lent (and throughout your whole life long) ends in the glory of the resurrection! May you know the triumphant joy of the risen Jesus during the **50** days of Easter! ☺

The Chart

SIGHT 1	HEARING 1	TASTE 1	TOUCH 1	SMELL 1
SIGHT 2	HEARING 2	TASTE 2	TOUCH 2	SMELL 2

11th Extra Practice:

Sight

- No T.V.
- Limit use of the mirror
- No watch
- No internet
- No makeup
- No jewelry
- No jeans
- No snooze button
- No speeding
- No overhead lights at night
- Wear a cross each day
- No curling iron
- No movies
- No favorite magazine
- No comics

Hearing

- Do nothing while talking on the phone
- No radio
- No CD player
- No car stereo
- Give up favorite CD
- No secular music
- No favorite artist
- Have 10 minutes of silence/day
- No CD's

Ideas for each of the Five Senses

Give someone 10 minutes of your undivided attention each day

Taste

- No meat
- No candy
- No chocolate
- No hot drinks
- No condiments
- No eating between meals
- No drinks but water
- No pop
- No fast food
- No ice
- No cheese
- No new groceries (eat what's in the cupboards!)
- No sweets
- No crunchy & salty foods
- No vending machine food

Touch

- Take cold showers
- Shave only once a week
- Wear a pebble in your shoe
- Don't crack your joints
- No jeans
- Sleep on the floor
- Sleep without a pillow

- Hug one person each day
- No favorite shoes
- Wear only skirts to work

Smell

- No cologne/perfume
- No scented lotions
- No favorite shampoo
- No scented candles
- Say a prayer for every good smell
- Put 25¢ in the Rice Bowl for every good smell
- Visit someone in a nursing home weekly
- Plant flowers each week
- Bake bread on Sundays with your family

Extra Practices

- Daily Mass
- Daily holy hour or half-hour
- Daily Rosary (or decade)
- Spend 5 minutes/day in the chapel
- Read the Bible daily
- Have 10 minutes of meaningful conversation with one family member each day
- Weekly confession
- Do something meaningful with one family member each week