



Lenten Calendar 2023

In the spirit of the prayer of the Lakota Peoples "All My Relations," we are invited this Lent to open our hearts to the whole world and to discover relationships of kinship with all beings.

February

22 Ash Wednesday "Rend your hearts not your garments," (Joel 2:12). Plan today how you will keep your heart open and vulnerable this Lent.

23 See how many people you can compliment today.

24 Practice a 'water fast' today by flushing your toilet only half as much as you ordinarily would. Many people in the world today will have access to only as much water as we use in one flush.

25 Read the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and find ways to practice each this Lent.

26 First Sunday of Lent "The guarantee of an authentic openness to God, on the other hand, is a way of practicing the faith that helps open our hearts to our brothers and sisters. Paradoxically, those who claim to be unbelievers can sometimes put God's will into practice better than believers." (*Fratelli Tutti*, 74)

27 2023 is the UN International Year of Millets. Never heard of these small grains? They are a staple in many parts of the world. Cook some and establish a relationship with a new food.

28 "You have to keep breaking your heart until it opens." Rumi

March

1 "If we learn to open our hearts, anyone, including the people who drive us crazy can be our teacher."

Pema Chödrön

2 In the spirit of yesterday's quote, make a list of people who drive you crazy and what they might teach you about yourself.

3 "Desiring to become a bow of praise, praying with outstretched arms each day that my arms, like the Spirit's wings, might grow wide enough to embrace the suffering of the world." Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB

4 Spend some time today, in the spirit of yesterday's quote, praying with your arms outstretched.

5 Second Sunday of Lent "Let us seek out others and embrace the world as it is, without fear of pain or a sense of inadequacy, because there we will discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts."

(*Fratelli Tutti*, 78)

6 "Wake, my dear. Be kind to your sleeping heart. Take it out into the vast fields of Light and let it breathe."

Hafiz

7 Jewish Feast of Purim. Read the Book of Esther about how a shrewd woman overcame an oppressive tyrant. How are you called to resist oppression?

8 International Women's Day. Send a card to thank a woman who has been a model or a mentor to you.

9 Open your heart to people who have respiratory ailments connected to air pollution by reducing your number of car trips for the rest of Lent.

10 Let your Lenten fast today be from a spirit of defeatism that believes that nothing in the world can be changed for the better.

11 Open your heart to a stranger by doing a random act of kindness.

12 Third Sunday of Lent "Let us realize that as our minds and hearts narrow, the less capable we become of understanding the world around us. Without encountering and relating to differences, it is hard to achieve a clear and complete understanding even of ourselves and of our native land." (*Fratelli Tutti*, 147)

13 "At the end of the journey they will ask me, 'Have you lived? Have you loved?' And I, without saying anything, will open my heart, full of names." Bishop Pedro Casaldaliga

14 What is something that you love to do that you haven't done in months? Do it!

15 Make a pilgrimage through your house/room. Linger over your cherished objects and pray for those whose memory they evoke.

16 Be in a relationship of kinship with trees by using cloth napkins and towels; old tee shirts to wipe up spills.

17 St. Patrick's Day Did you ever reflect that St. Patrick was a victim of human trafficking? As you enjoy soda bread today, recall immigrants, refugees, trafficked people who eat the bread of sorrow.

18 "I tell you this to break your heart, by which I mean only that it will break open and never close again to the rest of the world." Mary Oliver

19 Fourth Sunday of Lent "Politics too must make room for a tender love of others. What is tenderness? It is love that draws near and becomes real. A movement that starts from our heart and reaches the eyes, the ears and the hands." (*Fratelli Tutti*, 194)

20 St. Joseph "Oh, Joseph, do not be afraid. Assisting in this birth will break you. It will break your heart open, and it will hurt, because love enters this world amidst pain, with such terrible tenderness and horrific vulnerability, and this tenderness and this vulnerability never goes away." Nichola Torbett

21 Yesterday was the spring equinox. Look outside for signs of spring. Look inside for signs of new growth in you.

22 World Water Day - 2500 gallons of water go into the production of a pound of beef. Reverence water this Lent by reducing your beef consumption.

23 "You shall love your crooked neighbor with your crooked heart." W. H. Auden

24 1980 Death of Saint Oscar Romero "I don't want to be an anti, against anybody. I simply want to be the builder of a great affirmation: the affirmation of God, who loves us and who wants to save us."

25 Annunciation "In the power of the risen Lord, Mary wants to give birth to a new world, where all of us are brothers and sisters, where there is room for all those whom our societies discard, where justice and peace are resplendent." (*Fratelli Tutti*, 278)

26 Fifth Sunday of Lent "If I can help at least one person to have a better life, that already justifies the offering of my life. It is a wonderful thing to be God's faithful people. We achieve fulfilment when we break down walls and our hearts are filled with faces and names!" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 195)

27 Do some spring cleaning. Get rid of one unnecessary possession every day between now and Easter.

28 Be in kinship tonight with the 775 million people who don't have electricity by an electronic fast - no lights or electronic devices. Spend the evening in quiet conversation or restful silence.

29 "Tell my servants I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful," (Quran 15:49). Be in kinship with the people of Islam by learning about their religion; visiting a mosque; acting to counter Islamophobia.

30 As you pass people today, silently pray the words of the Buddhist loving kindness meditation: May you be happy. May you be well. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease.

31 As you pass other than human creatures today, silently pray the words of the Buddhist loving kindness meditation: May you be happy. May you be well. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease.

April

1 April Fool's Day – Humor promotes kinship. Share a joke with someone.

2 Palm Sunday Open your heart today to the catechumens who will receive the Sacraments of Initiation on Holy Saturday. What is one thing you can do to make the Church a place of welcome?

3 Share with a friend about your experience of trying to live Lent "with a heart open to the whole world."

4 Spend time praying today for people you find hard to forgive. At least in spirit, welcome them into your circle of kinship.

5 Passover begins at sundown. Pray Psalm 122 "for the peace of Jerusalem."

6 Holy Thursday As you eat today be conscious that every meal is a holy communion with all of creation.

7 Good Friday Did you ever think of Jesus as a victim of torture? Pray for victims of torture all over the world and for those who work for their healing.

8 Holy Saturday Light a candle today and renew your commitment to a life of universal kinship to "all my relations."

9 Easter Sunday "First and last alike receive your reward; rich and poor, rejoice together! Sober and slothful, celebrate the day! You that have kept the fast, and you that have not, rejoice today for the Table is richly laden! Feast royally on it, the calf is a fatted one. Let no one go away hungry. Partake, all, of the cup of faith. Enjoy all the riches of God's goodness!" Easter homily of St. John Chrysostom

