

Celebrating Lent

Keep these ideas in mind as you study **Unit 3, Session 15**.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and marks the 40-day period during which we prepare for Easter, which is the greatest feast day of the liturgical year. **PAGE 123**

After the decline of the Roman empire during the Middle Ages, the Church sought to protect Christianity and establish a Christian kingdom in the Holy Land, which is sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians. The Crusaders faced opposition. During the Crusades, many people on both sides of the battle lost their lives. **PAGE 124**

As we prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Church encourages us to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. With our sins forgiven, we can celebrate Confirmation with a happy heart. **PAGE 124**

There are times in the Church's history when it has repented for sins its members have committed. In March 2000, Pope John Paul II established a Day of Pardon and asked forgiveness of sins that the Church had committed throughout history. **PAGE 125**

During the season of Lent, the Church encourages us to practice prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. **PAGE 127**

When we choose to give in to temptation, we turn our backs on Christ by thinking, saying, or doing something that goes against his teachings. **PAGE 127**

Lent is an important time for the people in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), the process through which unbaptized adults join the Church. **PAGE 127**

On Ash Wednesday, we receive ashes on our foreheads as a sign of our call to penance and reconciliation. **PAGE 127**

Solidarity is the attitude of strength and unity that leads to the sharing of spiritual and material goods. **PAGES 127 AND 322**

The Act of Contrition is a traditional prayer in which we acknowledge our sins, ask God for forgiveness, and express our desire to sin no more. We pray it as part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but we can also include it in our daily prayers. **PAGE 128**

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