

Love Life Live Lent

Autism-Friendlier Version

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on behalf of the Church of England**

Ann is on the autism spectrum

Introduction for Clergy and Church Leaders

At least 1 in every 100 people in England is on the autism spectrum. People on the autism spectrum can find some actions or some changes to our daily life difficult or dangerous. People can either choose to follow ideas in the original Lent booklet, or can choose one or more things from this list instead. Some of us with an autism spectrum condition might need our friends, family, church leaders or carers to help us choose which things to do, and help show us how to do them.

Each person is different, with their own skills and needs, but everyone is loved by God, and everyone is able to help and/or pray and find joy in Easter in some way.

Why are we doing this?

It is Lent, which is the 40 days before Easter. It is a time when Christians do a lot of thinking and praying, and try to become better Christians. Easter is when we remember Jesus dying and then being alive again.

Each year the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, who are the leaders of our church, ask us to help make the world a better place.

The Archbishops say that we can all do good things with God's help. All sorts of things can help the people around us and also help the world. We can make sensible choices, be kind to people, make time to rest and to have fun, and share things with people. All of these are ways to show people what God's love is like. God loves us and cares about us all.

What Can I Try?

This guide has several ideas for things we can try.

See also the internet guide www.livelent.net for more information.

You do not have to do any of the things on the list below. You can pick the ones you want to do. Always choose things that are safe for you to try. If you are not sure, ask someone you trust for their advice.

**List of Things You Might Want to Try During Lent
(and if you like them, you might want to do them
again during the rest of the year too).**

1. Find out about Jesus's life. See if there is a film you could borrow from the library about Jesus, or read about Jesus online or in the Bible.
2. People like to hear about good things. If someone you know does something useful, tell them that you liked it. Or tell a friend you trust or someone in your family about it. For example if someone has been kind to you or to someone else, you could tell a friend or someone in your family about this.
3. Sharing meals with people is a way to be a friend. Are you able to ask a friend or someone in your family or someone you can trust to go for a meal or snack with you? Either at your house or their house or a restaurant? Or you could ask them if they would like you to make them something to eat – even something simple like a sandwich. Do not worry if you do not feel able to do this. Do not worry if people say no because they are too busy. If you have asked them, it still counts as a good thing.
4. Do you have enough spare money today to buy an extra meal? If you do, can you give that money to a charity? It does not have to be lots of money.
5. Do you have things in your home that you no longer use and do not need, for example clean old clothes, books, games? You could give these to a charity shop, or ask people that you trust whether they would like them.
6. Make a list of things you want to say sorry for because you got them wrong. Talk to God about it and say sorry. Even if we can't hear God, He always listens to us anyway.
7. If you live with other people, ask them if there is something you can do to help them today. Make sure it is something you can do safely.
8. If you have a garden or outside space, find out if you can help to keep it tidy. Always make sure you know how to stay safe when working in gardens. Ask for help if you need it.
9. Think of three things that you enjoy. Maybe someone you like or love. Maybe something that you have enjoyed reading or doing. Be happy about them. Say thank you to God for giving us a world where there are good things.

10. Instead of watching TV, talk to someone for a while or play a game with someone Maybe someone you live with, maybe someone you trust online?
11. It is better for the planet not to use a car with only one person in it. If you normally drive a car to somewhere, can you choose to walk there or cycle there safely instead? Or maybe get the bus or take the train? Do not worry if you cannot do this.
12. When you have a nice walk or a meal you really like or listen to some music, think about how much you are enjoying it and say thank you to God.
13. If you can afford it, go to a charity shop and buy something you want and pay more than they ask. Even a little bit more can help that charity.
14. If you can, make a home-made gift or card for a friend or member of your family and give it to them.
15. Be careful not to waste water. Do not leave taps turned on unless you are using the water.
16. Read about how the changes in our weather are making big problems for some people. There is information online, or in newspapers. Pray about it.
17. Pray for your friends, family, neighbours and the businesses in your town or village.
18. If you have a garden or a window sill, can you buy some seeds, plant them and look after them? Growing our own food or flowers is good for the world.
19. If you are buying fruit or salad or vegetables, try to buy ones that have been grown near your town or village, or in your country. It helps the world to buy things that have been made or grown near to where we live.
20. Say a prayer for someone you know who isn't well or is having big problems.
21. Is there someone in your family or a friend who you haven't spoken to for a few weeks or even longer than that? Write to them or telephone them if you can to say hello and ask how they are.
22. Put some food outside for the birds. They often like bits of fresh bread, or bits of apple if you don't have any bird seed. Put out fresh water for them, too. Check what not to give them on the RSPB website www.rspb.org.uk as birds cannot eat some foods.

23. If you buy Easter Eggs for people, try to find a Fairtrade chocolate one. This means that the people who grow the beans to make the chocolate will get the right money.
24. Draw or paint an Easter garden on a piece of paper and put it up in your window or on the wall in a room so that other people can see it and enjoy it.
25. When it is the 4th of April 2010, enjoy Easter and thank God for giving us his Son, Jesus.