

LENT 2025. THE JUBILEE AND FAMILIES. PILGRIMS OF HOPE AND SIGNS OF HOPE.

MARFAM SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES.

Introduction. Pope Francis established 2025 as a Holy Jubilee Year of Hope with the theme “Hope does not disappoint.” Its aims are renewal, experiencing God’s mercy, rebuilding of our relationship with God with others, and all of creation. Jubilee is a special biblical concept with a number of special beliefs, activities relating to repentance, forgiveness and hope for eternal life, which can be highlighted during the Lenten season in the parish and also in our own homes and families.

The Lenten theme built into MARFAM’s THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY is adapted from the MARFAM FAMILY YEAR PLANNER March theme Human Rights are Family Rights, Pope Francis’ Jubilee document *Spes non Confundit*, and his encyclical on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, *Dilexit Nos*. The aim is deepening family spirituality and an eco-spirituality. THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY are published on MARFAM website www.marfam.org.za, emailed daily to subscribers, posted on social media and whatsapp. Complete set is emailed to selected recipients monthly.

LENTEN ACTIVITIES FOR DEEPENING FAMILY SPIRITUALITY AND ECO-SPIRITUALITY. Activities can be done through performing acts of Love and Sacrifice around the three Catholic practices of Lent prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Prayer, personal or communal, makes room for God in our lives. Fasting is denying ourselves, possibly something we like, give to others in need, or just as self-denial. Almsgiving is sharing with others some of our gifts, time, talents, money or other possessions.

Create a family shrine with Bible, prayers, pictures. Pray STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR FAMILIES, ROSARY for Family life. Use MARFAM THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY for reflection and sharing. Have a Family prayer meal, Family Reconciliation Service. Eco-friendly activities : see below.

JUBILEE PRAYER FOR FAMILIES.

May the FAITH you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of LOVE enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
awaken in us the HOPE for the coming of your KINGDOM of love, peace and beauty.
As PILGRIMS OF HOPE and SIGNS OF HOPE in our families
help us to plant the seeds of the gospel, to care for and nurture them
and so transform the Church, the world and all of creation. Amen

MARFAM LENTEN FAMILY “ACTS OF LOVE AND SACRIFICE.” 40 suggestions to choose from daily or as appropriate to do individually or together. Relevant in many different contexts of families. Download and print

1. BE conscious of God in a stranger.
2. BE a good neighbour helping when needed.
3. BE a peacemaker or a peacekeeper
4. BE generous with someone in need.
5. BE patient with an old person or a child
6. BE eco-conscious, plant a tree for nature.
7. BE willing to forgive even when it hurts to do so.
8. BE eco-conscious start a vegetable patch
9. BE frugal. Have a meatless meal.
10. BE waterwise. Save, don’t waste water
11. BE present with someone who is lonely.
12. BE generous with a beggar. Look in his or her face.
13. BE health-conscious. Give up fizzy drinks for Lent.
14. BE polite to everyone, even people you don’t like.
15. BE prayerful with Jesus at home or in church.
16. BE punctual, don’t make other people late & wait.
17. BE eco-conscious. Recycle what you can.
18. BE willing to share your belongings with others.
19. BE animal and nature conscious.
20. BE caring, give food and drink to a hungry person.
21. Don’t BE rude or cheeky to a parent or other adult.
22. Don’t BE a bully to someone weaker than you.
23. Don’t BE greedy when others are hungry.
24. Don’t BE lazy, clean up your neighbourhood
25. Don’t BE violent, hitting or hurting someone.
26. Don’t BE wasteful, save electricity where you can.
27. Don’t BE selfish and refuse to help others.
28. Don’t BE dishonest in thought, word or deed .
29. Don’t BE angry or sulk if you don’t get your way
30. Don’t BE judgemental about differences in others.
31. Don’t BE a substance abuser.
32. Don’t BE ungrateful for what you have received.
33. Don’t BE unforgiving.
34. Don’t BE a couch-potato. Go do some exercise.
35. Don’t BE neglectful. Think of other’s needs
36. Don’t BE argumentative, listen and share openly .
37. Don’t BE impatient.
38. Don’t BE mean. Be willing to sacrifice for others.
39. Don’t BE unaware of the problems in society.
40. Don’t BE self-centred and refuse to help others.

Suggested LENTEN PRACTICES FOR THE HOME for Becoming an Eco-Friendly Family as Pilgrims of Hope , becoming Signs of Hope. .

Study and Read:

Study and use Laudato si Action Platform goals.

Subscribe to eco-friendly newsletters on-line. Select topics of interest to study further on climate, biodiversity and living a simpler lifestyle. Read up on biomimicry, water saving, electricity saving, carbon footprints, healthy diets. Watch TV series and programmes on climate action and protection of creation around the world. Read up St Francis life and way of life and study Pope Francis writings especially *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*.

Do: Do a family project on becoming eco-friendly: pray privately and together, do faith sharing ideally together. Hold a Family Reconciliation service and if possible Confession. Have a Family Prayer Meal. Pray STATIONS OF THE CROSS for Families from MARFAM in various languages. Check your family carbon footprint and make adjustments to reduce it. Save energy and water, grow herbs, vegetables, trees, eat more healthily – less meat, more vegetables. Support conservation projects for wild life, birds, bees, insects. Lobby about chosen issues – plastic pollution, environmental clean-up. Donate unused items to charity. Knit, sew, make items to donate to charity. Family fast days (Friday fast) to save money and donate to feeding projects. Exercise to keep fit.

Save money: Cut down on alcohol, smoking, fizzy drinks, junk food, bottled water, car use. Think twice before you spend, do clothes-swap rather than buy, buy in bulk and share. Have a meatless day. Donate money to Bishops' Lenten Appeal. ,

Waste reduction: Recycle. Avoid single use plastics, styrofoam, avoid wasting food, compost food wastage.

Energy Saving: Do energy use check, switch off unnecessary and unused lights, TV and plugs. Use solar power, solar lights and rechargeable batteries. Cut time on TV, computer and cellphone to save energy and data.

Water saving: Use “grey” water from bath, shower and washing for toilets and garden. Don't run taps when not needed. Collect rain water, use drip irrigation in garden or veggie patch.

Recycle: Join in recycling projects, plastic, paper, glass, make ecobricks out of plastic 2l bottles stuffed with plastic.

General: clean up environment, plant trees, support ecological campaigns in church, school and society. Make time for relationships and relaxation by cutting time on-line or cellphone.

Care for others: Befriend, share, give to poor and beggars, give away unused items, show care for sick and lonely

A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH. short prayer for families.

God of Love, creator of all, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You are a family, a community of love, our model and inspiration.

To us you have given the task of caring for our common home

And all the families of creation, human, animal and plant.

We praise and thank you and pledge our care. Amen

PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH. Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 2015.

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.