

Thought for the week
10th March 2019
1st Sunday of Lent

I have a friend who is a Catholic, who goes to Mass only on Christmas day and on Easter Sunday, yet she always takes Lent very seriously. This year she has decided to involve the whole family in her efforts. She has divined that they are all going to give up meat for the whole of Lent: and as she has 3 teenage sons this is no mean feat. She then intends to give the money she saves to charity. Having spoken with her earlier this week (and provided her with lots of meat free recipes), I was inspired by her commitment — she had given the idea a lot of thought and was organised. She has planned each week's menus to make sure she and her family can see this commitment through to the very end of Lent. She was determined that together they would all succeed in this commitment.

This got me thinking, *what am I going to do for Lent and how am I going to see it through to the end?* I had to admit to myself that I am not very good at completing things. I habitually break my New Year's resolutions. Having started dry January this year, I only got to week 2 before I succumbed: and at the beginning of the week when my son asked me what I was going to give up for Lent, I had to admit that chocolate and alcohol were certainly out of the question, as I was helping two friends celebrate their birthdays this weekend and there would definitely be alcohol and chocolate cake involved. I realised that I often set myself up to fail because I find excuses to opt out and I do not fully commit.

Today's Gospel tells us that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert eating nothing and being tempted by the devil. It was not easy and "*at the end he was hungry*" but, Jesus prevailed, and with him as our example we can too. So take heart this Lent and do not get discouraged. If like me, you are not very good at giving something up or having less, then find a way to do more—there is plenty of opportunity in Lent to commit to doing more. Praying, almsgiving, sharing, giving—and our Lenten Programme and sponsored charity offer lots of possibilities too.

So take heart, be inspired and this time let us see our commitment right through to the end of Lent.

A Parishioner