



An FMCiC National Prayer & Fasting Initiative **Wednesday, March 2 – Thursday, April 14**

Lent is an ancient tradition of the Church which, when practiced with a right heart and not just as a religious duty, can be a significant spiritual experience. Imagine the Church globally, setting aside 40 days to remember Jesus' sacrifice, love, promises, AND examine our own lives to repent and pursue reconciliation in all of our relationships? Imagine if the FMCiC decided to commit to 40 days to remember, pray, fast, repent and reconcile - 40 days with a national desire to hear from God and be responsive!?!

FMCiC, I am inviting you into this prayer & fasting season.



WEEK ONE – REPENTANCE: March 2-8

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Traditionally, this is a day to remember our own mortality and our need for repentance and reconciliation with our Father. Often, the words that are used as the minister puts ashes on your forehead (gently and often as a little cross), are, "Repent and believe in the Gospel." The ashes used are generally from the burned palm branches used on Palm Sunday.

Please join us on March 2 Ash Wednesday for a national event
(<https://vimeo.com/678812952>)

The focus of Week I is “repentance”. Please take time to answer the following (perhaps one or two questions a day for the week). These questions are meant to be a prayer exercise, which means you should pray as you answer the following questions:

- Write out a Biblical definition of “repentance”: _____
- What’s the difference between “repentance” and “reconciliation”? _____
- How does God respond to genuine repentance? _____
- What Psalms or other Scriptures are related to repentance: _____
- What are themes or issues that come to mind as you think about the need for repentance in your own life? _____
- If you are leader, what issues or themes come to mind as you pray about repentance and your church life? _____
- In the Bible we are told of different responses that repentant-forgiven people have. For instance, the whole city of Nineveh was penitent, David repented, Zacchaeus, Mary... Consider their responses. _____

We invite you into a week of repentance. Invite God to examine your life, and speak to you about what you need to turn from and what you need to turn to.

WEEK ONE FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.

LENT

Pray + Fast + Repent + Reconcile

WEEK TWO – GOD: March 9-15

We started with repentance because traditionally the Church has begun the Lenten season with Ash Wednesday. In some respects, however, it would have been better to start with GOD – Who He is, and what He means to us. Let's spend the second week of Lent remembering our Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

When Moses asked God to identify Himself, God's powerful response was (and is) "I AM" (Exodus 3:14). Why? What does this response tell us about God? Stop and pray to "I AM" – use the name which God gave Moses to call Him. Instead of "Dear God", start your prayer with "Dear I AM".

This week use the "I AM" statements which Jesus very intentionally uses for Himself, in order to remember who Jesus is. Note that there are 7 "I AM" statements in John. Do you know why the writer John notes 7 of these? What is significant about the number 7? As you pray to Him using another new name that He has given to us to know Him by, consider the meaning and richness of that new name.

For each of the following write the "I AM" statement, and address God in prayer using each "I AM" name (perhaps use one name daily all week long):

John 6:35 _____,
John 8:12 _____,
John 10:7 _____,
John 10:11 _____,
John 11:25 _____,
John 14:6 _____,
John 15:1 _____.

Note John 18:4-6, when Jesus said "I AM" what happened to the arresting officers?

WEEK TWO FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.

LENT

Pray + Fast + Repent + Reconcile

WEEK THREE – IDENTITY: March 16-22

Repentance leads to reconciliation (a fresh start) with self, others and GOD. This week take time to remember your true, reconciled self. Remember who you are in Christ! Consider the following C.S. Lewis quote,

Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised.

But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of – throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making court yards.

You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. A palace that He intends to come and live in Himself!

Read the following verses and write what the verse says about your identity (do two or three daily, as prayer):

- Psalm 139:13-14 _____
- Ephesians 2:10 _____
- John 3:16 _____
- Colossians 3:12 _____
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 _____
- John 1:12 _____
- Colossians 1:14 _____
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 _____
- Romans 8:1 _____
- Ephesians 1:1 _____
- Ephesians 4:24 _____
- Ephesians 3:12 _____
- Colossians 2:10 _____

- 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19 _____
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 _____
- Romans 8:17 _____
- Philippians 3:20 _____
- 1 Peter 2:11 _____
- 2 Corinthians 5:18 _____
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 _____
- Matthew 5:13-14 _____
- Matthew 28:18-20 _____
- Acts 1:8 _____
- 1 Corinthians 12 _____
- John 15:14-15 _____
- Deuteronomy 33:12 _____

And be thankful...

WEEK THREE FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.



WEEK FOUR – YOUR STORY: March 23-29

Did you know that the word "lent" comes from a word for "spring"? Lent is meant to be a "spring" season in your spiritual journey. It is meant to be a fresh start, and an opportunity to anticipate what God has in store for you and us this next year. Heaven knows that we need "fresh" and "new" considering the Pandemic season that we have been moving through.

In this week 4 of our national Lent initiative, spend your time thinking about your story with God. In fact by the end of the week, our hope is that you will have prepared a one page summary of your story (testimony) and that you find someone to share it with (anyone at all – blame it on us: "The denomination that I am a part of has issued a challenge this week, to sum up my story in one page. Can I read it to you?")

The following may be a helpful guide as you develop your one-page summary (testimony or story):

Preparing your story...

STEP ONE is to consider where you were spiritually prior to coming into faith. Some of you were raised in a Christian home, so the question might be, "when did your relationship with Jesus become real for you?"

Some questions to think about: What did you understand about faith? Did you consider yourself a "Christian"? What would others have thought about you spiritually? Would you have considered yourself as being on a 'search' for truth? Where had your spiritual journey gone, and was it satisfying? What did you think about church? What did you think church life would be like?

STEP TWO is to remember where you were emotionally and physically in your life. Some questions to think about: How would people describe you (i.e. happy, sad, quiet)? Were you satisfied with where life was for you and your family? What were your priorities? What preoccupied your thinking and your time? Were you content? Sin, shame, guilt that weighed heavy in your life? What was the meaning of life? What was your life philosophy (i.e. "to each his own", "the one with the most toys at the end wins!")?

STEP THREE is to recount how you turned the corner – the actual events or season. What or how did you come to faith? Where were you? Who was involved? What were the feelings around that time or season? How was God showing Himself to you? What was said to you about salvation that made you want to cross that line into relationship with Christ? Was it hard? Were there doubts? Did you second-guess the whole thing the next morning? When did it all feel real? Did you tell anyone?

STEP FOUR is to consider what has happened since 'conversion'. Have things changed – what? Are you thinking differently about things – like what? Are there any feelings that have come along with Christianity? Are you doing things that you weren't prior to faith? What are the things you are looking forward to now?

STEP FIVE is to compile steps one to four into a couple of pages so as to be able to offer this in a five-minute presentation. Be very aware that you cannot sum up your whole life to date in five minutes! Your story, your witness, will constantly be changing and will best fit each new situation you are in. So, this is a start – a witness to your church family!

WEEK FOUR FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.

LENT

Pray + Fast + Repent + Reconcile

WEEK FIVE – OUR CHURCH: March 30-April 5

Let's do the work of intercession this week. It is the desire of the National Prayer Team that we would become, as a movement, a "HOUSE OF PRAYER." The National Prayer Team explains that a "church becomes a 'house of prayer' when a significant number of God's people pray privately and corporately seeking the kingdom of God in such an intimate way that the Lord's Presence, supernatural power and gifts operate effectively, leading to manifestations of divine healing, deliverance, wisdom, guidance, provision, and ultimately spiritual growth through conversion and ongoing sanctification."

Please pray alone and find others to pray with (join us for our national prayer time Wednesday, March 30 @ 8:00 PM EST, 7:00 PM CST, 6:00 PM MST, and 5:00 PM PST (PQ prayer – 7:00 PM EST)

English Zoom Link: (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81605123945?pwd=UUxBNm5FdEdNS3IPamowakdjNE5rdz09>)

PQ Zoom Link: (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/859874336?pwd=SHAzLIkwTmcyYmIPdkdzNVNLNUZ6dz09>)

This week, perhaps at the dinner table, pray for each of these categories of ministries in our movement and if you miss one or two just move on to the next day.

- **Wednesday – Leadership Development:** Healthy churches need healthy and effective pastors. The Leadership Department exists to help facilitate this. From the moment a leader is identified in the local church and "tapped on the shoulder," all the way through the credentialing process (to either Commissioned or Ordained ministry) and beyond, as pastors live out God's call on their lives, we want to provide resources and structures that help leaders be both healthy (in every sense of that word) and effective (as they continue to grow and learn).
- **Thursday – Reconciliation & Hope:** reconciliation with indigenous peoples, French/English, regional, family and neighbourhood relationships, racial equality and unity. We are called to be "ministers of reconciliation". Canada is also challenged by an opioid crisis, significant suicide and pornography rates, human trafficking, and of course the ongoing pandemic. Pray for God's mercy and that the Church would shine!
- **Friday – Intercultural Engagement:** The Intercultural Engagement Team (IET) continues to provide support, resources and consultation for missional efforts by the local church. We are here

to help congregations embrace intercultural empathy and education, and to be equipped to meet the needs of one another, both here at home and around the world.

Some of these missional efforts currently include: outreach to our neighbours who are New to Canada (including "invite a student to dinner"), growing in relationship with our indigenous brothers and sisters and taking responsibility for reconciliation, and expanding our global partnerships in India, Ghana, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere, through the work of International Child Care Ministries and Tearfund.

- **Saturday – Church Planting:** The Church Planting team exists to oversee our church planting system. Our team has the privilege of working with new and emerging leaders and communities of faith as they follow Jesus into their neighbourhoods. The strength of our church planting process and our involvement in the New Leaf Network is producing fruit. Our work focuses on four areas of the church planting process: 1) Recruitment (currently there are 18 new ideas and leaders whom we are speaking with); 2) Discernment (currently there are five planters discerning God's leading); 3) Launching (currently there are five new launches); 4) Stabilizing (currently there are ten plants which are "stabilizing").
- **Sunday – Church Health:** Jesus gave His church the mandate to be a community of Disciple Makers. The FMCIC has asked its churches to accept responsibility for their communities as part of this mandate. The Church Health department is here to come alongside churches and leaders to equip, encourage and resource churches as they step fully into what God is asking them to do. This includes helping to strengthen church structure, aiding in the development of ministry plans, consulting with churches as they engage with health tools and resourcing congregations wishing to work through change in order to revitalize their ministries or as they continue to pursue robust health.
- **Monday – FMCIC National Leadership:** This includes the Bishop, Directors of Church Health & Leadership Development, Church Planting, and Administrative Services. Please also pray for your Board of Administration, MEGAP, and Study Commission on Doctrine. Pray for unity, vision, empowerment, wisdom, holiness, administrative excellence, financial provision and generosity. We also have other TEAMS (which are ongoing national bodies): "Legacy Team" which is in place to support and mobilize our retired leaders, and "Generosity & Stewardship". Finally, we have three TASK FORCES: LGBTQ2S+, Racial Justice & Ethnic Equity, and Intergenerational Ministry (exploring how to help our churches minister to children, youth, and young adults.)
- **Tuesday – Prayer:** "To join with Jesus in calling the FMCIC churches to become houses of prayer that are asking the Lord of the harvest to grant us a fresh infusion of the power of the Holy Spirit to be one with Him in relationship and mission in making saved and sanctified disciples of all nations." (National Prayer Team vision statement).

WEEK FIVE FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.

LENT

Pray + Fast + Repent + Reconcile

WEEK SIX – LISTENING: April 6-14

This is Christianity's most important week. Let's take this week to prepare our hearts for Easter, but also to pray that Good Friday and Easter Sunday would be a weekend when people return and turn to God in our churches. *Please Father, make it so.*

Therefore, besides preparing your heart and praying for salvation for those who do not yet have a saving relationship with Jesus, listen. Listen in prayer. Listen at bedtime rather than use words. Listen in the morning rather than rhyming off your prayers. Listen on your drive or in your regular quiet time. Find a friend to listen with, or perhaps a small group. It would be good if you were to write down some of what you sense God is putting in your heart and share it with your family or a friend. The Father may choose to say something, or He may simply sit with you – enjoy that time!

WEEK SIX FAST: please pick a day / meal(s) weekly to fast and pray for God's outpouring, stirring, breathing, healing, convicting, power INTO AND THROUGH you, your local Church, and the FMCiC.