



The symbolism behind abstaining from meat during Lent

The season of Lent is a time when Christians reflect on our lives and consider what sort of person we are becoming. It allows us to prepare for the great feast of Easter. Athletes, singers, dancers and anyone with a special skill will develop that skill by doing very specific exercises. Lent is a time when we do spiritual exercises to develop our own goodness.

Often in the past, Catholics thought of these exercises in a negative way. It used to be considered important to 'give something up' for Lent, but we can think of it more positively. What specific things can we do over the next six weeks that will help us to become a better people? What things can we do that will develop our talents, relationships and our sense of service? In short, what things can we do that will make us more loving?

We often say that Lent is a time of 'repentance'. Jesus used this word a lot but the actual word the gospel writers used was 'metanoia'. This Greek word means 'change of heart'. So Lent is a time when we change direction or at least realign ourselves with the things that are really important. It's time to put away the things that distract us or prevent us from being our best selves.

One Catholic Lenten practice is to abstain from eating meat on Fridays in Lent as well as Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The Jews in Jesus time had very strict rules about what they could and could not eat.

Some early Jewish Christians wanted to force these rules on everyone who joined their community. In the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 10:9-16), St Peter has a vision in which God reveals that Christians can eat any food and so were not bound by the Jewish rules.

So when we choose not to eat meat during Lent, it's not a rule to trip us up or make life unpleasant, it's because this practice can help us to appreciate God's gift even more and allow us to be mindful of those who don't have enough to eat.

- **Michael Blanchfield, Education Officer - Catholic Identity**

A Lenten Prayer

God of endless kindness and mercy,

Open our hearts in this time of Lent.

Give us courage to look at our lives with honesty;

Give us strength to deal with what we find;

Help us to forgive ourselves and each other,

so that we may return to you with all our hearts,

We make this prayer through Christ Jesus.

Amen.





Baked Lemon Butter Salmon

Ingredients

- 40g butter, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tsp finely grated lemon rind
- 2 bunches asparagus, trimmed
- 4 (about 180g each) skinless, boneless [salmon](#) fillets
- 2 tbsp dill
- 1 lemon
- 4 slices ciabatta



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Method

Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Place the butter, garlic and lemon rind on a small chopping board

Use a fork to mash until combined

Tear four 30cm square sheets of foil and line with baking paper

Divide the asparagus among the centres of the paper. Top with the salmon. Scatter with small dollops of the butter mixture

Season

Fold the foil and paper to enclose the filling and seal tightly

Place onto a large baking tray and bake for 15-20 minutes (depending on the thickness of the salmon) or until the salmon flakes easily when tested with a fork.

Serves 4



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Creamy Tuna Pasta bake

Ingredients

375g dried large shell pasta
2 cups (250g) frozen peas and beans
1 bunch asparagus, trimmed, cut into 3cm pieces
2 tbsp cornflour
2 cups low-fat milk (or milk alternative)
1 cup grated Bega So Extra Light Tasty cheese
425g can tuna in springwater, drained, flaked
Salt & pepper



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Method

Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced

Cook pasta in a large saucepan of boiling salted water, following packet directions, until tender, adding peas, beans and asparagus in the last 4 minutes of cooking time

Drain, reserving 1/2 cup cooking liquid. Return pasta mixture to pan

Meanwhile, blend cornflour and 1/2 cup milk together in a jug. Place remaining milk in a saucepan. Bring to the boil. Whisk in cornflour mixture. Bring to the boil

Cook, stirring, for 1 minute, or until sauce thickens. Stir in half the cheese

Add tuna and white sauce to pasta mixture. Stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon into a greased 8-cup capacity baking dish

Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden

Serves 6



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Zucchini & Corn fritters

Ingredients

4 (about 520g) zucchini coarsely grated
2 (about 360g) potatoes, peeled, coarsely
grated
2 corn cobs, husks and silk removed
1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves, finely chopped
40g (1/4 cup) plain flour
2 eggs, lightly whisked
3-4 tbsp olive oil
80g baby rocket leaves
Tzatziki for serving



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Method

Combine the zucchini (4 (about 520g) zucchini, ends trimmed, coarsely grated) and potato in a colander and use your hands to squeeze out the excess moisture

Transfer to a large bowl. Use a sharp knife to cut down the length of the corn, close to the core, to remove the kernels

Add the corn and thyme to the zucchini mixture and stir until well combined. Stir in the flour. Add the egg and stir until well combined. Season with salt and pepper

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Spoon four 125ml (1/2-cup) portions of potato mixture into the pan

Use an egg lifter to flatten slightly. Cook for 4-5 minutes each side or until golden brown and cooked through

Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Cover loosely with foil. Repeat with the remaining oil and potato mixture, reheating the pan between batches

Divide the fritters among serving plates. Top with the rocket and serve immediately with tzatziki

Serves 4