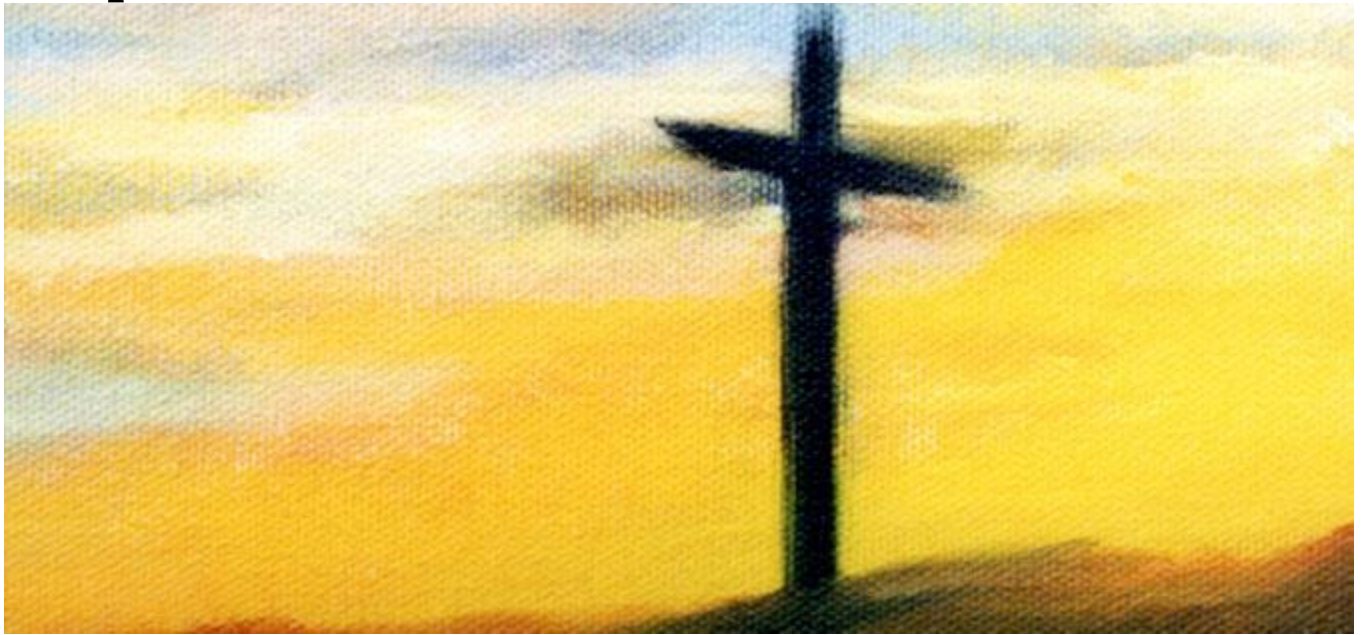


# Preparation for Lent



St. Ignatius throughout the [Spiritual Exercises](#) suggests that we prepare ourselves before we enter into the specific exercise. He suggests preparing the night before: “After retiring, just before falling asleep, for the space of a *Hail Mary*, I will think of the hour when I have to rise, and why I am rising, and briefly sum up the exercise I have to go through”.

The preparation before prayer is important. It allows us to physically carve out space in our day for prayer, and it allows our minds to be mentally ready for prayer. As [Lent](#) approaches, the same idea of preparation that St. Ignatius suggests can be helpful in our preparation for Lent.

- Have we physically set aside a prayer space for our Lenten journey?
- What time of day will we pray during Lent?
- What are the “exercises” or prayer methods we will be using during Lent?

In our preparatory prayer during the Spiritual Exercises, we pray for specific graces. What is the grace we desire to deepen within us during Lent?

- To deepen our understanding of Jesus’ Passion?
- To walk with Jesus through his Passion and Resurrection?
- To work on overcoming a temptation that keeps us from fully entering into life with Christ?
- To foster a new spiritual practice to ignite or inflame our relationship with Jesus?

In these last few days before Lent begins, I invite us to begin our preparatory prayer. We can turn to Jesus and ask, “What is the grace you desire to deepen within me over these next 40 days?”