

Living Faith @

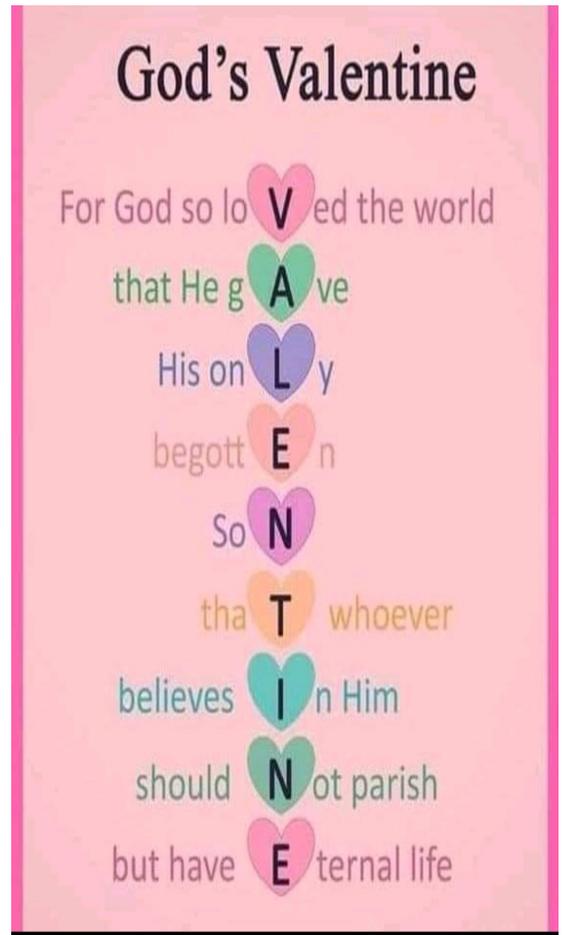


February ... the month with the least number of days on the calendar but seems like the longest. The weather can be cloudy, foggy, snowy, cold, rainy or sunny (sometimes all of them on the same day!) February has a number of special days - the best known of which are Valentine's Day, American Heart Month, Groundhog Day, Super Bowl Sunday, Presidents' Day, and, this year, Ash Wednesday.

I found a few others that aren't as well known: Random Acts of Kindness Week, Dark Chocolate Day, Tater Tot Day, Ice Cream for Breakfast Day and a whole lot more. The ones we recognize most are Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday.

These are the ones I will highlight here in this article. Enjoy your month of February and let's hope the weather doesn't bring too much more snow!

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(taken from Feb. 2019 Faith at Home)

Encourage your kids to show their love for God by serving someone else. They could complete a simple service project like making a meal, shoveling snow, or cleaning for someone who could use help. Have the kids make a valentine for the person and include the words: "We love because God first loved us" or "We are valentines of God."

✚ LENT ✚

Lent is a 40-day liturgical season that begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on Easter. Sundays are not included in the 40-day count because every Sunday is a joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Though not biblical, Lent has long been a tradition in the Christian Church, and it is thought that the tradition of the 40 days recalls the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting and being tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11), the 40 days and nights Noah and his family spent on the ark and the 40 years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. Focused on the Easter promise of new life and renewed faith, Lent invites us to look honestly at ourselves as we seek to be strengthened in the call to be Christ's disciples. Lent is considered a time when many people make a special focus on enhancing their ever-growing and loving relationship with God. Christ's life, ministry, and death are remembered during this season. It's also a time to think about how God is with us all the time. You may choose to do this through prayer, reading the Bible, helping others, or something else. Anything that connects you with God is a great practice. We can ask what is breaking down (in individuals, our congregations, our communities, and in the world) and what is waiting to be recreated or revitalized ... the hope of new life that comes through baptismal waters.

Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:20

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. On this day, Christians

focus on their complete sinfulness and Christ's suffering and death to insure their salvation. Ashes are referred to many times in the Old Testament as signs of sorrow, mourning, humility, and repentance, and on Ash Wednesday they are used to remind people of their mortality; that "you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19).

Here's an Activity to try ... Pretzel Prayer Pals

With the pretzel being a common food associated with the season of Lent and prayer, it is a great way to share your faith with others. The shape of the pretzel twist is patterned after the common posture of early Christians in prayer - arms crossed or folded across their chest, each hand touching the opposite shoulder.

Bake your own pretzels or buy the twists from a store. Place a few pretzels in a clear plastic bag, seal the bag, and attach a card or a note letting your "prayer pal" know you are praying for them during this season of Lent. You can add decorations to make it personalized.



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