Spring into the Lenten season

March 20, 2023 by [Fillmore County Journal](https://fillmorecountyjournal.com/author/fillmore-county-journal/) [1 Comment](https://fillmorecountyjournal.com/spring-into-the-lenten-season/#comments)

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I saw my first robin the other day and oh, the joy that filled my heart!  We are so very blessed to live in a region where we get to experience the beauty of all for four seasons and I believe spring to be such an inspiring season.  It brings with it renewal and rebirth.

So, the moment I saw that robin I was not only elated that springtime had come once again, but I was thrilled with anticipation of what the next few months would bring.  You see, each year on my back deck where we have a side light a robin couple comes and builds a nest to raise their young, and how wonderful it is to be a part of watching this miracle of nature right on my patio as I take my daily moments to be with God.  Thank you, God for creating for us the life-giving season of spring!

Folks there is another life lifting event that happens in the spring and this event also bring with it joy, anticipation and renewal.  We are also walking through the Lenten season.  Did you know that Lent is a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday? The English word Lent comes from the Anglo–Saxon word lencten, which means “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring. Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. But I want you to remember, Lent is not a time to beat yourself up. You see, Lent gives us an opportunity for greater intimacy with God. Rest assured that God’s love and our salvation are not reliant on denying ourselves simply pleasures, but observing Lenten practices does give us a clearer vision to the fact that idolatry of any a form stands in the way of worshiping the one true God.

Friends, these 40 days are set aside to praise and worship the Lord; to read the Bible more, and to pray more often. Christians who observe Lent correctly anticipate deeper intimacy with the Lord, which is the blessing.  So, be sure to check your motives for observing Lent. The intent of a Lenten observance is to recognize our need for repentance for it is written in 1 John 1:9. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

So I encourage you this beautiful Lenten season to make opportunity and time to draw closer to God, and to prepare your heart for the celebration of Easter.

Lastly,  I will leave you with this Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian:  “O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of laziness, faint-heartedness, desire for power, and idle talk. But give your servant the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors and not to unjustly or hastily judge my brother, for you are blessed, now and forever. Amen.”