

Parish and Home

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CALENDAR FOR MARCH.

- 1.—1st Sunday in Lent. *Morning*—Gen. xix., 12 to 30; Mark vi., 14 to 30. *Evening*—Gen. xxii. to 29; or xxiii.; Rom. xiii.
11.—2nd Sunday in Lent. *Morning*—Gen. xxvii. to 41; Mark x. to 32. *Evening*—Gen. xxviii or xxix.; 1 Cor. iv., to 18.
18.—3rd Sunday in Lent. *Morning*—Gen. xxxvii.; Mark xiv. to 27. *Evening*—Gen. xxxix. or xl.; 1 Cor. x. and xi. 1.
25.—4th Sunday in Lent. *Morning*—Gen. xli.; Luke i., 46. *Evening*—Gen. xliii. or xlv.; 1 Cor. xv., to 35.

LENT.

Is this a fast to keep
The larger lean
And clean
From fat of neats and sheep?
Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet, still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragged go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour?
No. 'Tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto a hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate;
To circumcise thy life;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

—Robert Herrick, 1648.

The season of Lent is here once again with its invitation to abstinence and self-denial in the service of the King.

Our beloved Church does not lay down hard and fast rules for the observance of this season, but general principles, leaving to the individual member to apply those principles as he believes God would have him do.

God does not say remember especially to keep the season of Lent holy, as he does say "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" but he tells us that it is good to come apart with him, and

that if we draw nigh to God, God will draw nigh to us.

Let us make a right use of this season of our Church, let us come apart from the rush and turmoil and hurry of life and hold real and deep communion with our Saviour Christ. Let us spend more time in prayer, and tell all our needs and desires to our Father in heaven who is interested in our every welfare.

Let us study his word so diligently that we will get to love it more and more, and know that "man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Let us practise some self-denial that we may help others, and do more to extend the kingdom of God's dear Son.

A Lent properly spent under the guidance of God's holy spirit may do much to strengthen our faith, deepen our interest in the Church's work and make us more valiant soldiers of the King for the future. Surely there is need for God's people to pray, "Search me O God! and try me and see if there be any wicked ways in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

To the stranger, or first-time visitor, the service of our Church always seems strange and difficult to follow; yet as they get to know and understand it they almost invariably appreciate its beauty, depth and purity.

This is one reason why Church people should be careful to show every attention to visitors, giving a prayer-book, or, better still, letting them look on with them, taking occasion, at home, to show friends who are not familiar with our Book of Common Prayer how easy it is to find the places, and in every way showing the beauty of our service.

We should be especially thoughtful and courteous in our treatment of strangers, and yet in how many

places people utterly ignore their duty in this matter. How frequently we hear it said that congregations are cold, reserved, distant. "No one ever speaks to you, or shows any courtesy. You know as little of the people at the end of six months as you did when you first went."

While sometimes it is easy to find fault and grumble, yet let us remember that love begets love, and kindness leads on to kindness, and God would never have us forget to show thoughtful kindness, and with a warm welcome do to others as we would they should do unto us.

While the Lord Jesus drove the money changers and sellers of doves from the temple, He healed the sick therein, and spoke encouraging words of the poor widow's gift as He entered, and showed love to God and love to His fellow man.

While we make God's house a house of prayer, let us also make others realize that it is a good place to go, so that they may say with the Psalmist: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Let us make the stranger feel at home, and encourage all who come to join with us in the worship of our God.

Rev. H. Symonds, who contributes an article to this number of PARISH AND HOME, has recently published a book on the subject of "Christian Unity," which consists of six lectures entitled, "The Movement Towards Unity," "The Goal of the Christian Church," "What is Christian Unity?" "The Historic Episcopate," "The Church of England and the Historic Episcopate," "The Relation between Civil and Ecclesiastical Policy." William Briggs, of Toronto, is the publisher, and the price is 75c.