

Love Life Live Lent in an outer London parish

I started as a curate in my church in summer 07, so by Lent 08 I felt brave enough to suggest a brand new thing for Lent.

I wanted to do something at Lent which would involve everyone – children, teenagers, mums, dads, busy professionals, older retired folk, people who love being super spiritual during Lent and people who've never given Lent a second thought.

Love Life Live Lent is a perfect way to grab the attention of a huge sector of your congregation. It is a very simple idea to get across and has the added benefit of being cheap. No one objected to paying £1 for a lovely colour booklet – in fact most people loved having their very own book. Lots of families really enjoyed going through the tasks as a family and yet it's also designed for individuals, so whatever your age or domestic situation you can have a go. *Love Life Live Lent* looks like a lot of fun and it really is fun in practice. The activities are for the most part easy to fit into your daily routine – and yet the real beauty is the sense of achievement and spiritual growth that *Love Life Live Lent* brings about. *Love Life Live Lent* may seem lightweight on the surface but it really packs a punch. It's all about transforming the world around you – but the major thing that gets transformed is YOU and your attitude towards God and other people.

Its fun attitude attracts everyone to take part, but actually the underlying message means that everyone is engaging with Lent at a deeper, more spiritual level.

How we did it

We had one launch in the family service just before Ash Wednesday and one launch at the school during assembly. At the end adults and children shared stories of which task they'd enjoyed the most. A little boy in year 4 told me that his favourite activity was sitting in silence. I asked him what he'd learnt from that activity, to which he replied: "I learnt that the world is not just about me and what I want, but about the needs of everyone."

Real highlights for me were:

- A sense that about 80% of the congregation were taking part, rather than a dozen or so in a special 'Lent Group'
- The fact that it's truly an all-age resource where everyone feels valued and stimulated
- The posters were so attractive that people outside the church asked for one
- We easily involved all kinds of groups: Brownies, Sunday School, Guides, the primary school next door, Bible study group

- Parents came up to me and said how delighted they were with the booklet and the values it was trying to promote

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