

Tony Thinking Aloud xciv

The question is – are you ready for Pancake Day? It seems to have changed in importance over the years. My mother always made them for dinner – that was a midday meal. If there was any leftover, we could have some more at tea time!

Today lots of folk will buy the Pancake Mix at the supermarket or readymade pancakes to warm up! How things have changed... but not everything, the basic reason is the same.

Pancake Day = Shrove Tuesday – the last day before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time of penitence leading up to Easter. Shrove is making an act of penitence before Lent. Meals in Lent were frugal. No eggs, the reason for the pancakes on Shrove Tuesday is to use up all the eggs. All meat should be finished on the day before, Collop Monday.

In many places on the continent and South America especially, where there is a more catholic tradition, there are still lots of celebrations leading up to Lent which have to stop at Midnight on Shrove Tuesday. Lichfield usually has a Shrove Time Fair in the Market Place. This year Barton is going to experience some of this 'Mardi Gras' during the last part of Shrove Tuesday. (Look out for information, events *from 4p.m.*)

I need to phone my mate, who does not regularly go to church, but always says to me – What are you doing for Lent this year, what is your Lent Rule? Things you do to make Lent more positive en route for Easter. I guess he will give up biscuits and chocolates etc. Nowadays you could give up watching so much television. Really it should be more positive what do you do with your extra time! I come back to the pandemic; we gave up time to support others.

We could do something in Lent more focused on the needs of each other. We can be aware of others in prayers, especially with the present conflict. Have a good Lent learning to focus not only on our own needs but others too!

Ps When I was at college, we had to hand in our Lent Rule to our Chaplain for inspection by Shrove Tuesday!!!