

Kids Church - The Temptation of Jesus in the Desert

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. The word 'Lent' comes from an Old English word meaning, 'spring season' and it is from this word that we also get 'lengthen,' as the days grow longer.

Starting on Ash Wednesday and ending on Holy Thursday, Lent is a joyful journey of forty days towards Easter. In Lent we are encouraged to focus on re-conversion and re-commitment to our baptismal promises in following Jesus. Three main activities of Lent have traditionally been prayer, fasting and almsgiving to help us grow closer to God in preparation for the Easter mysteries.

Rov Claveria

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

At once the Spirit made [Jesus] go into the desert, where he stayed forty days, being tempted by Satan. Wild animals were there also, but angels came and helped him. After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. "The right time has come," he said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- What happened to Jesus in the desert? What type of things might have tempted him? What type of things tempt children your age today?
- What did Jesus tell the people when he returned to Galilee?
- What does it mean to repent? How can we change our lives to be closer to God?
- Why is God's Kingdom 'Good News?'

In the desert, Jesus had the chance to prepare for doing the very important work that we know about from the gospels. We have the chance to use this time now to prepare to celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection.

Sometimes we focus too much on 'giving something up' for Lent, and not on the fact that if we have given something up, it should be so that we have more 'space' for God in our hearts.

Food or fame or anything else are not bad things in themselves, as all good things come from God. However, if we start to treat those things as if they are more important than God, they become sinful for us.

- Ask the children how you can you grow and closer to God? (e.g., pray, be kind to others, ask someone to join in playing with them, help their mum and dad, etc.),

- Ask the children how you cannot be close to God?
- As you gather as a family, talk about the importance of Baptism. At our Baptism, our sins were forgiven, and we promised to live as children of God. As part of the Rite of Baptism, we rejected sin and Satan. During Lent, we renew the promises of our Baptism, turning again from sin and promising to follow God. Light a candle, perhaps a candle used at one of your family member's Baptisms, and pray together the Act of Contrition.

Activity - "Lenten Reminder Decoration"

You will need:

- Scissors
- Paper
- Paper plates
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue and/or tape
- Sticks

Procedure:

1. Use markers and/or cut pieces of paper to mark themes of Lent on the paper plate ("prayer, Jesus, thought, Scripture, service, fasting, sacrifice", etc).
2. Place a circle or heart and a cross in the center of the paper plate, or use sticks to form the shape of a cross.
3. Add extra decorations, verses, or color as desired.
4. If you would like to hang the craft, attach a string or pipe cleaner to the back side. 5. Hang your Lenten reminder in a spot you are likely to see often. Remember to pray!

