

St. Joseph's *Children's Liturgy of the Word*

February 2024 (Year B)



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St. Joseph is the patron saint of the family, and the family is the “domestic Church.” These sheets were originally developed to support my parish of St. Joseph in Great Malvern, Worcestershire, but they are now used by parishes and schools not just in the UK, but some are sent to contacts abroad as well. As always, feedback and suggestions are most welcome.



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The Call of St. Peter from the Vatican museums. Before Lent starts, we hear Jesus calling His first Apostles – the Call He makes to them, He also makes to us. Are we ready to respond?

Sunday Mass is the cornerstone of our week; These resources are designed to be used in a family setting or in Children's Liturgy of the Word at Mass, or in the classroom. Please make them your own and feel free to pass them on for free.

Almost Lent!

It seems as if we have only just got going in ordinary time, and its Lent! Rather than just send out two weeks for February, I have covered the whole of February in this edition but will also send out the Lent edition shortly with the same first two weeks. The last two weeks of Ordinary time see Jesus very busy going from place to place, teaching, healing and praying. On 4th February Jesus' activity reflects all four Dimensions of Faith and this is a moment to think about the fact that our faith is indeed four dimensional and Jesus speaks to us in each of these different dimensions. I have included a Children's Liturgy of the Word for Ash Wednesday in case its of use in the school or home and at the end of the booklet are some Lent suggestions. On the first Sunday in Lent there is a suggestion to make a model of Jesus praying in the desert. If this is done, prayers on sticks could be added to the model during Lent and then possibly turn it into an Easter Garden later on. Please do share any photos if you do this.

There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.

Professing the faith (speaking about it and learning the faith)

Celebrating our faith in the liturgy and the sacraments

Jesus above St. Peter's Rome, pointing to heaven. © C A Harnett 2022.



Living the faith in Christ (making choices by the grace of Jesus Christ)

A prayer-filled life where the Our Father takes centre stage

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 5th Sunday Year B

4th February 2024

Gospel

Mark 1:29-39

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them.

That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you.' He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came.' And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

Q: Jesus is very busy in this Gospel reading. What are all Jesus' different actions in this week's Gospel? (A: *Went* to Simon and Andrew's house; *helped* Simon's Mother in law up, that means He *healed* her, *cured* people, *cast out* devils; *left* the house to *pray* in a lonely place; *said* that they needed to *go elsewhere* and *preach...*).

Q: We can sum up Jesus' activities as preaching, healing, going and praying.

Q: These reflect the Four Dimensions of our Faith, which are; Speaking (and learning) about Jesus, coming to Mass (and the other sacraments) Living our faith and praying. Which of these actions match which dimension? (A: Preaching = speaking/learning about the faith; Healing = the Liturgy and the sacraments (Mass); Going = living the faith, that is making sure that everyone is OK; Praying = praying.)

Q: Let's think about when Jesus does these things: Can you tell me some of the times when Jesus taught people? (A: Open, e.g. Sermon on the mount, parables, teaching in the Temple....anything that He said....)

Q:How can we listen to Jesus teaching us? (A: By reading the Bible/doing these activities)

Q: Who did Jesus heal? (A: Simon's mother-in-Law and many others were cured.)

Q: Jesus heals us when we say sorry to Him for our sins. When do we do that? (A: Beginning of Mass when we say the I confess and Sacrament of Reconciliation.) *Note, it may be necessary to add that He heals our souls and our broken relationships etc.*

Q: Why didn't Jesus want to stay in the one place for long? (A: Because other people needed to hear His message)

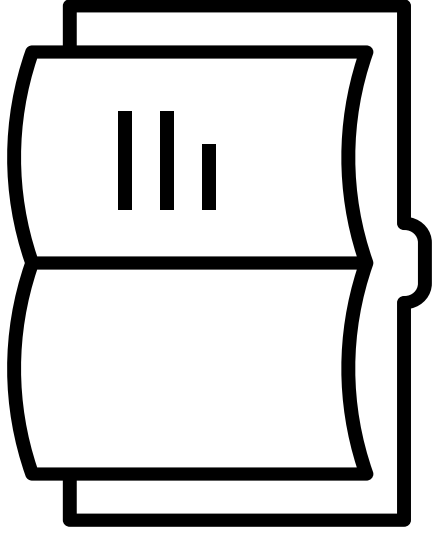
Q: When did Jesus pray? (A: Very early in the morning/in the middle of the night.)

Q: Why did Jesus pray? (A: Various; to get strength from His Father/the Holy Spirit).

Q: When can we pray more? (A: Open-ended answer.)

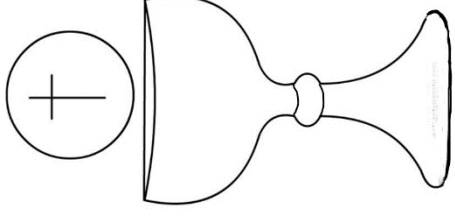
Jesus works in me in all four dimensions of my faith

Jesus teaches me in the Bible



Jesus says: _____

Jesus heals me at Mass



Jesus says: _____

**Jesus helps me to be
kind to people wherever
I am**



Jesus says: _____

Jesus prays with me when I pray



Jesus says: _____

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 6th Sunday Year B

11th February 2024

Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Discussion on the Gospel

Q: Who came to Jesus? (A: A Leper)

Q: who or what or is a leper? (A: Someone who has a very bad skin disease that is very catching.)

Q: What does the leper ask Jesus? (A: To cure [heal] him.)

Q: What was Jesus' response? (A: Of course, He wanted to.)

Q: After the man was healed, Jesus told him something very sternly. What did Jesus say? (A: Don't tell anyone but go and show himself to the priest.)

Q: In those days if you had a skin disease you were not allowed to go to the synagogue or temple and had to self-isolate. Only a priest could declare you were well and if you were better, then you had to make an offering to God to say thank you to God. who here has been ill? (A: Open.)

Q: What could you say to God when you are better? (A: Open, e.g. Thank you.)

Q: What did the leper do after he was cured? (A: He told everyone about his cure....)

Q: Why do you think he disobeyed Jesus and did that? (A: He was so excited and pleased to be well again.)

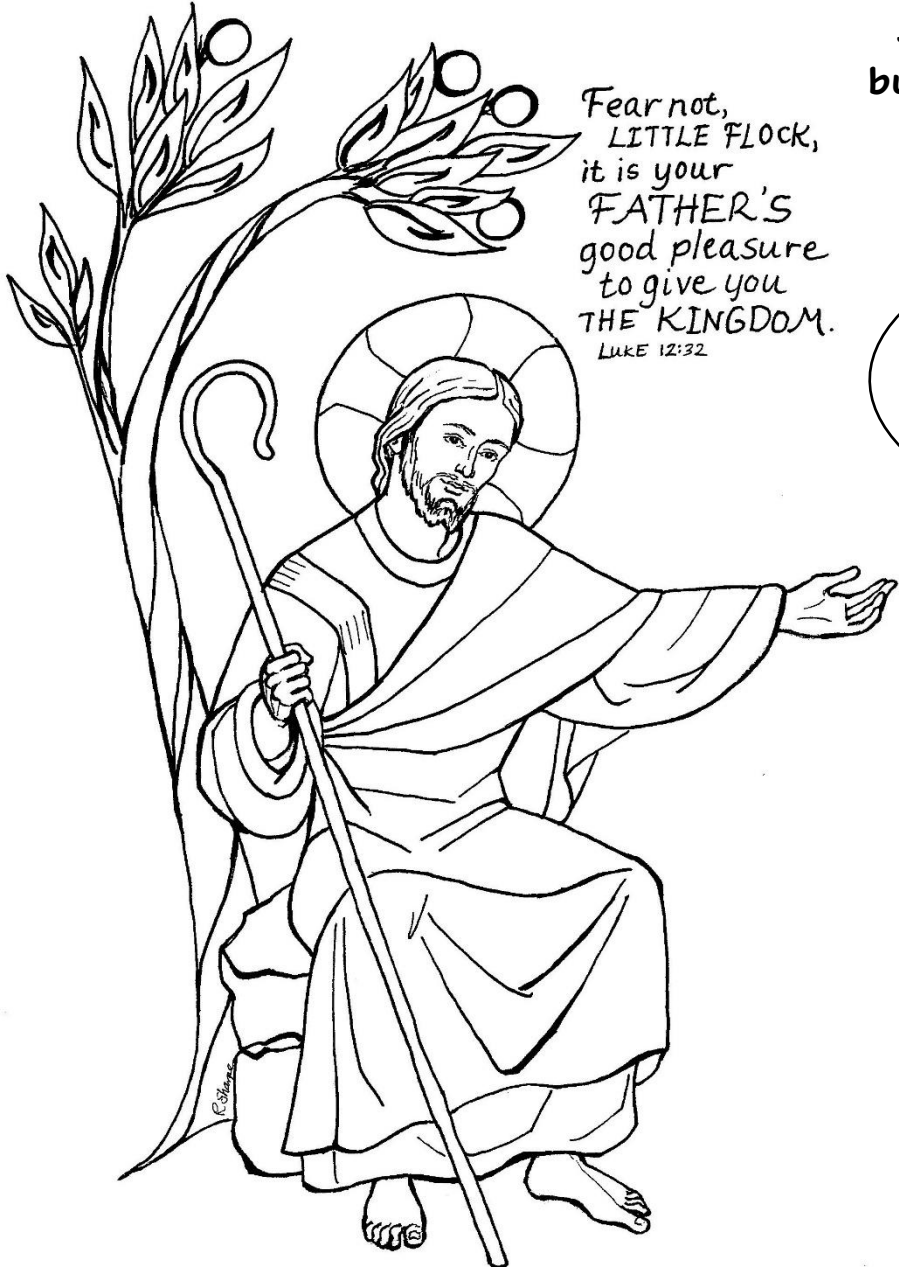
Q: What did Jesus have to do because the man told everyone? (A: He couldn't go into the town and had to stay in the countryside.)

Q: What did the people do because Jesus was not in the towns? (A: Went out to look for Him.)

Q Why do you think that they did this? (A: Open.... E.g.: They wanted to be healed, to hear Him teach.)

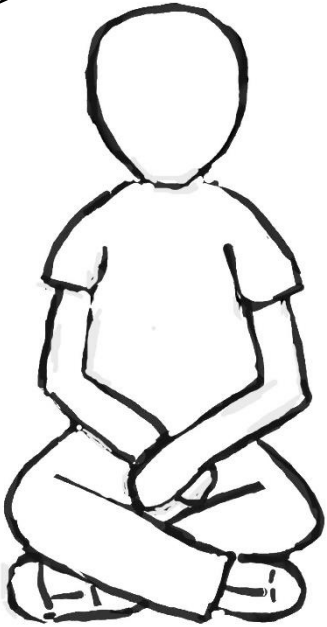
Q: Where can we find Jesus today? (A: Open – Mass, reading the Bible in our times of prayer....)

Make this child look like yourself listening to Jesus or asking Him some questions. In the bubble, write what you ask Him, or what He is saying to you.



Fear not,
LITTLE FLOCK,
it is your
FATHER'S
good pleasure
to give you
THE KINGDOM.
LUKE 12:32

Picture © Roseanne Sharpe 2021.



Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for Ash Wednesday

Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: ***Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ***

Discussion on the Gospel for Ash Wednesday

So often the first thing that people refer to in Lent is "giving up" something, whether that is cakes, sweets, sugar, the TV.... But let's look carefully at what Jesus is asking us to do:

Q: What does Jesus mean by "good deeds"? (A. Nice, kind things we do for other people.)

Q: What does Jesus mean by "giving alms"? (A. Giving money or things to people that need it.)

Q: What does Jesus mean when He says that our left and right hands must not know what they are doing? (A: We give in private, or in secret, without telling people! [Obviously children need to check with their parents before they start giving things away!])

Q: How can we give of our time to other people in secret? (A: We can do some helping at home or in school without being asked and without boasting about it, we can put a bit of our pocket money in a charity box without boasting....)

Q: What was Jesus' second instruction? (A: To pray in secret)

Q: How can we pray in secret? (A: Open, but suggestions are, to say a prayer in bed as soon as we wake up, or when we go to bed as we go to sleep, to go and spend a few moments away from everyone else to pray the "Hail Mary" or may be to decide to pray a decade of the Rosary each day. We can pray silently when we are in the car or walking to school.)

Q: And finally, what was Jesus' third instruction? (A: To fast without being gloomy.)

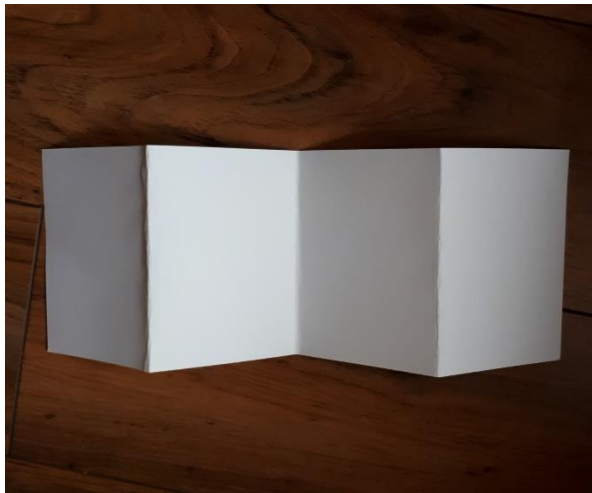
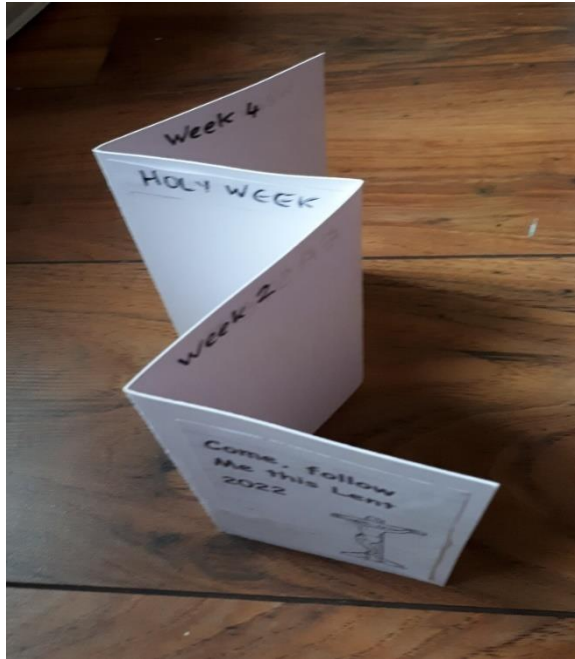
Q: What is "fasting"? (A. It means going without something.)

Q: Apart from the usual "giving up" of sweets etc how can we fast this Lent. What can we do without? (A: Open, suggestions are to have a "devise free evening" etc.)

Q: To sum up, what are the three actions Jesus asks us to do in Lent? (A: Giving alms/doing good deeds; prayer in secret; fasting)

Let us ask our Heavenly Father to help us to decide how we can discipline ourselves this Lent and for the grace to stick to our Lenten resolutions. Our Father

Make a Lenten booklet to help you pray, be generous and fast this Lent.



On the next Page are labels you can cut out, (or draw and write your own).

1. Begin with a piece of A3 Paper or card (or Sellotape two pieces of A4 together.) Fold in half lengthwise and cut along the fold so that you have a long rectangular page.
2. Fold this in half so that the short ends meet and then fold each of the short ends backwards to make a zig-zag.
3. Stand your zigzag upright so that the front is like a book with the opening on the right.
4. Stick the cover page (below) on the front.
5. Open the booklet and write "Week 1" "Week 2" etc on each of the folds as in the picture.
6. Don't write "Week 6" but write "Holy Week" on the 6th page, and on the 7th Page write Easter!
7. Each of the quotes in text boxes on the next page are adapted from the entrance antiphon for Mass each Sunday of Lent. These in turn mostly come from the Psalms (if you have a missal, you can see the references beside the antiphons).
8. Stick the quotes from the next page under the label for each week.

Help and encourage the children* to use the booklet all the way through Lent to record their thoughts and how they have been able to follow Jesus by giving, praying, and fasting.

* Children? ... we are all children of God so this activity can be used by children from aged 5-500!

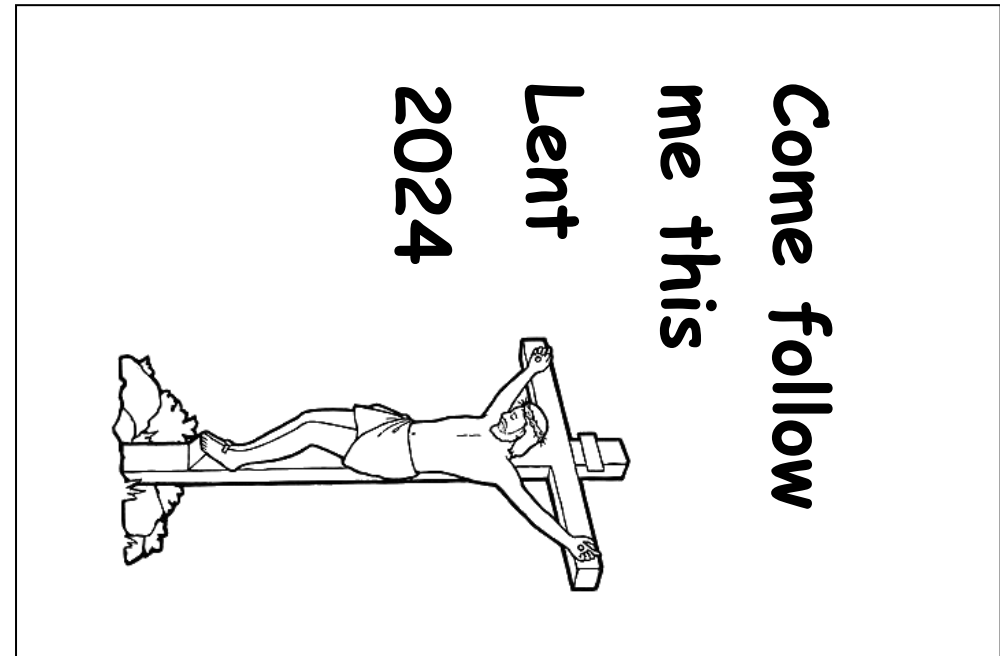
1. Jesus says, "When you call on me, I will answer you. I will deliver you and give you glory, and I will grant you length of days.

2. Of you dear Jesus, my heart has spoken,
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
Do not hide your face from me.

3. My eyes are always on you O Lord,
for you rescue me.
Turn to me and have mercy on me,
for I am alone and poor without you.

4. Rejoice,
Be joyful, all who were sad.

5. Give me justice, O God,
and plead my cause against faithless people.
Rescue me from those who lie and try to
trick me, for you, O God, are my strength.



Holy Week: (Palm Sunday)
The children ran to meet Jesus;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:
Hosanna in the highest!

Easter: The Lord is truly risen, alleluia.
To him be glory and power
for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 1st Sunday of Lent Year B

18th February 2024

Mark 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

The Gospel of the Lord:

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

In Mark's Gospel we don't hear the details of how Jesus was tempted, but we rush straight on from the desert to the beginning of His ministry. We can pause and discuss what the temptations were (drawing on their knowledge).

Q: Where did Jesus go? (A: The desert/wilderness)

Q: Why do you think He went there? (A: To pray, to spend time with His heavenly Father to work out exactly what His ministry was going to be...)

Q: How long did Jesus go there for? (A: 40 days.)

Q: How long is Lent? (A: It's 40 days if you don't count the Sundays – try counting it on a calendar!)

Q: What does it mean to be tempted? (A: To have the idea of doing something wrong.)

Q: Is it a sin be tempted? (A: No.)

Q: In other Gospels we learn that Jesus was tempted to turn a stone into bread [Jesus was hungry] Jump from the top of the Temple [so spectacular miracles to grab people's attention] and to worship the devil and become a really powerful earthly ruler. What sort of things are we tempted to do? (A: Various)

Q: When we are tempted, what can we do and say to stay strong and not give in? (A: Open but suggestions are: In Matthew's Gospel Jesus says to Satan, "Begone Satan!". We can also make the Sign of the Cross.)

Q: Jesus begins His public proclamation by saying "Repent and believe the Good News". What is the Good News? (A: Various – that Jesus has come to save us/ restore us to His Father/that He will forgive us our sins.)

There are two suggested activities below – one is to fill in the sheet and the other is to make a model of Jesus praying in the desert. This could be changed into an Easter Garden at the end of Lent.

Fill a shallow tray with sand or soil. Add some stones and a few "wild animals" (plastic toys would work, or draw them on card and cut them out, sticking them in the sand)

Colour in and cut out the picture of Jesus praying and the angels and place them in the tray. You could put prayers around the scene each week, asking Jesus to give us the grace to repent and believe.

Repent and believe
the Good News!

Jesus Christ has come to
show us His Father and
send us His Holy Spirit!



Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 2nd Sunday of Lent Year B 25th February 2024

Mark 9:2-10

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter spoke to Jesus: 'Rabbi,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.' Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

The Gospel of the Lord:

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel

Every year we hear the Gospel of the transfiguration on the second Sunday of Lent. Each of the different evangelists give us a slightly different picture of this event and it only in Luke that we hear about what Jesus, Moses and Elijah were discussing. Elijah represents the prophets and Moses the Law, two of the three divisions of the Jewish Bible. The third is the writings, which include the Psalms.)

Q: Where did Jesus take Peter, James and John? (A: Up a high mountain)

Q: Why do you think He went there? (A: To pray, to spend time with His heavenly Father)

Q: What happened to Jesus? (A: He was transfigured.... And may be the rest of the story could be recounted)

Q: What does "transfigured" mean? (A: Jesus was suddenly visible in all His heavenly glory)

Q: Who appeared with Jesus? (A: Moses and Elijah)

If needed you can explain that both Moses and Elijah also had mountain-top experiences of the presence of God, (Moses when he received the Ten Commandments [Exodus 19:16-24]) and Elijah on Mount Horeb [I Kings 9:9-18]) and also Moses represents the Law and Elijah the Prophets.

Q: What did the Father say? (A: "This is my Son, the beloved, Listen to Him").

Q: Who was the Father speaking to? (A: The Apostles and through them, to us.)

Q: How can we listen to Jesus? (A: Listen to Him in the Gospel, in our prayers.....)

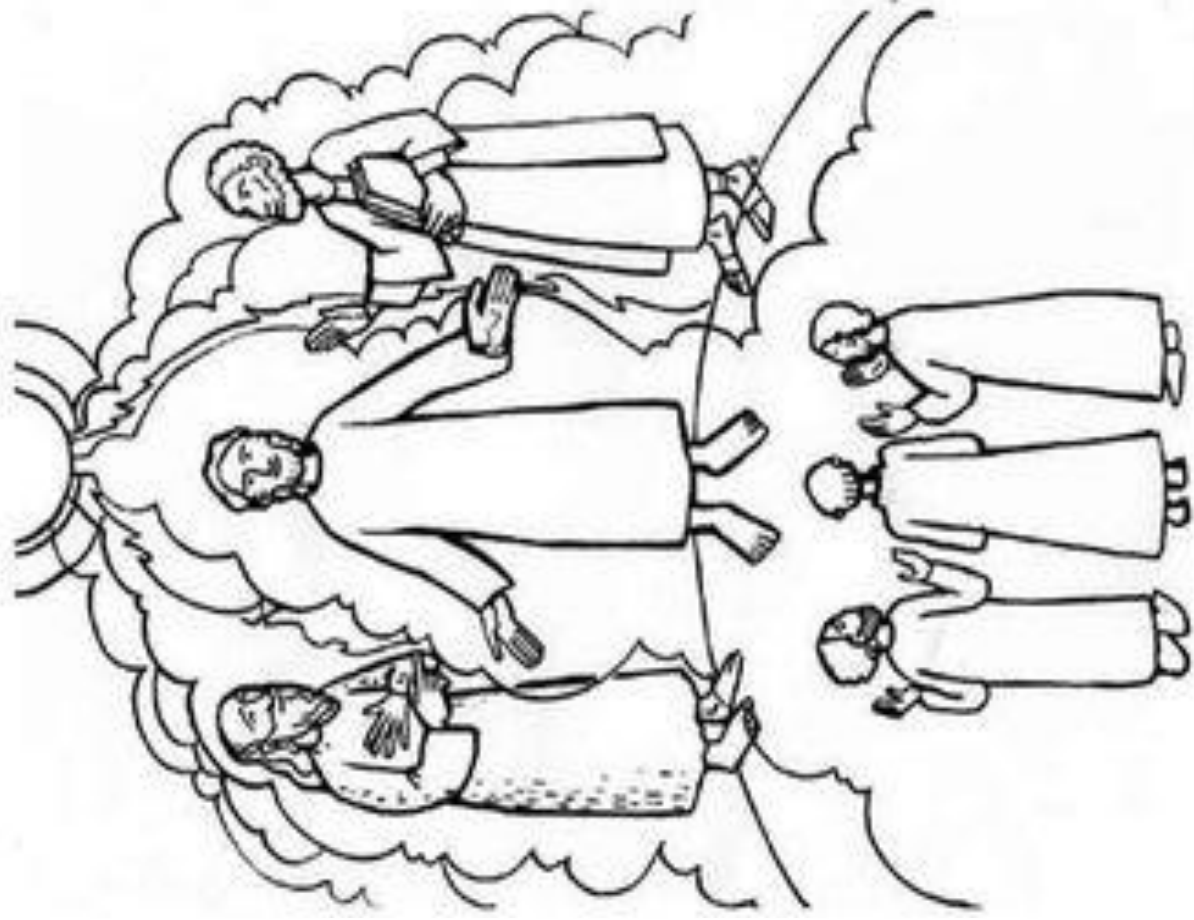
Q: At the end, Jesus tells the Apostles not to say anything until after He had risen from the dead. The Apostles didn't know what Jesus meant, but we do, what did Jesus mean? (A: That He would rise from the dead after His crucifixion)

Q: When do we celebrate Jesus' death on the Cross? (A: Good Friday (older children may add, every Mass.)

Q: When do we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection? (A: Easter Sunday and every Mass.)

Q: What was it again that the Father told us to do? (A: To listen to Jesus.)

This is my Son, the Beloved



Listen to Him

Some Lent Activities

Fasting = Giving up something for Lent

Why do we fast? Why do we do without something that we like? We do it because it helps us to be self-disciplined and to say to Jesus, "I love you more than this biscuit/ cake/ chocolate/ video game...."

If 6 weeks is too long to "give up" something, may be choose something different each week? E.g. one week, give up snacks between meals and the next limit playing video games to just one hour a day, and the next week you can choose something else. The point is that whatever you do, you do it for Jesus because He gave up everything for you and me. Jesus gave up His life so that we can go to heaven and be with his Father for all eternity. What can we give up for just one day (at a time)?

Learn the Apostles Creed by heart

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Apostles Creed rose out of the baptismal promises made by new Christians in Rome in the very early Church. They had to publicly claim faith in God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Q: How is God the Father described? (A: Creator....)

Q: Who is Jesus described as? (A: Son of the Father, our Lord [Lord is a title for God])

Q: What was Jesus' suffering? (A: His crucifixion is mentioned but you could discuss the fact that He was mocked, beaten, whipped, wore a crown of thorns, etc)

Q: Which lines recount what we commemorate in Holy Week and Easter? (A: Suffered...rose from the dead)

Q: From where will Jesus come to judge us? (A: the right hand of the Father in Heaven.)

Q: In the Bible there are lots of symbols of the Holy Spirit, e.g. cloud, water, fire, dove. Which symbol of the Holy Spirit was used in the Gospel account of the Transfiguration? (A: The Cloud that covered Jesus before the voice of the Father was heard.)

Q: Who forgives our sins? (A: The Father does through Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. In confession, when the priest says "I absolve you" He is speaking for Jesus, so the work of forgiving is Jesus' work, not the priest's)

Pray the Apostles Creed slowly together and may be work on learning a few lines together each day.

Here are some Lent questions. The answers are all in the word bank here

1. Where did Jesus go to pray after His Baptism?
2. Who tempted Jesus when He was in this place?
3. Who looked after Jesus when He was in this place?
4. What was Jesus tempted to turn a stone into?
5. What actions of ours offend God?
6. On what day of the week did Jesus die?
7. As well as giving up something and helping people, what else are we asked to do more of in Lent?
8. How many Days are there in Lent?
9. On what day do we celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead?
10. What is the Sunday before Easter called?
11. What is the word for giving up something that we like?
12. What is the Prayer that Jesus taught us?

Word Bank

Our Father, Desert, Satan, Bread, Angels, Praying, Forty, Friday, Sins, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Fasting,

Stations of the Cross:

Reflecting on the stations of the Cross can help us to enter more deeply into what Lent is all about. It does not have to be morbid or gloomy, and children can express their real sense of injustice in their simple words and drawings. There are various things you can do to help children to reflect on Jesus' last hours. E.g., take them to see the stations of the Cross in a church there and talk about them. Invite them to say ad-hoc prayers. May be later to draw pictures of some of the stations. Over Lent, you can build up a collection of pictures and reflections which you can draw on and develop over the years. These are the titles of the stations in order:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Jesus is condemned to death, | (9) Jesus falls the third time |
| (2) Jesus carries his cross | (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments |
| (3) Jesus falls the first time | (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross |
| (4) Jesus meets his mother | (12) Jesus dies on the cross |
| (5) Simon of Cyrene helps to carry Jesus' cross | (13) Jesus is taken down from the cross |
| (6) Veronica wipes Jesus' face | (14) Jesus is placed in the tomb |
| (7) Jesus falls the second time | (15) Jesus rises on Easter Sunday morning |
| (8) The women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus, | |

