

Week 2: 'Repentance'

(1st Sunday in Lent, Year A - Sunday 13th February 2005)

FOCUS FOR THE LEADER:

As followers of Jesus, we have much for which to repent – our separation from one another, our arrogance towards those with different beliefs, our lack of concern for poor nations, racism in our congregations and among Christians, disregard for injustice toward women and the marginalized. We admit our sinfulness and ask for God's mercy. We need forgiveness ourselves and we offer forgiveness to others.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:1-11

In this week's Gospel, we hear about how Jesus fasted for forty days and the tempter came.

Gospel Acclamation 2 for Lent Martin Foster



Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, Word of God.

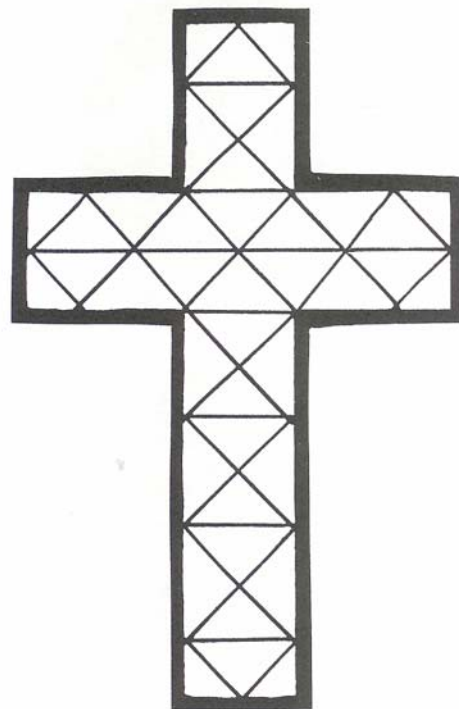
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At Your Word, Lord programme

Breaking open the Gospel:

- Ask the children if they have ever been tempted by anything? Perhaps some visitors were invited and there were some special cakes or biscuits baked or bought and they were told not to touch them. Remind them just how good these biscuits looked and ask them if they thought no-one would notice if just one biscuit or just one cake went missing.
- In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus was tempted by Satan. He was tempted with food when he was hungry and then with taking a big chance to jump off the top of the temple – expecting the angels to take care of him. Then, he was tempted the third time; Satan said he would give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus refuses the temptations three times; he tells Satan to leave him alone and says that "You must worship only God and serve no one else."
- This is a very visual Gospel. Do a role-play, a mime or a drama. Consider stopping after each temptation and asking the children what they think. After the first temptation, ask the children if they think the food we eat comes from God, if all our foods are gifts of God. After the second temptation, ask the children how important

money and power is. Jesus warns us that we can't think they are more important than God, doesn't he? And, finally, after the third temptation, ask them if they are sometimes tempted to have more than they have and more than they need. Ask them if they sometimes think their possessions are more important than their friends.

- Consider giving the children a Lenten cross on an A5 card with 40 triangular shapes on it – one for each day of Lent. At the end of each day, suggest that they colour in one triangle or write or draw something in the triangle to describe what they have done to grow more like Jesus. Tell them that this is what Lent is about. If they were tempted and did not behave like Jesus, they might think about that; they might say sorry and promise to try harder the next day. It is not always easy to overcome temptations.



(Lenten Cross taken from Barbara Hopper's *Handbook for Children's Liturgy*, p. 90. Used with permission.)

A Creed – a series of questions to which the children are invited to reply, "We do."

- Do you believe that God loves us – even when we are tempted and fail?
- Do you believe that Jesus came to tell us he understands that it is difficult to resist temptations but he is there to help us?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to be more like Jesus?
- Do you believe in the Holy, Catholic Church, where we come to learn about God?

Intercessions

Jesus has told us to ask God for what we need, so as God's children, we pray


- for all the people in God's family who look after us. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- for God's beautiful world, so that we look after it with loving care. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- for all those who are hungry or sad, lonely or sick. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*
- for all those who live in our parish and need our prayers. *Response: Lord, hear our prayer.*

Loving Father, we ask you to listen to these prayers in the name of Jesus, our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Gospel Acclamation 2 for Lent Martin Foster



Praise to you, Lord Je - sus Christ, Son of the Fa - ther, Word of God.

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GOSPEL: Matthew 4:1-11

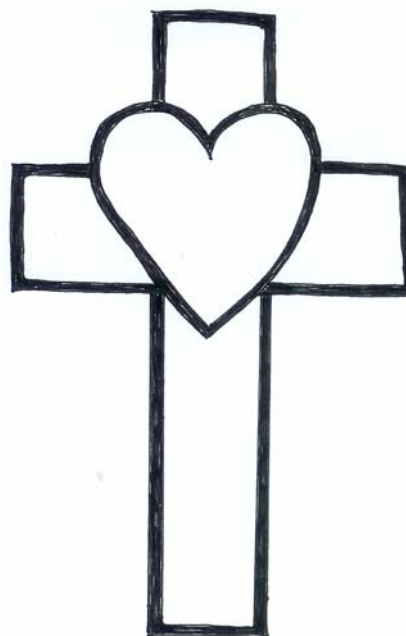
In this week's Gospel, we hear about how Jesus fasted for forty days and the tempter came.

Breaking open the Gospel:

- Ask the children if they have ever been tempted by anything? Perhaps some visitors were invited and there were some special cakes or biscuits baked or bought and they were told not to touch them. Remind them just how good these biscuits looked and ask them if they thought no-one would notice if just one biscuit or just one cake went missing. Ask if they took the biscuit or cake.
- In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus was tempted firstly to make a stone into bread when he was hungry. Secondly, he was tempted to make himself king of many countries; but he chose not to because he knew that God, his father, is the only king. Then, thirdly, he was tempted to jump off a high roof because, surely, if he did, God would save him from being hurt – but he didn't do it because he didn't want to test God's love.
- You might get the children to act out the Gospel. Remind them that we are tempted sometimes too. Tell them that we are tempted not to behave sometimes; we are tempted not to share our toys with others, not to share our sweets. Say we are tempted not to come when we are called. There are all kinds of temptations. We can choose to

be like Jesus – to share with others, to be kind and obedient – or we can choose not to. During Lent, tell the children that we are invited to try to be more and more like Jesus every day.

- Perhaps this Lent, they might make a promise each Sunday and try to keep it all during the week. This week, they will have a cross with a small heart in it. Ask them to write or draw something in the heart that they can promise to do to be more like Jesus. They can take the cross home and it will remind them of their promise. (Each week during Lent, you might give them a similar cross – but each week, the heart can become bigger and bigger until you can hardly see the cross.)



A Creed – a series of questions to which the children are invited to reply, “We do.”

- Do you believe that God loves you very much?
- Do you believe that Jesus came to tell us what God is like?
- Do you believe that we come to church to learn about God?

Intercessions

Jesus has told us to ask God for what we need, so as God's children, we pray.

- for all God's family so that we may share the Good News with everyone. *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*
- for God's beautiful world that we look after it with loving care. *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*
- for all who are hungry or sad, lonely or sick, today we pray for *Lord, in your mercy; hear our prayer.*

Loving Father, we ask you to listen to these prayers in the name of Jesus, our Lord. *Amen.*