

Fourth Sunday of Lent Year C –31st March 2019

Introduction

Today is the fourth Sunday of Lent. (Ask the children if they can tell you what we mean by Lent?) A time of forty days of preparation for Easter, beginning on Ash Wednesday. In Lent we do three things to bring us closer to God, so that we may truly celebrate the joy of Easter. During Lent we **PRAY** more, we **FAST** (give up something we like), and we show love or **CHARITY** to those around us by being generous and sharing and not being selfish. The most important of these three actions is prayer. As we are more than halfway through Lent ask the children about the things they have been doing to prepare for the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

Make the Sign of the Cross – a sign of the love God has for us. (This is optional, as we have already done this at the start of Holy Mass, but for young children it helps to demonstrate and practice how to do this correctly.)

Light the candles on the table next to the Lectionary. An adult lights the candles).

Penitential Act

Ask the children to think about how they have behaved in the past week. Ask them if they have always been kind and helpful to others, obedient to their parents, listened to their teachers etc.

Lead the children in singing the “Sorry Song”.

We are sorry,
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord,
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder, (sung to tune of Frere Jacques)
Forgive us,
Forgive us.

NO Gloria DURING LENT

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing the **Gospel Acclamation:**

Praise to You Lord,
King of glory,
Your Good News,
Is for us.

“The lost has been found,” (same tune as above)
Your love has saved us.
Praise to You Lord,
King of Glory.

Gospel

Select the correct Gospel from the Children’s Lectionary. This week it’s on pages 29-31, Fourth Sunday of Lent, in the Book of Readings. The Lectionary Adapted for Children.” (Year C)

Luke 15:11-32

“A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke”.

Explain and demonstrate – make three crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and one on your heart (in this way we think God’s word, speak God’s word and keep God’s word in our hearts) **as we say together “Glory to You, O Lord.”**

Read the Gospel aloud to the children. At the end say: **“The Gospel of the Lord”**.

All reply: **“Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ”**. Ask everyone to be seated.

Lead a Discussion on the Gospel

Why did the son leave home? (He wanted to go off and enjoy himself and see lots of new places).

How do you think his father felt? (He wanted his son to be happy as he loved him very much. He was sad to see his son go away as he would miss him)

The father never stopped loving his son even when he was not there.

Why did the son return home? What did he say to his father?

When they son wanted to return home what happened? (His father welcomed him with open arms. He forgave him and was overjoyed to see him).

Why do you think Jesus told this story? What does he want us to know? (Just as the Father welcomed home his son, our Father in heaven will always welcome us to when we return to Him).

When we turn away from God, how do you think He feels? (He is sad and wants us to return to Him)

When we return to Him and He shows us His love and forgiveness, how do we feel? (We feel happy and full of joy when we return to Him).

There is a Sacrament that is a special way of returning to God, seeking His forgiveness? Can anyone remember the name given to this Sacrament and what happens? (Discuss with the children the Sacrament of Reconciliation and remind them of the importance of receiving this during Lent if they have received this Sacrament – remembering that some children will be too young).

How can we “return to God Our Father” during Lent?(by choosing to do good things : especially remembering to **pray**, and to **fast by giving up something we like**, and to show **charity** to others by not being selfish and being kind and generous).

Remember - if you're tempted to give up - ask Jesus and Mary His mother and our heavenly mother, to help you to try your best.

Prayers of the Faithful (optional/ time dependent)

You may wish to prepare some of these yourselves or ask the children for their prayers. Here are some suggestions for today:

Lord Jesus, help us to try our best during Lent to come closer to You by **praying** to You - remembering to tell You that we love You, that we are sorry for our faults and also to thank You for all the love that You show us.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: "**Hear our prayer.**"

Lord Jesus, help us to try our best during Lent to **fast** by giving up something that we like and to show **charity** by not being selfish and being kind and generous to others especially those who have less than we have.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: "**Hear our prayer.**"

Closing Prayer

Hail Mary, full of grace.....

Amen.

Now ask for volunteers for the Offertory Procession. After the procession, children return quietly to sit with their families in church.