

Children's Prayer Space

Introducing Lent

Lent is a time for us all to think about our lives and our relationship with God. During Lent, we take the time to think about the plan that God has for each and every one of us. We also think about the ways in which we have not responded to God's love and care for us.

Jesus did the exact same thing when he went into the desert for forty days. He prayed for guidance and protection. Each year during Lent we give up something. During Lent, we challenge ourselves to change something in our daily lives so that we can become as close to God as possible. This Lent, why not take on a challenge that faces all of God's creation – climate change!

Across the world, many young people are affected by climate change every day: they may have no water to drink, or to wash clothes in, or to cook food in; they may have very little to eat because their parents can no longer grow crops as their land is too dry; they might even have had to move away from their homes because of flooding or extreme weather caused by climate change.

This Lent, remember that we are all affected by climate change – but not equally. Here on this island of Ireland, we are more fortunate than many nations in the world, as we are able to cope with most changes in our environment. But children and families in places where Trócaire works, such as Honduras, Kenya and Pakistan, are not as fortunate as us. Let's remember them this Lent.

Ideas for School Assembly

- As you explore each passage of the scripture with your class, allow for discussion and questioning.
- Hold a school assembly before you finish up for the Easter break. Use the Children's liturgies below in your assembly.
- Introduce Carla from Honduras and tell her story.
- Explain why our climate is changing and how it is affecting Carla in Honduras.
- Sing the song 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' found at the back of this resource.
- Lead the group in prayer.

Ideas for Children's Liturgies in Parish

In Preparation

Each child is asked to draw the flag of Honduras, leaving one side of the page blank.

Gather around a prepared sacred space. (You could use a table covered with a cloth. Place the Bible with the crucifix and the statue of Mary along with the globe, candle and the holy water on the table.)

Call To Prayer

(Ring the bell to begin the liturgy.)

All: In the name of the Father ...

Leader: Dear Jesus, we gather as a community of people to pray for the people of Honduras and for all people suffering from extreme climate change in our earthly home. We ask you to gift us the courage to show your care and kindness to our earthly home.

Leader: We listen to a personal story of climate change from Honduras. We ask everyone to listen to the story as if we were there.

Reader 1: Carla lives on a sandbar in the Omoa district, close to the border with Guatemala. Climate change is causing the sea level to rise and the beach to erode. Her community is at risk of losing their home. The soil is now salty, so they can't grow rice and vegetables. Some 170 families have been relocated, but 80 families are still stranded. Hurricane season is from May to November. Carla's house is often flooded and damaged during hurricane season. Sometimes her family has to evacuate for days at a time.

Reflection

Leader: Ask everyone about how they feel about this story? What do they think about it?

(Here, a song may be sung.)

(Ring the bell for all to stand)

Gospel

You are the Salt, you are the Light (Matthew 5:12–16)

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and

put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (*The Gospel story may be repeated in different languages, if readers are available.*)

Action: On the back of their flags ask the children to write a prayer (2nd, 3rd & 4th classes) and/or to commit to an eco-action on their flag (5th & 6th classes).

Prayers of the Faithful

Choose some prayers from the children's own flags and ask different people to read them or use the following prayers.

Leader: Lord, let us keep and treasure all that you have given us as we pray the Our Father.

Our Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Your name ...

Concluding Prayer

Let us leave here to care for the earth. Amen.

In the name of the Father ...

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it,
The world, and all who live in it'.

(Psalm 24:1)

Weeks of Lent

Introduction

In this resource we have taken pieces of scripture from the Sunday Gospels in Lent. We invite you to read the scripture, allow some discussion with reflecting questions and ideas for taking action each week.



First Week of Lent



Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights without food, Jesus was hungry.

Activity
1

Activity 1

Being away from everything and everyone can be hard, but sometimes it is important to mind ourselves and take time on our own, like Jesus. For a few moments, we will try to be silent. Listen to what our body is telling us, then what our mind is telling us and now what Jesus is trying to say to us today.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Can you remember the last forty days?
2. Were there any tests or hard times?
3. What can you do over the next forty days to help when the next test comes?

Second Week of Lent



Scripture: Matthew 17:1-9

Jesus took with him Peter and the brothers James and John and led them up a high mountain where they were alone. As they looked on, a change came over Jesus: his face was shining like the sun, and his clothes were dazzlingly white.

Activity
2

Activity 2

Create a short drama in which you are Peter, James and Jesus walking up the high mountain.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Have you ever walked up a mountain when the sun is shining?
2. Who would you take with you if you were going walking?
3. What colours do you see when the sun is rising?

Third Week of Lent



Scripture: John 4:5-42

Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink of water.'

Activity
3

Activity 3

Encourage your school/parish to move away from bottled water. Ask each person to have their own reusable bottle or to use a glass when they need a drink. Could you do this in your school lunch box?

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do you ever think where your water comes from?
2. How much water do you drink?
3. Would you have helped Jesus by giving him some water?

Fourth Week of Lent



Scripture: John 9:1-41

Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud with the spittle; he rubbed the mud on the blind man's eyes and told him, 'Go and wash your face in the Pool.' So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.

Activity
4

Activity 4

In pairs, do a trust walk in the grounds of your school/parish. One person is the guide, while the other is blindfolded. The guide must lead and communicate with their partner to get to the end of their walk. The blindfolded person must listen out for new sounds, smell for new smells and feel their way around the walk.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do you remember opening your eyes this morning? Seeing the light?
2. Who was the first person you saw this morning?
3. Can you remember all the people you saw on your way to school/parish today?

Fifth Week of Lent



Scripture: John 11:1-45

Jesus said, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I will go and wake him up.'

Activity
5

Activity 5

Say a prayer before you go to sleep.

Children's Bedtime Prayer

*Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord, my soul, to keep:
May God guard me through the night
And wake me with the morning light.
Amen.*

Questions for Reflection:

1. Have you ever seen a flower go to sleep when it's dark by closing its leaves, then opening again when the sunlight comes back?
2. When you're asleep, do you dream?
3. Jesus brought light to his friend Lazarus by waking him up. How do you bring light to the world?

Song for Use

'Shine, Jesus, Shine' by Graham Kendrick

*Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness shining.
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us,
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.*



*Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance.
By the blood, I enter your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me, shine on me.*

Refrain

*Shine, Jesus, shine; fill the land with the Father's
glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze; set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow; flood the nations with grace and
mercy.
Send forth your Word, Lord and let there be light.*

Refrain

*As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory.
Mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.*

Refrain



For Teachers

This table outlines how the Climate Change, Climate Justice 3 Lent 2017 education pack, and the Children's Prayer Space link to the Grow in Love program.

Grow in Love

Theme	Lesson
<i>Grow in Love, Junior Infants 2. Our World</i>	3: We can care for the world
<i>Grow in Love, Junior Infants 8. Water</i>	1: Water is wonderful!
<i>Grow in Love, Senior Infants 1. Our World</i>	1: God asks us to care for the world



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Working for a just world.

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