

First Sunday of Lent – year A

Preparation

Read [Matthew 4:1-11](#). Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/lenta1.htm>

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/109452_115827_ENG_HTM.htm

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/who-says.html>

http://www.cyberfaith.com/proclaiming_faith.cfm?id=177

<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/temptation.htm>

<http://www.ebibleteacher.com/children/lessons/tempt1.htm>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/lent1les.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/b/1Lent-b/A-1Lent-b.html>

<http://children.calvarychapel.com/site/pdf/New/curr175.pdf>

http://www.daniellesplace.com/html/bible_themes_-_jesus.html#jesuswilderness

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Purple candle and candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Purple cloth
- Rocks of various sizes
- A calendar

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Have the children put the rocks around the candle. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

Walking with God, we learn to love;

Walking with Jesus, we learn to care;

Walking with the Spirit, we learn to share. Amen.

Blow out the candle. Show the calendar to the children. Ask if they know how long a week is and show them a week on the calendar. Then ask them if they know how long 40 days is. Explain that Lent is 40 days, but that we don't count the Sundays, and that Lent started on the Wednesday before this Sunday – on Ash Wednesday. Count out the days with the children that will make up Lent this year.

Story Time

Materials

- story characters at the end of lesson
- small paper tubes or craft sticks
- scissors
- glue

Instructions

- Print up the story character faces and cut them out – glue them to the top of the paper tubes or craft sticks.

Jesus walked and walked and walked.

Move the Jesus character around as if walking or have one of the children do this.

He was beginning to feel very tired. Then Jesus walked and walked some more.

He was beginning to feel hungry. He had not eaten for days and days. Jesus stopped and counted how many days he had been walking.

Jesus One, two, three, fourten...sixteen.....twenty-three.....thirty-seven....forty. Wow that is a lot of days!

Jesus sat there and thought about how many things he had seen. He thought about how many good talks he had with God. He was thinking about what was going to happen next. Suddenly, the Evil One showed up. He was looking very pleased with himself.

Bring out the Evil One character.

Evil One Hello Jesus. I see that you are very hungry. If you are really God's son, why don't you turn these stones into bread?

Jesus You will remember what is written in the Bible. We don't live by just bread, but every word that comes from God.

The Evil One then took Jesus to Jerusalem – a place that is holy for everyone. They stood on top of the highest point of the city. *Move the two characters to a different place.*

Evil One "Jesus you will remember what was also written in the Bible. If you should dash your foot against a stone, God's angels will take care of you. So, if you are the Son of God throw yourself off of here and the angels will come you and protect you."

Jesus "Remember it also says in the Bible that you are not to tempt God."

The Evil One then took Jesus up to one of the highest places in the world. He showed Jesus all the nations of the world. He showed Jesus all the wonderful things in the world. *Move the two characters to a different place.*

Evil One "Jesus, I will give you all of this if only you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus "Go away, Evil One. Remember that it says in the Bible that we are only to worship and serve God. It is time for you to go away now."

Finally the Evil One left Jesus (*take away that character and leave the Jesus character standing alone*) all by himself. Jesus stood there and suddenly God's angels came to him. They gave him something to eat and took care of him.

Response

Project Idea 1: Mosaic Crosses

This is an activity that will be good for marking the journey through the whole of Lent, and reminds the children how we are to act during this holy season.

Materials needed

- card stock or poster board
- scissors
- tissue paper
- small zipper plastic bags

Instructions

Ahead of time cut out cross shapes from the card stock or poster board. They should be about 15 cm high and 10 cm wide. Give each child a cross. Have them tear up lots of different colours of tissue paper into fairly small pieces (about 5-cm square) and put them into the plastic bags. Explain to the children that they are to take their crosses home and hang them up somewhere where everyone in the family can see it. As they go through Lent every time someone in the family does a good or kind thing for someone else then the person who sees them doing it is to glue a piece of tissue paper on to the cross. By the end of Lent they should have a beautiful mosaic cross that shows how much Jesus' love is acted out in their family.

Project Idea 2: Bannock Making

This activity will help to remind the children that the angels came and took care of Jesus and the connection with turning stones into bread.

Materials needed

- large mixing bowl
- wooden spoon; pastry knife or two knives
- oiled baking sheet
- oven – preheated to 350°F (175°C)

Ingredients

- 750 mL (3 cups) of white flour
- 250 mL (1 cup) of whole-wheat flour
- 25 mL (5 tsp.) of baking powder
- 15 mL (1 tbsp.) of sugar
- 2 mL (½ tsp.) of salt
- 125 mL (½ cup) of lard or shortening
- 500 mL (2 cups) of water or milk

Instructions

Mix all dry ingredients together. Slowly mix in the lard or shortening until it looks like coarse oatmeal with the pastry knife or two knives. Make a hole in the centre of the bowl, gradually pour in the water or milk mixture. Mix all ingredients together. Knead for a few minutes but not too long as it makes the bannock tough. Pat out with hands to about 20-mm thickness and press into an oiled pan. Prick with a fork and bake in the oven at 350°F until golden brown (about 20 to 30 minutes).

Project Idea 3: Painted Stones

This activity will help to connect the children with the desert experience that Jesus had for forty days. Encourage the children to use the stones to help them pray every day during the season of Lent as they go on this journey with Jesus.

Materials needed

- stones (as flat and big as you can get)
- tempera or water colour paints
- paint brushes
- containers for water and paint

Instructions

Invite the children to choose a stone from the collection that you have put out. Remind them that Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness and that he would have walked over many different stones. Explain to the children that you would like them to paint a symbol that represents Lent on their stone. If you can find some symbols of Lent that you can share with the children that would be helpful. Some possible symbols are pathways, water (for baptism), bread, praying hands. Younger children may need some help in outlining a symbol on the rock that they can then colour in with the paint. Older children should be encouraged to think about the symbol they want before they start painting. When they are finished ask the children to put their rocks somewhere at home where they can see them every day and remember to pray during this season.

Closing

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**Loving God, be with us every day;
Caring Jesus, be with us every day;
Sharing Spirit, be with us every day. Amen.**

Story Characters

The Evil One



Jesus

