

LENT & HOLY WEEK

Ideas for Teachers and Catechists

The Church's liturgical year continues with the celebration of Lent and Holy Week, the time during which Catholics throughout the world honor the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and the giving of alms. Through the suggestions and resources listed below, RCL Benziger is pleased to partner with you in leading children, youth, and families to a prayerful, meaningful experience of the Lenten journey.

1. Remember to refer to the liturgical year section in the back of your religion textbooks for specific lessons on Ash Wednesday, Lent, Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, and Holy Week. Remember, too, that your textbooks contain an outline of the Stations of the Cross and the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.
2. Help your students continue to learn about and draw inspiration from the stories of the saints whose memorials the Church celebrates this Lenten season. Visit **SaintsResource.com** for information on these saints. Also included is a listing of where the stories of these saints are told in *Be My Disciples* and *Blest Are We*.
3. The Church will celebrate two solemnities during the season of Lent. They are the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.



MARCH 19: THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Prepare ahead of time to celebrate on March 19 the tradition of the Blessing of Saint Joseph's Table.

This custom offers a wonderful opportunity for children and youth to offer gifts of food for the poor.

The order of the blessing may

be found in both *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers* (revised edition, © 2007, 2020 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) and the *Book of Blessings* (prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, and ©1989 by The Order of Saint Benedict, Inc.).

For a classroom-friendly reproducible outline of this blessing, go to Saint Joseph's Table.

MARCH 25: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Take time today to proclaim all or part of Luke 1:26-38, the Gospel reading assigned to

this solemnity. In addition, consider praying the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary (which include the Annunciation), the Angelus, the Litany of Loreto (or Litany of Mary) or the Hail Mary.



Celebrating LENT & HOLY WEEK

4. Your religion textbook contains chapter prayers and liturgical lessons focusing on Lent and its themes of mercy, forgiveness, the poor (almsgiving), and the Cross. Explore these prayers ahead of time as you prepare for Lent.

In addition, incorporate the following classroom prayer celebrations.

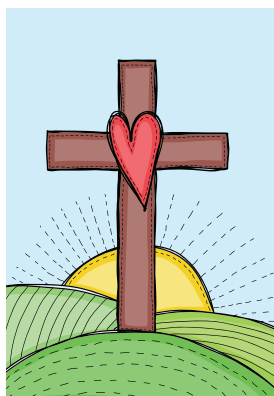
PRE-LENT/ALL: BURYING THE ALLELUIA

Celebrate this prayer just before Ash Wednesday. Students will have the opportunity to say farewell to the Alleluia, highlighting for them that it will not be spoken or sung in the liturgies of the Church until we celebrate the joyful season of Easter.

This prayer is appropriate for all grade levels, and would also be appropriate for an all-school or all-religious education class or family pre-Lent gathering.

LENT/PRIMARY: I WILL!

This prayer, adapted from a *Be My Disciples* classroom prayer suggestion, gives primary-grade students the opportunity to think about how they will work to better live as children of God during the Lenten season.



LENT/UPPER ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH: TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

This prayer is also adapted from a *Be My Disciples* classroom prayer, and will help students reflect on how

they will follow Jesus more closely during the season of Lent.

HOLY WEEK/ALL/ MULTICULTURAL: ALFOMBRAS

Based on a Holy Week tradition celebrated in Guatemala, this prayer incorporates art, song, and procession. It may be prepared and celebrated in individual classrooms, or prepared in individual classrooms and celebrated as an all-school or all-religious education class or family Holy Week celebration.



5. There are many age- and grade-appropriate classroom activities available to highlight the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Click on the following four resources for downloadable activity pages for children and youth.



LENT: PRAYING AND REPENTING DURING LENT

This activity will help children reflect on their faith life and make a commitment to strengthen their faith life during Lent.

LENT: MAKE A BOOK TO HELP YOU FOLLOW JESUS

Activities include a page for primary-age children ("Follow Jesus") and an adaptation of the activity for upper-grade children ("Make a Discipleship Book for Lent").

Celebrating LENT & HOLY WEEK



LENT: I MAKE A FORGIVENESS CARD

In this activity, primary-age children will make a card to ask for forgiveness from someone in their family.

LENT: EXPLORING THE SCRUTINIES

On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent, the Church celebrates the Scrutinies with the elect, those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil.

This activity invites young people to read and reflect on the Gospel stories proclaimed on the Scrutiny Sundays: The Woman at the Well, The Man Born Blind, and The Raising of Lazarus.

Prayer, fasting, and the giving of alms—may the stories, songs, prayers, activities, and disciplines of Lent lead us ever closer to Christ, whose constant invitation is to *Be My Disciples*.

