

Children's liturgy – First Sunday of Lent (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: Purple

Song suggestions: *Be not afraid* (964, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we are going to hear about how Jesus spent 40 days in the desert. The desert can be a dangerous place, where there is not much food or water. Let's think a bit more about that today.

Opening prayer: God of life, your Son Jesus went out into the desert to talk to you in prayer. Help us to talk to you and get closer to you this Lent, in our prayers and in our actions. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

First reading (optional): Genesis 9:8-15

Psalm: Ps 24:4-9 r 10

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia', such as: Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.*

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

At once the Spirit made [Jesus] go into the desert, where he stayed forty days, being tempted by Satan. Wild animals were there also, but angels came and helped him.

After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. "The right time has come," he said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: Today is the first Sunday of Lent. What is Lent?

Lent is a special time when we prepare for Easter. We take time in Lent to pray more, and to think about how we live our lives. This time can help us to change for the better and grow in our faith.

As we grow closer to God, we also realise that we are called to put our faith into action, and to live our lives as God wants us to, loving and caring for all people and for the earth.

What do you remember from today's reading?

Jesus goes out into the desert for 40 days. He had hardly any food to eat or water to drink. How do you think Jesus felt while he was in the desert?

Jesus might have been hungry, thirsty and afraid. He might have been lonely.

But we also hear that in the desert, the angels helped him. We all need people to help us sometimes. Even when we work really hard, we can't always do everything on our own.

Aaron is seven and lives in a country called Liberia with his grandparents. He likes learning science, playing football and eating palm soup and beans. His grandfather, Augustine, is a fisherman. Aaron helps his grandmother, Felicia, to clean and dry the fish, before she sells them to earn money.

It can be very dangerous to go out to sea and fish. Sometimes it can be hard to find the fish to catch and then the fisherman and his family go hungry.

As Aaron says, "A fisherman needs someone to buy his fish so he can make money. People need money to buy food."

Sometimes storms come and the waves and the wind can capsize the boat (turn it upside down so that everything falls out). It can be very frightening.

Recently some of the fishermen, including Aaron's grandfather, took part in some training and were given some new equipment to help them to fish more safely.

He now has a lifejacket, a fishfinder and a mirror. How do you think these things help Augustine?

The fishfinder helps him to find the good places to fish, so that he catches more. It also helps him to find his way back safely to shore.

The lifejacket helps to keep him safe in the water, and the mirror helps him to signal to others if he needs help.

How do you think Augustine feels about this?

Augustine says, "The training has helped us a lot. We can go further out to sea – we can cross many miles and come back safely. We can get better fish. This has helped our home because we've caught plenty of fish. You eat some, you reserve some, you sell some. You can educate your children by paying school fees. You can use some money to pay medical bills. You can pay for troubles if they come."

It is because of this extra money that Augustine and Felicia were able to bring Aaron to live with them when his mum needed some extra help.

Now Aaron wants to be a fisherman when he grows up. Just like his grandfather.

Lent lasts for 40 days, just like Jesus' time in the desert. This Lent, let's remember in our prayers all the people in the world like Aaron, Augustine and Felicia who are working hard, but who need some support.

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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And let's do what we can to help and support each other and our brothers and sisters around the world, as we grow in our faith this Lent and try to live as God calls us to.

Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

As we try to be closer to God this Lent, we pray together:

We pray for world leaders: that they may work together to make the world a fairer place, where all people have enough food to eat. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for those who go to sea and all those who face danger in order to feed their families. May God be always with them, keeping them safe. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: may God guide us to share what we can and to work together so that everyone may look to the future with hope. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Loving God, may we draw closer to you this Lent. Show us how to follow you and help us to be there for one another. Teach us to share whatever we have fairly so that we, and our whole global family, may look to the future with hope. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children, which will be available to download at cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

Encourage the children to take part in CAFOD's Big Lent Walk – either with their family or as part of a parish or school walk. More information about the Big Lent Walk can be found at **walk.cafod.org.uk**

Order CAFOD's Lent prayer cards from **shop.cafod.org.uk** – these have a children's prayer as well as one for grown ups on them – and share these with the children, encouraging them to pray this prayer at home during Lent.

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in today's liturgy with others at home and to inspire their family to take part in CAFOD's Big Lent Walk.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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