

LESSON NO. 2 TITLE: LENT IS A SEASON FOR TURNING BACK TO GOD THROUGH FASTING AND ALMSGIVING

Achievement Objective 2

Children will be able to: recognise Lent as a season for turning back to God through fasting and almsgiving.

Learning Outcomes:

The children will:

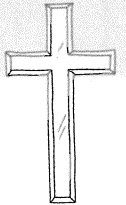
- 1 recognise *Lent* as a season for turning back to God through fasting and almsgiving
- 2 identify ways people are helped to turn back to God during the season of *Lent*

Preparation for the Lesson:

- Natural hessian pieces 20 cm by 15 cm - one for each child
- Cardboard templates of a cross shape for children to trace onto hessian and to cut out
- Felts to decorate hessian cross
- Materials to make posters
- Reflective music tape or CD and player
- *Lenten* Material from Caritas

He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.

Matthew 4:2



Teacher's Notes:

Each season in the *Liturgical Year* has its own purposes and *symbols*. It may be the season that prepares people for something that is coming. It may be the season itself is the great celebration. Each season has a mood or a feeling about it. Just as the season of summer has a happy, relaxed mood because it is the season for holidays, so the season of *Lent* has a quiet mood as people wait and prepare for the sad memories of the *Holy Week* events. There is a feeling of having something hard to go through before the joy of Easter can be celebrated. 40 days is a long time to wait and prepare. The Church invites people to use this time to grow closer to Jesus and to understand in a deeper way what his life and death were all about.

People can do this through prayer. They can also do it through fasting. Fasting means eating less and sharing what we have with others. It may mean going without sweets or cakes and ice creams in *Lent* and giving the cost of these to the Caritas appeal. It may mean sharing what we have by taking the smallest biscuit on the plate or being the one who goes without when there is not enough to go round.

Fasting reminds people that it is *Lent* and it also helps people to recall the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert fasting and praying before he began his work teaching the people about God - Te Atua. Fasting has a way of helping people to turn back to God. When people's bodies feel hungry they somehow come to think about how hungry their souls are also. It is the food of prayer they need which connects them to God. Through prayer - karakia and fasting people are helped to turn back to God's ways of love - aroha. These are the ways of living with *tika* and *pono* which Jesus showed.

Another way through which people are invited to show they are turning back to God is by giving money to help others in need. This is called almsgiving. Catholics do this by giving to the *Lenten* appeal. This money is then given to people in need in different parts of the world. Children can use this opportunity in *Lent* to share some of their pocket money with people in need.

Lent is a time for people to turn back to God through prayer - karakia, fasting and almsgiving. It is a time when their relationship with God can grow deeper.

Teaching and Learning Experiences:

- Children recap their ideas about the season of *Lent* and refer to the signs on the prayer table.
- Children think about the mood of the season of *Lent* and share their thoughts about this with a partner.
- Children in pairs make posters to put around the school to bring people's attention to what the season of *Lent* is about. The posters could include information about the Caritas *Lenten* Appeal and illustrations of the theme for the year.
- Class organise a lunch of rice and water or something similar and take up a collection to send to the *Lenten* Appeal.
- Children make a cross from hessian to hang in their bedroom to remind them that *Lent* is a time for fasting, almsgiving and prayer - karakia. The crosses could be decorated with appropriate words and *symbols*.
- Children suggest other ideas they could use to make *Lent* a time for turning back to God including the prayer suggested in Lesson 1.
- Class prayer - karakia time during *Lent* could include a time of silence for children to reflect on how they are using *Lent* to help them come to know God more deeply. Reflective music may help this.

Consolidation and Extension Activities:

- Class set aside a time each week to think about how they are using the season of *Lent* and plan non-intrusive ways to encourage each other in prayer, almsgiving and fasting

Suggested Assessment Examples:

- **LO 1&2** Complete the sentence:
Lent is a season in which people turn back to God through fasting, almsgiving and prayer.
Refer to Consolidation activity