

THIS LENT... REACH FOR THE WORLD

Ideas for Classroom Mission Animation
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PRAYER

Prayer is dialogue...both talking to and listening to what God has to say. Prayer helps us to see with new eyes ~ it is a filter through which we view our life and our world. Lent is a “graced time” to expose students (and perhaps yourself) to other ways of praying. The ministry of Holy Childhood offers many opportunities to reach out in prayer.

- Darken the room and light a candle. Read the Scripture of the day with children, invite them to share words they remember or to draw a picture to visualize the reading. Ask: “Does the Scripture remind you of something happening now in your life, our school or in the larger world?”
- Set up a prayer space with a cross, candle and Bible and other simple Lenten decor: i.e. piece of sackcloth, large nails, pretzels, etc. Consider using an HCA globe or a small world map to move prayer beyond the “gimmies.”
- Pray a decade of the mission rosary each day or week of Lent. Use a mission magazine or newspaper to help children to broaden their view. Turn the prayer into a poster collage or Lenten bulletin board by cutting out pictures. “Adopt” a child to pray for each week from the pages.
- Pray with one Station of the Cross. Discuss ways that same thing happens to people in the world here and now. Pray for “Jesus condemned” in the loner or child who is different. Pray for “Jesus stripped” in Haiti, Sudan or any where human dignity is ignored, etc. See HCA prayer service on national website.

FASTING

Fasting is a discipline of Lent. Hold the nibbles in check. Consider 'giving up' a favorite food or dessert. Besides fasting from food we can fast from television, negativity, consumerism or cynicism. Get the idea? We do with out to grow within, spiritually! The word "discipline" also means TEACH. What is it you/the class needs to learn this Lent? Is there a common "fast" for the class?

- Urge students to make personal sacrifices - i.e. giving up chocolate. Place the monies saved in their Holy Childhood containers. "Do without so that others in the family of God might have." Visit www.hcakids.org In faith and justice remember catholic (small "c") means universal.
- Invite families to participate in Catholic Relief's Rice bowl contributing monies saved from eating simpler family meals. Learn more about food in poorer countries. www.crs.org. Be in solidarity with those who lack sufficient food to sustain life. www.orb.crs.org is a good family site to promote. Try the global recipes...for added appreciation.
- Instead of a steady diet of TV or Play Station III encourage the children to fast from a favorite program or spend a half hour less playing a game. Instead read, make something creative, pray or help someone.
- For middle and upper grade students: Give-up...selfishness, pity parties, taking about other students, etc. Try to anticipate others needs.

ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is reaching out to others with your time, talent and treasure. Practice random acts of kindness in the family, at school or toward our sisters and brothers around the world. Someone asked poet, Rev. Gerard Manly Hopkins for advice on "how to believe." Hopkins sent back a two-word letter: "Give alms." Sharing with the poor and needy is a work of justice!

- Financial SACRIFICE! Save and collect money from movies not rented, Happy Meals given up, junk food sacrificed. Give to the work of organizations like Holy Childhood Association, "children helping children." At www.hcakids.org see what happens to your dollar.
- Students can give time to assist lower grade students or offer to work as a class at Second Harvest or a shelter.
- Discuss with the class "simplify" your lifestyle. Got a new toy or article of clothing, give something from your closet or toy box away. St. Vincent de Paul Society recycles for the poor.
- Reach out and make someone happy: visit a sick or elderly person; offer to help a sibling or classmate with homework; write a thank you note or make a birthday card. Make somebody smile!!!
- Have students create a simple cross from paper or twigs. Invite them to keep it on their pillow. "When you make your bed, let it remind you to take a minute to think of a child your age somewhere in the world who suffers without benefit of a bed, food, clothing, religion or a family. Ask God to be with them right now."