

# Journey *through* Lent

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FIVE LESSONS  
*for* MARCH 2019

Lower Elementary  
and  
Upper and Middle Elementary Versions

# Journey *through* Lent

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**Lessons for  
Lower Elementary**



# Journey through Lent

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### Lower Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019
- › Handout B: Lent

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel passage for Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, Jesus teaches His disciples, and us, about the how we should give alms, pray, and fast. These three practices have traditionally formed the pillars of Catholic Lenten practice. In this lesson, students will learn about the season of Lent and consider these three pillars of Lenten practice.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Have students complete the **Handout B: Lent** activity. You may choose to have your students read about Lent on their own, or you may read together as a class. Then discuss the answers when finished.

## Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019

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### **A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18** **The Temptation of Jesus**

Jesus said to his disciples: “Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

“When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.



*Christ Tempted by the Devil*, by John Penniman

“When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.”

1. What did Jesus warn about when doing righteous deeds?

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2. Who will see our good deeds and almsgiving in secret?

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3. What did Jesus warn about when praying?

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4. Who will see when we pray in secret?

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5. What did Jesus warn about when fasting?

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6. Who will know when we fast?

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# Lent

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**Directions:** Read about Lent. Then use the Lent Code to solve the puzzle and answer the questions.

**Lent** is the 40 days before **Easter**. Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday. Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**. A cross made of ashes is put on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday. The ashes remind us of when God made Adam. They also remind us of God's mercy and love for us.

Lent is a season for us to grow closer to God. Jesus taught us a few ways to do this. He taught us to help others, to pray, and to fast.



## Help others

Jesus tells us to help others. Some examples of people who need our help are the poor, the hungry, the sick, and the lonely. We can help by giving food or money. We can spend time with someone or do good things for them.



## **Pray**

We talk to God when we pray. God talks to us too. We are friends with God when we pray.



## **Fast**

When we fast, we give something up and give it back to God. Some people give up candy or chocolate, or even watching TV for Lent as a gift to God. What can you give up for God?



# Lent Code

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
5	11	15	26	1	8	17	4	19

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
25	20	9	3	2	12	24	21	10

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
7	14	16	6	23	18	22	13

What three things can we do during Lent to grow closer to God?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
24 10 5 22

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
4 1 9 24 12 14 4 1 10 7

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
8 5 7 14

# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019

1. Not doing righteous deeds so that people can see them.
2. God our Father, who will repay us.
3. Praying like the hypocrites so that others can see you.
4. God our Father, who will repay us.
5. Looking gloomy, like the hypocrites, so that others know we are fasting.
6. God our Father, who will repay us.

## Handout B: Lent

1. Pray
2. Help others
3. Fast



# Journey through Lent

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

### Lower Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019
- › *Christ in the Desert*
- › Teacher Resource: *Christ in the Desert* Discussion Guide
- › Handout B: Christ in the Desert Coloring Page

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for this first Sunday in Lent, Jesus spends forty days in the desert preparing for His public ministry. In many ways, Lent is our time in the desert in which the Church encourages us to prepare to receive the salvation Christ won for us on the Cross. In this lesson, students will reflect on prayer using sacred art.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Lead your students in a reflection on the sacred art image *Christ in the Desert* by Ivan Kramskoi. Use **Teacher Resource: *Christ in the Desert* Discussion Guide** to help guide the activity. Then, have students color **Handout B: *Christ in the Desert* Coloring Page**. On each of the blank lines provided, have your students write one thing that they want to pray to Jesus for during Lent.

# Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019

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**Directions:** Read the Gospel passage. Then answer the questions.

## **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 4:1-13: The Temptation of Jesus**

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, *One does not live on bread alone.*” Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, “I shall give



*Angels Ministering to Christ in the Wilderness,*  
by Thomas Cole

to you all this power and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me.” Jesus said to him in reply, “It is written: *You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.*” Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: *He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*” Jesus said to him in reply, “It also says, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*” When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.

1. Where did Jesus go for forty days?

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2. Who tempted Jesus?

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3. Do you remember how many times Jesus was tempted?

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# *Christ in the Desert*

BY IVAN KRAMSKOI (1872)



Oil on canvas. Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

## *Christ in the Desert* Discussion Guide

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**Note to Teacher:** Lead your students in a discussion about the painting *Christ in the Desert* by Ivan Kramskoi. Use the discussion questions below to help guide your conversation. Feel free to allow the conversation to go in unexpected places and add or substitute your own questions for discussion.

1. Take a moment to look at the painting of *Christ in the Desert*. What do you first notice? *Accept reasoned answers.*
2. Does this painting make you feel happy or sad? Why? *Accept reasoned answers.*
3. What is happening in this painting? *Jesus is praying alone in the desert.*
4. What do you think Jesus might be praying for? *Accept reasoned answers.*
5. Is there someplace that you like to go to be alone? Where is it? What do you like about it? *Accept reasoned answers.*
6. What is something that you can pray to God for? *Accept reasoned answers. Offer possible suggestions such as for your parents and siblings, to do well on a test, for someone who is sick, for the poor or hungry, for yourself if you're feeling sad, to tell God thank you for something good in your life, and so forth. Help your students recognize that there are a lot of different reasons we can pray to God.*
7. How can Jesus be an example of prayer for us? *Jesus took time away from everything to pray to His Father. He prayed alone and in silence. Jesus often gave thanks to God, and He also prayed to God for other people. Accept other reasoned answers.*
8. The artist of this painting painted his own version of Jesus praying and fasting in the desert for forty days. If you could paint your own version, or add to this one, what would you paint differently? Why? *Accept reasoned answers.*

# Christ in the Desert Coloring Page



**What is one thing you want to pray to Jesus for during Lent?**

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# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019

1. The desert. For forty days.
2. He was tempted by the devil.
3. Jesus was tempted three times.



# Journey through Lent

## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

### Lower Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019
- › Handout B: Jesus Is God and Man
- › Handout C: God and Man

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for the second Sunday of Lent, Jesus is revealed in His full glory as God at the Transfiguration. During Lent, we reflect in a special way on the full humanity and full divinity of Christ and how our God fully knows our human condition. In this lesson, students will create their own art and solve a puzzle to help them understand the mystery of the Incarnation.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Have your students read about how Jesus is both God and man from **Handout B: Jesus Is God and Man** (or read the information to your students while they follow along). Then, have them complete the word search and fill in the blanks. Finally, have your students create their own drawing of Jesus that shows that He is both God and man using **Handout C: God and Man**.

## Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019

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### **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 9:28B-36: The Transfiguration of Jesus**

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said



*Transfiguration, by Rafael*

to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

1. Where did Jesus go to pray?

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2. What happened to Jesus while He was praying?

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3. What did Peter want to make for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah?

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4. Do you remember what the voice of God said?

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# Jesus Is God and Man

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**Directions:** Read the information. Then find the words in the word search and fill in the blanks.

**Jesus is God.** He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

**Jesus is also a man.** He is like us in all things but sin.

**Jesus is fully God and fully man.** That means that God knows what it is like to be you and me. He knows what it is like to be happy and to be sad. He knows what it is like to have friends and to laugh. He also knows what it is like to sometimes feel lonely and hurt.

The good news is that Jesus died on the Cross to save us from sin. He invites us to love Him and accept His gift of salvation.



*Transfiguration, by Bl. Fra Angelico*

# Word Search

**Words to  
find:**

Cross  
God

Man  
Like

Gift

D	G	N	P	O	R	R	O	D	R
R	A	I	R	N	O	I	Z	Z	K
M	G	H	F	H	F	B	C	G	J
R	K	F	A	T	I	Y	G	A	G
S	V	C	R	O	S	S	H	N	S
L	T	D	B	D	Q	J	C	D	O
C	I	W	G	Z	Q	X	J	I	R
U	X	K	L	K	N	D	D	O	B
Z	W	F	E	R	N	O	J	T	E
X	M	S	Q	S	G	Y	W	Q	O

## Fill-in-the-Blanks

### Word bank

Cross

God

Man

Like

Gift

1. Jesus is fully \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Jesus is fully \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ us in all things but sin.
4. Jesus died on the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Jesus gives us the \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation from sin.

HANDOUT C

# God and Man

**Directions:** Draw your own picture of Jesus that shows that He is both fully God and fully human.





# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019

1. Jesus went up a high mountain.
2. His face changed in appearance and His clothing became dazzling white.
3. Tents.
4. "This is my chosen Son; listen to him."

## Handout B: Jesus Is God and Man

### Word Search

See answers at the right.

### Fill-in-the-Blanks

1. God
2. Man
3. Like
4. Cross
5. Gift

D	G	N	P	O	R	R	O	D	R
R	A	I	R	N	O	I	Z	Z	K
M	G	H	F	H	F	B	C	G	J
R	K	F	A	T	I	Y	G	A	G
S	V	C	R	O	S	S	H	N	S
L	T	D	B	D	Q	J	C	D	O
C	I	W	G	Z	Q	X	J	I	R
U	X	K	L	K	N	D	D	O	B
Z	W	F	E	R	N	O	J	T	E
X	M	S	Q	S	G	Y	W	Q	O



# Journey through Lent

## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

### Lower Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 24, 2019
- › Handout B: The Fig Tree

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for the third Sunday of Lent, Jesus tells a story of a fig tree that hasn't grown any fruit for three years. The owner of the tree wanted to cut it down, but the gardener asked to care for the tree for another year in the hope that it would finally produce fruit. In many ways, we are like this fig tree. In this lessons, students will consider how Jesus helps them to grow and assess their progress so far this Lent.

#### Gospel Reflection

Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then, discuss the focus questions with them as a class. Share the background information with your students before discussing the focus questions.

#### Activity

Have students read the information on **Handout B: The Fig Tree** (or read it aloud as they follow along). Then, have your students answer the questions, or discuss them together as a class.

# Gospel Reading for Sunday, March 24, 2019

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**Directions:** Read the Gospel passage. Then answer the questions.

## **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 13:1-9: A Call to Repentance**

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus said to them in reply, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!” And he told them this parable: “There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So

cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?' He said to him in reply, 'Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.'"

1. What does Jesus warn the people against not doing?

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2. In Jesus' parable, what was planted in the orchard?

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3. Do you remember why the orchard owner wanted to cut the tree down?

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4. What did the gardener offer to do to the tree?

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# The Fig Tree

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**Directions:** Read about this week's Gospel. Then answer the questions.

This week's Gospel is hard to understand. At the beginning of the story Jesus was talking to the crowd about some bad things that had happened to people. People had died. Jesus warned the people that if they didn't repent – turn away from sin – then they would die too.

This teaching might be a little scary. It doesn't mean that when we do bad things we will die right away.

Instead, when we sin, we turn away from God. God gave all of us life. So, when we turn away from Him because of sin, we do in fact die spiritually.

There is good news, however! In the Gospel Jesus tells a story of a fig



*Parable of the Fig Tree woodcut.*

tree that hadn't grown any fruit. The owner of the tree wanted to cut it down. But the gardener asked to give the tree another chance. He offered to care for the tree and to feed it. With a little love and care the tree would hopefully produce fruit and not be cut down.

We are just like the fig tree. When we sin, we aren't producing fruit – we aren't doing good things. But, Jesus came to give us another chance. And with His help we can do better and be friends with God! Jesus loves us and cares for us, and He even feeds us with the Eucharist. All of these things help us to avoid sin, to grow in holiness, and to be the people God made us to be.

## Reflection Questions

1. Have you ever felt bad for doing something that hurt someone else? What did you do to make up for hurting them?

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2. What are two ways that you know that Jesus loves you?

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3. What is one way you have helped others so far this Lent?

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4. What have you given up this Lent? Has it been easy or hard to do so? Why?

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5. Have you prayed every day this Lent? What can you do to remember to pray?

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# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 24, 2019

1. Jesus warned the people that if they didn't repent they would die.
2. A fig tree.
3. The fig tree had not produced fruit in three years.
4. The gardener offered to care for the tree for a year (by cultivating the ground and fertilizing it.).

## Handout B: The Fig Tree

*Accept reasoned answers.*





# Journey through Lent

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

### Lower Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 31, 2019
- › Handout B: The Father's Love
- › Handout C: *Parable of the Prodigal Son* Spot the Differences

#### Learning Goals

The Gospel for the fourth Sunday of Lent contains one of the best-known parables of Jesus': the parable of the lost, or prodigal, son. With this parable Jesus teaches us in a powerful way about the love and forgiveness of the Father. In this lesson students will reflect on God's love and forgiveness using sacred art in a spot the differences activity.

#### Gospel Reflection

Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then, discuss the focus questions with them as a class.

#### Activity

- Have your students read about God's love for us from **Handout B: The Father's Love** and then answer the questions. Students may answer the question individually or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Have students complete the **Handout C: Parable of the Prodigal Son Spot the Differences** activity. Tell your students to compare the two versions of the painting *Parable of the Prodigal Son* by James Tissot and find 8 differences between the two images. Have them circle the differences.

# Gospel Reading for Sunday, March 31, 2019

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**Directions:** Read the Gospel passage. Then answer the questions.

## **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 15:1-3, 11-32: The Parable of the Lost Son**

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So to them Jesus addressed this parable: “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him

any. Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your

brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, ‘Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.’ He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

1. What did the Scribes and Pharisees say about Jesus?

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2. What did the younger son do with his inheritance?

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3. Why did the younger son decide to return home?

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4. When the father saw his lost son returning, what did he do?

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5. The older son was angry. Why?

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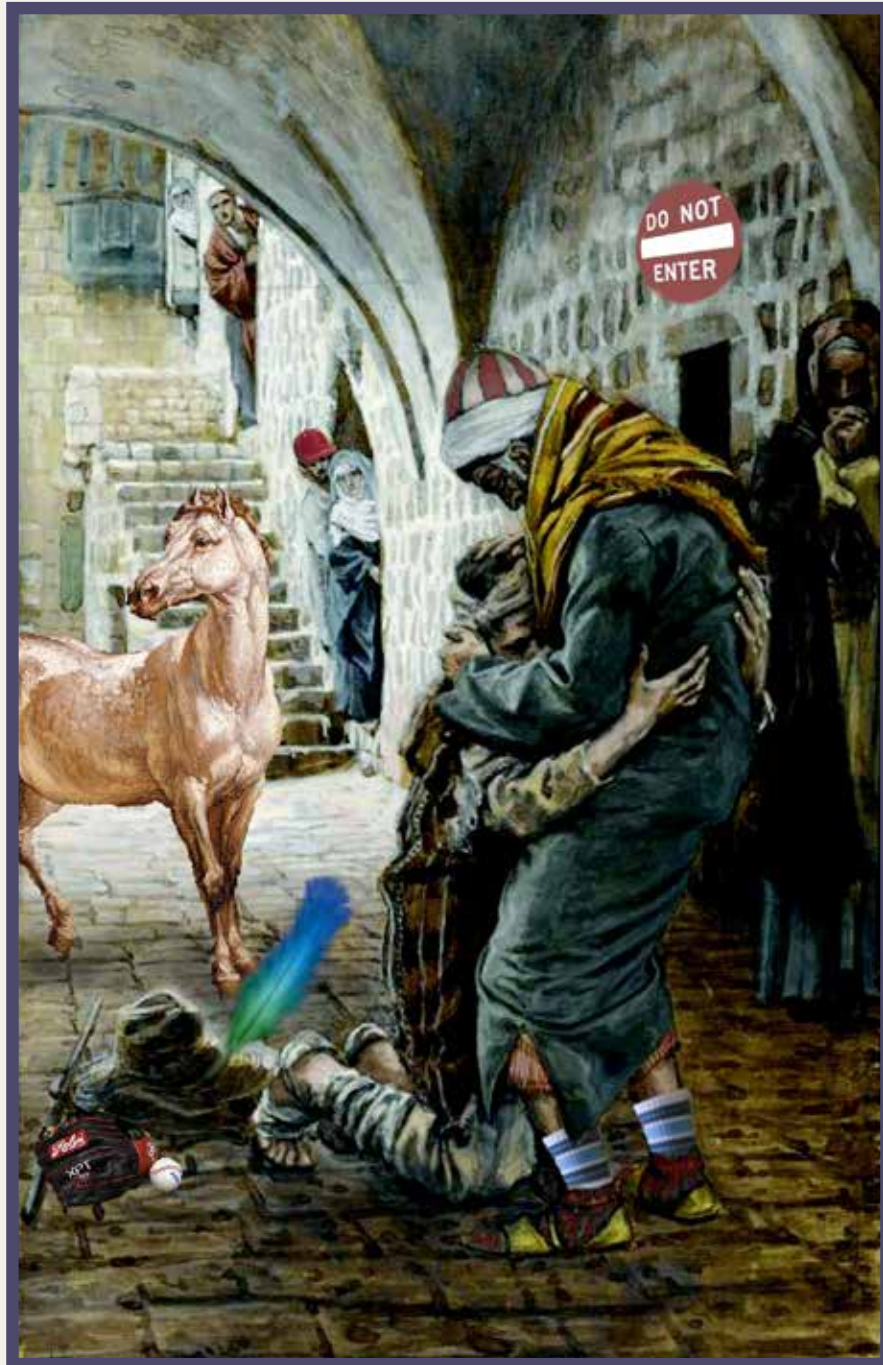
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# Spot the Differences

**Directions:** Compare the two images of *Parable of the Prodigal Son* by James Tissot. See if you can spot 8 differences between the two images. Circle the differences when you find them.



**First Image**



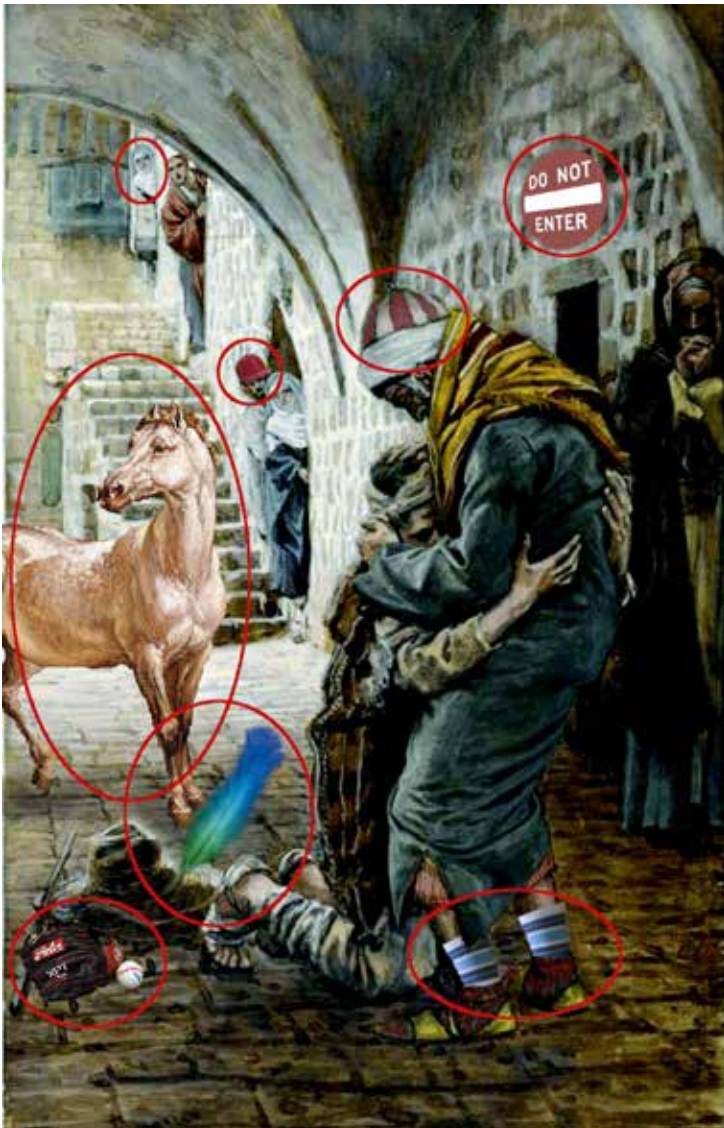
**Second Image**

# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 31, 2019

1. "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."
2. He moved away and squandered it on a life of "dissipation," or sin.
3. He had spent all of his money, was in "dire need," and was starving.
4. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.
5. He was angry because he had been working for his father faithfully all along and never had a celebration in his honor.

## Handout B: *Parable of the Prodigal Son* Spot the Differences





# Journey *through* Lent

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**Lessons for  
Upper and Middle  
Elementary**



# Journey through Lent

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### Upper Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019
- › Handout B: Journey through Lent

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel passage for Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, Jesus teaches His disciples, and us, about the how we should give alms, pray, and fast. These three practices have traditionally formed the pillars of Catholic Lenten practice. In this lesson, students will learn about the season of Lent and consider these three pillars of Lenten practice.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Have students complete the **Handout B: Journey Through Lent** (upper elementary version) activity. Then discuss the answers when finished.

# Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019

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## A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18:

### The Temptation of Jesus

Jesus said to his disciples: “Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

“When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see

them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

“When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.”

1. What did Jesus warn about when doing righteous deeds?

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2. Who will see our good deeds and almsgiving in secret?

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3. What did Jesus warn about when praying?

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4. Who will see when we pray in secret?

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*Christ Tempted by the Devil*, by John Penniman

5. What did Jesus warn about when fasting?

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6. Who will know when we fast?

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# Journey through Lent

**Directions:** Read the essay about Lent and then answer the focus and reflection questions.

**F**or Catholics, **Ash Wednesday** is the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent. We receive ashes on our foreheads as the words “Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return” are spoken. This humble act recalls the creation of Adam from the dust of the ground. And it symbolizes our need for ongoing repentance throughout our lives. Our journey through Lent begins with this focus on our need for God’s mercy.

**Lent** is a forty-day time period that leads up to the Church’s memorial of Christ’s Passion and Death during **Holy Week** and the celebration of His Resurrection from the dead on **Easter Sunday**. This time period reflects the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness before the beginning of His public ministry. There, Jesus fasted, prayed, and endured temptation to strengthen Himself for the work of salvation He was about to undertake. Likewise, during Lent, we are asked to prepare ourselves to receive the gift of salvation from sin by repenting from our sins, doing good works, and by renewing our commitment to our Faith in Christ. Lent is also the time in which people who have been preparing to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion in order to enter full communion with the Catholic Church begin their final preparations. They will be welcomed into the Body of Christ and receive their Sacraments at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

There are a number of ways that the Church offers us to enter more deeply into Lent. In



*St. Lawrence Distributing Alms,*  
by Bl. Fra Angelico.

the Gospel reading for Ash Wednesday, Jesus teaches His disciples about almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. These three practices are the pillars of our Lenten journey.

## Almsgiving

**Almsgiving** is giving food or money (alms) to the poor. More broadly speaking, almsgiving means to care for the needs of others, especially those who are in the most need, such as the poor, the sick, the suffering, and the outcast. In the Gospel of Matthew we read about Jesus teaching His disciples the Corporal

Works of Mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, visit the sick, and bury the dead). He also taught that whenever we perform these good works, we are not just loving our neighbor, but we are loving Christ himself. The Works of Mercy should be a guide for our own actions to care for the needs of others, not only (and especially) during Lent, but throughout the year.

## Prayer

**Prayer** is to be in relationship with God. Prayer is talking with God, asking good things of Him for ourselves and for others, being in His presence, and listening to Him talk to us. There are many different ways to pray: formal prayers such as the Our Father or the Hail Mary; in our own words; reflecting on the words of Scripture or the writings of the saints; in and through the liturgies of the Church; in contemplation of the beauty of creation and the works of God; or in silence. Whatever the method of prayer, Lent is a time for us to focus on our relationship with God in an intentional way so that we can grow closer to Him.

## Fasting

**Fasting** is to intentionally give something up or deny ourselves something as a sacrificial offering. Fasting helps to strengthen our will so that we are better able to say no to temptations

and avoid sin. Traditionally, many Catholics will give up something during the entire season of Lent such as candy, soda, or watching TV. Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 (if they are healthy and able) are required to fast from food on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. When fasting, Catholics are permitted to eat one full meal and two small meals that together are not equal to a full meal, and should avoid snacking between meals. Also, Catholics 14 years-old and older are required to not eat meat (**abstain**) on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and every Friday during Lent.

Some other Lenten practices include not saying the word Alleluia during Mass. Alleluia means “praise the Lord” and is typically sung as an acclamation before the Gospel reading during Mass. We respectfully reserve the use of this word during Lent so that we can use it again during Easter to joyfully acclaim Christ’s Resurrection. The singing of the Gloria during Mass is similarly reserved during Lent for much the same reason.

The liturgical color of Lent is purple, or violet. Purple is a color that represents penance. It serves as a reminder of the solemnness of the season and our focus on fasting and repentance from sin. It reminds us of our call to do acts of penance to make up for our sinfulness. The Church strongly encourages the faithful to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent, and to extend forgiveness to those who have hurt us.

1. What is Ash Wednesday? What do we receive on this day and what is its meaning?

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2. What is Lent?

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3. How does Lent reflect Jesus' time in the wilderness before the beginning of His public ministry?  
What does this mean for us?

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4. For whom is Lent a special time of preparation?

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5. What does it mean to give alms?

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6. What is prayer?

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7. What is fasting? What are the rules of fasting during Lent?

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8. Why don't we sing or say the Alleluia during Lent?

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9. What is the liturgical color of Lent? Why?

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10. What does the Church strongly encourage the faithful to do during Lent?

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**Reflection Question**

Choose one of the three pillars of Lenten practice (almsgiving, prayer, and fasting) and write about at least two ways that you can focus on doing it in your own life during this Lent.

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# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 6, 2019

1. Not doing righteous deeds so that people can see them.
2. God our Father, who will repay us.
3. Praying like the hypocrites so that others can see you.
4. God our Father, who will repay us.
5. Looking gloomy, like the hypocrites, so that others know we are fasting.
6. God our Father, who will repay us.

## Handout B: Journey Through Lent

1. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent. We receive ashes on our foreheads which symbolize the creation of Adam and our need for repentance and God's mercy.
2. Lent is the forty-day time period that leads up to the Church's memorial of Christ's Passion and Death during Holy Week and the celebration of His Resurrection on Easter.
3. During Jesus' time in the wilderness He fasted, prayed, and endured temptation to strengthen Himself for the work of salvation. For us during Lent, we are asked to prepare ourselves to receive the gift of salvation by repenting from sin, doing good works, and renewing our commitment to our faith in Christ.
4. Those who will receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion for the first time and be welcomed into full communion with the Catholic Church.
5. To care for the needs of others, especially those who are in most need, such as the poor, the sick, the suffering, and the outcast.
6. Being in relationship with God, talking with God, asking good things of Him, being in His presence, and listening to Him.
7. Intentionally giving something up or denying ourselves as a sacrifice to help strengthen our will so that we are better able to resist temptation and avoid sin. Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 (if they are healthy and able) are required to fast from food on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. When fasting, Catholics are permitted to eat one full meal and two small meals that together are not equal to a full meal, and should avoid snacking between meals. Also, Catholics 14 years-old and older are required to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and every Friday during Lent.
8. To reserve its use for Easter to joyfully acclaim Christ's Resurrection.
9. Purple, or violet.
10. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation

**Reflection Question:** Accept reasoned answers.



# Journey through Lent

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

### Upper and Middle Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019
- › Handout B: Examen Journal
- › Teacher Resource: Examen Journal Template

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for this first Sunday in Lent, Jesus spends forty days in the desert preparing for His public ministry. In many ways, Lent is our time in the desert in which we prepare to receive the salvation Christ won for us on the Cross. In this lesson, students will reflect on their own daily spiritual journey using an examen.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Go over the **Handout B: Examen Journal** explanation with your students. Then, lead them in the examen journal exercise. You may have your students write in their own journals, or photocopy the **Teacher Resource: Examen Journal Template** for your students to use. Consider beginning religion class every day during Lent (or every other day, or once a week) with a few minutes of reflection using the **Examen Journal** as a guide.

# Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019

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## A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 4:1-13: The Temptation of Jesus

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, *One does not live on bread alone.*" Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship

me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: *You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.*" Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: *He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*" Jesus said to him in reply, "It also says, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*" When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.

1. Where did Jesus go for forty days? What was He Filled with and who led Him there? What did He eat while there?

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2. Who tempted Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was Jesus first tempted to do? What was his response to this temptation?

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4. What was Jesus' second temptation? What did Jesus say in response to this second temptation?

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5. What was Jesus' third temptation? What did Jesus say in response to this temptation?

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6. What did the devil do after he had finished tempting Jesus?

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# Examen Journal

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The Gospel reading for the first Sunday of Lent tells us of the forty days Jesus spent in the desert before beginning His public ministry. During this time Jesus fasted, prayed to His Father, and resisted the temptations of Satan. Even Jesus, who is fully God and fully man, took time to reflect and to pray in order to better prepare Himself to do the will of His Father.

In part, Lent is a time for us to imitate Christ's forty days in the desert. Lent is a time for us to fast, to pray, and strengthen ourselves to resist temptation and avoid sin. One great way of reflecting on our lives during Lent is to reflect each day using a method of prayer and reflection called the examen. This style of prayerful reflection on our lives, being aware of God's presence, and recognizing how we have loved God and others and how we have failed to do so was first developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit religious order. It is simple and can be done quickly, but always invites us to be more prayerful, reflective, and aware of God's will in our lives.

Every day during Lent (or as often as your class chooses to do it) use the following examen questions to reflect and to pray.



*St. Ignatius of Loyola,  
by Peter Paul Rubens*

## 1 Begin with prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you and praise you for this day and for all the blessings that you have given to us. Help us to prayerfully reflect on all the ways we have loved you and others and all the ways that we have failed to do so. Please continue to bless us today and every day. Show us your way in all we do. Amen.

## 2 Examen reflection

Take a moment to remember and reflect upon the fact that you are always in the presence of God. He is with us every day, in everything we do, and in everyone we meet. Quietly thank Him for His love for you.

Think back over the last 24 hours (or however long it has been since your last examen reflection). Then, reflect upon and journal about the following:

- › What are you most thankful for during this time?
- › How have you loved God during this time?
- › How have you loved others during this time?
- › How have you failed to love God during this time? What is one thing you can do to make up for this?
- › How have you failed to love others during this time? What is one thing you can do to make up for this?

### **3 Think ahead to tomorrow**

Think ahead to the next day. Then, reflect upon and journal about the following:

- › What do you most need God's help with in the next day?
- › Who would you like to pray for?

### **4 Conclude with prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you for your goodness. Thank you for the gift of life and for your mercy and love. Help us today and every day to love you and to love one another according to your will. Amen.



# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 10, 2019

1. The desert. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and led by the Spirit. He ate nothing.
2. The devil.
3. The first temptation was to change a stone into bread. Jesus refused and said, “*It is written, One does not live on bread alone.*”
4. The second temptation was to have power and glory over all the kingdoms of the earth if He would only bow down before the devil. Jesus refused and said: “*It is written: You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.*”
5. The third temptation was command the angels to save Him. Jesus refused and said: “*It also says, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*”
6. The devil departed from Him for a time.



# Journey through Lent

## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

### Upper and Middle Elementary

#### Materials

- ▶ Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019
- ▶ Handout B: Jesus' Divinity and Humanity
- ▶ Handout C: God and Man

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for the second Sunday of Lent, Jesus is revealed in His full glory as God at the Transfiguration. During Lent, we reflect in a special way on the full humanity and full divinity of Christ and how our God fully knows our human condition. In this lesson, students will analyze sacred art to help them contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

Arrange students into small groups and have them read the essay on **Handout B: Jesus' Divinity and Humanity**, and then reflect on the paintings together using the discussion questions. You may alternately choose to read the essay and reflect on the paintings together as a class. Then, have them create their own drawing of Jesus that shows that He is both God and man using **Handout C: God and Man**.



# Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019

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## **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 9:28B-36: The Transfiguration of Jesus**

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.



*Transfiguration, by Rafael*

1. Who did Jesus bring up the mountain with Him to pray?

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2. What happened to Jesus while He was praying?

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3. Who appeared with the transfigured Jesus and conversed with Him? What did they talk about?

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4. Why did Peter and the others become afraid?

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5. What did the voice of God say?

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6. What happened after the Voice had spoken?

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# Jesus' Divinity and Humanity

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## Part I: Essay

**Directions:** Read the essay about Jesus' humanity and divinity.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus is revealed in all of His glory as God. His divinity shines through, literally, as a blinding light. And yet, Jesus is still Jesus. His humanity doesn't go away. His divinity, the glory of God, whom He is fully, is made known in and through His humanity. This is part of the mystery of the Incarnation, the Son of God assuming a human nature and becoming man in the Person of Jesus Christ. How is it that Jesus is both 100% fully God and 100% fully human?

Rather than being a mystery for us to solve, the mystery of the Incarnation is a great truth that only God can make known to us. The dual nature of Christ is a profoundly beautiful reality that invites us to contemplate how great God's love is for us – that the all-powerful God of the universe would humble Himself and become

one of His creatures, a human being, in order to show us His love, be our model of holiness, and save us from sin.

During Lent, we are reminded of both the humanity and divinity of Jesus. Soon, we will memorialize Jesus' Passion and Death on the Cross. In His humanity, Jesus suffered greatly, and poured out His life for us on the Cross. But He did not stop being God in those moments of suffering. That means that our God deeply and personally knows what it is like to be one of us, even in our greatest moments of suffering. And then, on Easter Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead. Our God defeated death and conquered sin!

Let us reflect on these great truths of our Faith all throughout this Lenten season.

## Part II: Sacred Art Reflection

**Directions:** Using the questions provided, reflect on the humanity and divinity of Jesus using the two paintings by Carl Bloch.

1. Take a moment to observe the first painting, *The Sermon on the Mount*. What first stands out to you about this painting?
2. In the Gospels, the Sermon on the Mount is the greatest example of Jesus teaching His disciples. How does this painting show us Jesus teaching?
3. How would you describe the people in the crowd and how they are relating to Jesus?
4. In what way does this painting emphasize Jesus' humanity? What evidence of his divinity is present in the painting?

*Sermon on the Mount*



*Transfiguration*



5. Take a moment to observe the second painting, *Transfiguration*. What do you first notice about this painting?
6. How is this week's Gospel illustrated by this painting?
7. In what ways does this painting emphasize Jesus' divinity? What evidence of His humanity is present in the painting?
8. How is this painting similar to *The Sermon on the Mount* painting? How are they different?
9. Why do you think it is important that Jesus was Transfigured?

HANDOUT C

# God and Man

**Directions:** In the frame below, draw your own picture of Jesus that shows that He is both fully God and fully human.



# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for March 17, 2019

1. Peter, John, and James.
2. His face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.
3. Moses and Elijah. They were conversing about the exodus that Jesus would accomplish in Jerusalem.
4. A cloud came upon them and cast a shadow over them.
5. “This is my chosen Son. Listen to him.”
6. Jesus was alone and the disciples did not tell anyone what they had seen.



# Journey through Lent

## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

### Upper and Middle Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 24, 2019
- › Handout B: The Fig Tree
- › Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace) song video: [SophiaOnline.org/BrokenVessels](https://www.sophiaonline.org/BrokenVessels)

#### Learning Goals

In the Gospel for the third Sunday of Lent, Jesus tells a story of a fig tree that hasn't grown any fruit for three years. The owner of the tree wanted to cut it down, but the gardener asked to care for the tree for another year in the hope that it would finally produce fruit. In many ways, we are like this fig tree. In this lessons, students will consider how Jesus helps them to grow and assess their progress so far this Lent.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished.

#### Activity

- Have students complete the **Handout B: The Fig Tree** activity. Then, ask for volunteers to share about how their Lenten journey has been going so far. Specifically, ask what students have done to help others, how their Lenten fast has been going, what challenges they have encountered in keeping their fast, and if they have any experiences of prayer they'd like to share about.
- Conclude by showing the video of the song "Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace)" by Hillsong Worship, found at the following link: [SophiaOnline.org/BrokenVessels](https://www.sophiaonline.org/BrokenVessels). Invite your students to prayerfully reflect on their Lenten journey using the song. They may close their eyes and listen, or follow the lyrics in the video.

# Gospel Reading for Sunday, March 24, 2019

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**Directions:** Read the Gospel passage. Then answer the questions.

## A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 13:1-9: A Call to Repentance

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus said to them in reply, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you

will all perish as they did!” And he told them this parable: “There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?’ He said to him in reply, ‘Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.’”

1. The people tell Jesus of two events that had recently occurred in which some people were killed in a terrible way. In both instances, what question does Jesus ask them?

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2. What does Jesus warn the people of?

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3. Why did the owner of the orchard want to cut down the fig tree?

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4. What did the gardener ask of the orchard owner?

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5. What did the gardener tell the orchard owner he could do in the end?

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# The Fig Tree

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**Directions:** Read about this week's Gospel. Then answer the questions.

This week's Gospel can be a bit challenging to understand. At the beginning of the story Jesus was speaking to the crowd about events in which people had died. Jesus warned the people that if they didn't repent – turn away from sin – then they would die too, like the people in the events.

This teaching might be a little scary for us today. It doesn't mean that when sin we will immediately die. Instead, when we sin, we turn away from God and reject His love. God is the source of life. So, when we turn away from Him because of sin, we turn away from the source of life and in die spiritually. This is what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. And this is what happens to us when we we mortally sin.

There is good news, however! In the Gospel Jesus tells a story of a fig tree that hadn't produced fruit for three years. The owner of the tree wanted to cut it down. But the gardener asked the owner to give the tree another chance. He offered to care for the tree and to fertilize, it. With a little love and care the tree would hopefully produce fruit by the next year and not be cut down.

We are just like the fig tree. When we sin, we aren't producing fruit – we aren't doing good things. But, Jesus came to give us another



*Parable of the Fig Tree woodcut.*

chance. And with His help we can do better and be friends with God! Jesus loves us and cares for us, and He even feeds us with the Eucharist. All of these things help us to avoid sin, to grow in holiness, and to be the people God made us to be.

Remember the three pillars of our Lenten journey: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. These three practices are a great way for us to begin to nurture the soil around us so that we can grow in holiness, just like the fig tree.

1. What are two obstacles in your life that are making it harder for you to have a better relationship with God? What is one thing you can do to begin to overcome each of them?

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2. Think about someone you need to forgive for hurting you. Without naming them, write a brief prayer below asking God to give you the strength and courage to forgive them.

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3. How has your Lenten fast been going so far this Lent? Have you been successful in your fasting? How has it been difficult to fast? What can you do to recommit (if necessary) to your Lenten fast?

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4. How have you helped others so far this Lent? In what ways can you continue to help others in the time remaining this Lent?

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5. Remember, prayer is entering into relationship with God – by talking to Him, letting Him talk to you, and by listening to Him. How would you describe your current relationship with God? What are two things you can do this week to improve your relationship with God?

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# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 24, 2019

1. “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans?”
2. “If you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!”
3. It had not produced fruit in 3 years.
4. The gardener asked to give the fig tree one more year, during which time he would cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it.
5. If the tree had not produced fruit by the next year he could cut it down.

## Handout B: The Fig Tree

*Accept reasoned answers for all questions.*



# Journey through Lent

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

### Upper and Middle Elementary

#### Materials

- › Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 31, 2019
- › Handout B: Parable of the Prodigal Son

#### Learning Goals

The Gospel for the fourth Sunday of Lent contains one of the best-known parables of Jesus': the parable of the lost, or prodigal, son. With this parable Jesus teaches us in a powerful way about the love and forgiveness of the Father. In this lesson students will reflect on God's love and forgiveness using sacred art.

#### Gospel Reflection

- Have students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions. You may have students answer them on their own or you may discuss them together as a class.
- Review and discuss the correct answers when finished

#### Activity

Arrange your students into groups of three or four. Have them reflect on the parable of the lost son using the painting and discussion questions from **Handout B: Parable of the Prodigal Son**. When they are finished, call on groups to share about their discussions.

# Gospel Reading for Sunday, March 31, 2019

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**Directions:** Read the Gospel passage. Then answer the questions.

## A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 15:1-3, 11-32: The Parable of the Lost Son

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So to them Jesus addressed this parable: “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’ So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His

son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, ‘Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.’ He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

1. What did the younger son demand from his father? How did the father respond to the younger son's demand? Normally, when might someone receive what the younger son is demanding?

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2. What did the younger son do with his inheritance?

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3. Why did the younger son decide to return home?

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4. When the father caught sight of his son, what did he do?

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5. What did the father order his servants to do once the younger son had returned? Why?

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6. Where had the older son been? How did he respond to the news that his younger brother had returned?

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7. How did the father respond to the older son's anger?

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# Parable of the Prodigal Son

BY JAMES TISSOT





# Parable of the Prodigal Son



*Parable of the Prodigal Son*, by James Tissot

**Directions:** Reflect on the painting *Parable of the Prodigal Son* by James Tissot using the discussion questions.

## Conversation Questions

1. Take a moment to observe the painting. What do you notice about this painting?
2. What moment in the Parable of the Prodigal Son does this painting illustrate? How do you know?
3. How do you see love in this painting?
4. Imagine for a moment that you are the younger son. How could you have been a better son to your father?
5. The son felt sorry for his sins and decided to change his life. What do you think would have happened if he had gone back home without being sorry? Would that be right? Why do you think it's important that the son felt sorry, expressed his sorrow, and asked for forgiveness?
6. If a friend offended you, would you be satisfied merely to know that he or she was sorry, or would you want that friend to tell you he or she was sorry?
7. Imagine for a moment that you are the father. How would you have felt seeing your son again, who has broken your heart, taken all of your money, and wasted everything? What would you want to say to him? Would you want to punish him? Would you forgive him and welcome him home?

# Answer Key

## Handout A: Gospel Reading for Sunday March 31, 2019

1. He demanded his share of his father's estate (or inheritance). The father gave it him. Normally a person would receive an inheritance from someone after they had died.
2. He squandered it on a life of dissipation (or sin.)
3. He decided to return home because he was broke and starving.
4. He ran out to meet him, embraced and kissed him.
5. He had the finest robe, a ring, and sandals put on him, and he orderd the fattened calf to be slaughtered for a feast.
6. The older son had been working for his father the whole time. He was angry because he had been faithful to his father but had never had a celebration in his honor.
7. He told him, "My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."

## Handout B: Parable of the Prodigal Son

*Accept reasoned answers for all questions.*