

Lent Intergenerational Program

"Lent in Word and Symbol"

Learning Objectives

The "Lent in Word and Symbol" preparation program guides learners of all ages to...

- develop a deeper understanding of the Lenten lectionary and symbols (*know-what*)
- develop an appreciation for the meaning of Lent in their lives as Catholics (*know-why*)
- participate more actively and meaningfully in the Lenten season (*know-how*)

Catechism Connection

540, 1438

Background Readings

Catholic Updates

Annual Lent Catholic Update Issue

Ash Wednesday: Our Shifting Understanding of Lent. Rev. Lawrence Mick, O. Praem.

Catholic Update C0204.

Celebrating Lent in Your Home. Kathryn A. Schneider and Robert M. Hamma. Catholic Update C0293

How to Find Joy in Lent. Jack Wintz. Catholic Update C0295

Lent: A 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call. Thomas Richstatter, O.F.M.

Catholic Update C0290.

Lent: Balancing the Old and the New. John Bookser Feister. Catholic Update C0293.

Lent Giving Our Hearts to God. Joyce Rupp. Catholic Update C0297.

Lent: Opening the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thomas Richstatter, O.F.M. Catholic Update C0298.

Lenten Customs: Baptism is the Key. Rev. Lawrence Mick, O. Praem. Catholic Update C0302.

Books

Bergant, Diane, with Richard Fragomeni. *Preaching the New Lectionary.* (Three Volumes: Year A, B, C) Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999, 2000, 2001.

Birmingham, Mary. *Word and Worship Workbook.* (Three Volumes: Year A, B, C). New York: Paulist Press, 1998, 1999, 2000.

Brown, Raymond. *Reading the Gospels with the Church – From Christmas through Easter.* Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1996.

Brown, Raymond. *A Crucified Christ in Holy Week.* Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1986.

Brown, Raymond. *How to Read the Passion Narratives.* Catholic Update CU 0484. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press.

Donohue, John. *Hearing the Word of God – Reflections on the Sunday Readings*. (Three Volumes: Year A, B, C). Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003, 2004, 2005.

Huck, Gabe. *Introduction to Lent and Eastertime*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publication.

Living Liturgy. Collegeville: MN: Liturgical Press, annual.

Senior, Donald. *Jesus: A Gospel Portrait*. New York: Paulist Press, 1992.

Shea, John. *The Spiritual Wisdom of the Gospels for Christian Preachers and Teachers*. (Three Volumes: Year A, B, C) Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004, 2005, 2006.

Simcoe, Mary Ann. *Parish Path through Lent and Eastertime*. Chicago: Liturgical Training Publications, 1985

Sourcebook for Sundays and Seasons. Liturgy Training Publications. Chicago: LTP, annual.

Potential Uses

- Preparation for the Season of Lent

Session Resources

Before the Session

Environment

Set up a prayer table or decorate the large group meeting space with symbols of Lent:

- purple tablecloth (or one with purple in the pattern or drape a piece of purple cloth on a white tablecloth)
- the Lectionary or Bible
- Sacramentary
- thick white candle
- clear glass bowl with water
- a small clear bowl with olive oil
- loaf of bread (unsliced) on a plate
- clear glass with wine
- cross (not a crucifix)
- palms and ashes
- thorns

Note: For the Age Group format, all the age groups will need their own symbols for this learning program. You will need one table of symbols for the families with children, another for the adolescents, and another for the adults.

Home Kit

Home Activities at Generations of Faith Online

1. Lenten Daily Prayers
2. Prayers for Every Day of Lent
3. Preparing the Lenten Prayer Space
4. Scripture Reflections during Lent
5. Table Prayers for Lent

Catholic Update (St. Anthony Messenger Press)

Annual Lent Catholic Update Issue

Ash Wednesday: Our Shifting Understanding of Lent. Rev. Lawrence Mick, O. Praem. Catholic Update C0204.

Celebrating Lent in Your Home. Kathryn A. Schneider and Robert M. Hamma. Catholic Update C0293

How to Find Joy in Lent. Jack Wintz. Catholic Update C0295

Lent: A 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call. Thomas Richstatter, O.F.M. Catholic Update C0290.

Lent: Balancing the Old and the New. John Bookser Feister. Catholic Update C0293.

Lent Giving Our Hearts to God. Joyce Rupp. Catholic Update C0297.

Lent: Opening the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thomas Richstatter, O.F.M. Catholic Update C0298.

Lenten Customs: Baptism is the Key. Rev. Lawrence Mick, O. Praem. Catholic Update C0302.

Creative Communications

Creative Communications for the Parish produces inexpensive Lenten booklets for families, teens and adults, as well as prayer cards, calendars, activities, and lectionary reflections.

Catholic Teenager's Trip through Lent

Lenten Calendar for Youth

Lenten Calendar for Children

Lenten Calendar for Adults

With the Cross of Jesus – Daily Bible Readings for Lent

Diocese of Saginaw

Lenten Books: *Little Black Book for Lent* (Teens and Adults) and *Little Purple Book for Lent* (Children) (To order go to www.dioceseofsaginaw.org and look for link to Little Books on the front page of the web site.)

Twenty-Third Publications

Twenty-Third Publications produces inexpensive Lenten booklets of prayers, activities, and lectionary reflections for families and individuals.

Liturgy Training Publications

Liturgy Training Publications produces a variety of Lent and Holy Week resources for parish and home. See especially:

What Am I Doing for Lent This Year?

Prayer Resources

Haas, David. *Increase Our Faith – Parish Prayer Services for Whole Community Catechesis*. (Three Volumes: Year A, B, C) Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2004, 2005, 2006.

Haas, David. *A Time to Pray with the New Testament*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Religion Publishers, 2005. (See the prayer celebrations: "Gospel of Mark: Take Up Your Cross" and "Lent: Turn to the Living God.")

For additional prayer services consult:

Costello, Gwen. *Junior High Prayer Services by Themes and Seasons*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2000.

Cronin, Gaynell Bordes, and Jack Rathschmidt, O.F.M. Cap. *The Blessing Candles – 58 Simple Mealtime Prayer-Celebrations*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2000.

Galipeau, Jerry. *Prayer Services for Parish Life*. Schiller Park, IL: World Library Publications, 2004.

McCann, Deborah. *Let Us Gather – Prayer Services for Catholic Schools and Assemblies*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2002.

Morley, Jack, editor. *Bread of Tomorrow – Prayers for the Church Year*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992.

Piercy, Robert W., and Vivian E. Williams. *When Children Gather – 20 Prayer Services for the Liturgical Year*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 1998.

Rupp, Joyce. *Inviting God In – Scriptural Reflections through the Year*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2001.

Rupp, Joyce. *Out of the Ordinary – Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2000.

Singer, Charles. *Prayers for Feasts*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2002.

Vos Wezeman, Phyllis, and Jude Dennis Fournier. *Celebrations Seasons – Prayer Lessons for Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2000.

Materials for the Session

Gathering

- name tags
- community building activities

All Ages Opening Learning Experience

- Opening Prayer Service
- Bible

In-Depth Learning Experience

- the *Lectionary for Children* or children's Bible
- sheets of newsprint, markers for each person, masking tape
- white paper and pens/pencils
- if you choose the children's drawing activity, you will need: strips of paper, crayons, marking pens, and children's Bibles or copies of the Lenten Gospel stories
- if you choose the children's symbol creation activity you will need: an unlined 3x5 or 4x6 file card and 12" colored ribbon (purple) for each person, and creative art supplies (e.g., a variety of photo-filled magazines, construction paper, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, tape, pipe cleaners, etc.), children's Bibles or copies of the Lenten Gospel stories
- copies of handouts:
 - *Symbols of Our Lives*
 - *Lent in Word and Symbol*
 - *Lenten Scripture Readings*
- copies of the **Catholic Update** for leaders: *Lent: 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call* by Thomas Richstatter (C0290) (Order from St. Anthony Messenger Press at 800-336-1770)

Sharing Learning Reflections and Home Application

Closing

- Closing Prayer Service

Session at a Glance

Part One: Gathering (5 minutes)

Part Two: All Ages Learning Experience (20 minutes)

Introduction to Lent

Part Three: In-Depth Learning Experience (90 minutes)

Choose a Learning Group Format

- Whole Group Format
- or
- Age Group Format

Learning Plan

1. Introduction to the Lenten Symbols
2. Lenten Symbol Exploration
 - Option A: Lenten Symbol Creations (Families with Children)
 - Option B: Symbols in Lenten Liturgies (Adolescents and Adults)
 - Option C: Words and Music in the Lenten Season (All Ages)

Part Four: Sharing Learning Reflections and Home Application
(20-25 minutes)

Part Five: Closing Prayer Service (10 minutes)

Part 1

Gathering (10 minutes)

1. Registration and Hospitality

- Welcome people and ask them to sign in for the program.
- Ask people to make a nametag.
- Distribute the Home Kit for the session, including any handouts participants will need for the session. (You can also distribute handouts for the In-Depth Learning program at the beginning of the activity.)
- Invite people to share a meal; depending on time of day, the program may end with a meal instead.

Welcome

Welcome the participants to the program and introduce the theme of the session.

2. Group Formation

In the Whole Group Format, organize table groups of families with children, adolescents, and adults.

3. Opening Prayer Service

Lead the participants in an opening prayer service on the theme: Words and Symbols of Lent. Use the Prayers from the Sacramentary for Ash Wednesday and the Sundays of Lent, and the music that will be used during the Lenten season.

Part Two

All Ages Learning Experience (15-20 minutes)

The All Ages Opening Experience introduces the participants to the theme of the program. There are a variety of ways to conduct the opening experience. For a presentation to the large group you can use drama, media, storytelling, or other interactive approach that works well with a large group.

For this Lenten program you might consider an extended prayer service incorporating Lectionary readings and the symbols for Lent.

Part 3

In-Depth Learning Experiences (90 minutes)

Whole Group Format

This format guides the entire assembly through each of the learning experiences.

You might choose this format if you have:

- a large physical space with good acoustics/sound system and furniture to comfortably accommodate the learners
- a competent large group facilitator/master of ceremonies able to provide clear directions and to manage the dynamics and energy of a large group
- a group of catechists who feel comfortable moving through the assembly offering assistance, or a large enough team of table leader catechists to have one catechist work with each table group
- a learning topic that lends itself to everyone learning the same thing at the same time, but in different ways, in the same space

Facilitation Tips for This Format

Guide small groups through each of the activities at the same time.

- Organize people into table groups based on age groupings: families with children (grades 1-5), middle school adolescents, high school adolescents, young adults, and adults.
- The lead facilitator guides the entire group through each of the learning experiences. All presentations and activity instructions are given to the whole group.
- The age-appropriate learning activities within each learning experience are conducted in table groups.
- Where needed, catechists and small group leaders facilitate the work of the table groups.

Whole Group Format Outline

Learning Plan Outline

1. Introduction to the Lenten Symbols
2. Lenten Symbol Exploration
 - Option A: Lenten Symbol Creations (Families with Children)
 - Option B: Symbols in Lenten Liturgies (Adolescents and Adults)
 - Option C: Words and Music in the Lenten Season (All Ages)

Age Group Format

This format provides for three separate parallel learning programs. Though age groups are separated, each one is focusing on the same topic.

You might choose this format if you have:

- an adequate number of meeting spaces for the various groups to gather
- an adequate number of competent facilitators and catechists to work with each group
- a topic that is best explored through age-specific learning

Facilitation Tips for This Format

- Organize participants into three or more parallel learning groups: families with children (grades 1-5), adolescents (grades 6-12), and adults.
- If there are a large number of adolescents, divide them into two groups: middle school and high school.

Organize separate groups for young adults, adults, and older adults. Or you can give the adults their own choice for forming small groups.

- Direct the adolescents and adults into small groups. Give them all the handouts and learning materials needed for the learning experiences
- Guide the families with children into table groups of two or more families. Give each table all the handouts and learning materials necessary for the learning experiences.
- A facilitator must guide all of the families through each learning experience, while catechists move from table to table assisting.

Age Group Format Outline

The In-Depth Learning Plan can be utilized for break-out groups of families with children, adolescents, and adults.

Families with Children

Learning Plan Outline

1. Introduction to the Lenten Symbols
2. Lenten Symbol Exploration: Creating Lenten Symbols
3. Additional Activity: Option C: Words and Music in the Lenten Season

Adolescents, Young Adults and Adults

Learning Plan Outline

1. Introduction to the Lenten Symbols
2. Lenten Symbol Exploration: Symbols in Lenten Liturgies
3. Additional Activity: Option C: Words and Music in the Lenten Season

Introduction to the Lenten Symbols

Whole Group: All Ages

Age Group: Families with Children, Adolescents, Young Adults and Adults

Preparation

Set a table (or use the one from the prayer space) for all to see with the purple tablecloth, Bible or Lectionary, lighted candle, bowl of water, small bowl of olive oil, loaf of bread (unsliced), glass of wine, cross, palms and ashes.

Introduction to Symbols

1. [spoken text] Begin this session by introducing the importance of symbols in the Catholic life. Use the following background information to prepare a brief introduction to symbols. Adapt the following information to the needs of your group.

Briefly put, a symbol is something that stands for and reminds us of something else. A symbol is a sign that embodies what it is intended to signify. It is almost synonymous with sacrament. It is a sign which is intimately connected to that which it signifies.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church summarizes the importance of symbols, “The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols relating to creation (candles, water, fire), human life (washing, anointing, breaking bread), and the history of salvation (the rites of Passover). Integrated into the world of faith and taken up by the power of the Holy Spirit, these cosmic elements, human rituals, and gestures of remembrance of God become the bearers of the saving and sanctifying action of Christ” (paragraph #1189).

Sandra DeGidio reminds us, “The symbols of the sacraments are all expressions of human intimacy – a bath, a meal, an embrace, a laying on of hands, a touch, a rubbing with oil. They do for us what words alone or abstract thought cannot do. They put the coming of God in our lives into body language. The symbolic acts at the heart of the sacraments help us break open and share with one another the common human experiences which reveal God’s presence to us.” (The Seven Sacraments – Symbols of God’s Care, Catholic Update 0483)

The waters of Baptism symbolize life and death, washing and cleansing, the mystery of new life out of death. The bread and wine of Eucharist are symbolic of God’s care, nourishment, love, nurture, and sacrifice for us; and of our care, sharing, love, nurture, nourishment, and sacrifice for one another.

Symbols speak to us of our identity as Catholics. For example, the symbol of light has its genesis in Christ, Light of the World. Since we are to walk as children of the Light, light identifies us and we become its reality – we become light, we become bread, etc.

If symbols were to speak, they would say: “I am...” rather than “I am like...” Symbols in the sacramental sense are the reality they express. Eucharist in the form of bread and wine is the Body and Blood of Jesus.

2. Design a chart, similar to the one below, on newsprint or poster board. In column one write the symbols listed below. Leave room under each symbol so that you will have room to write a summary of the responses from the participants in columns two, three, and four.

Symbols	Where we find this Symbol during Lent	Meaning for Us as Catholics
Ashes		
Desert		
Light and fire		
Water		
Palm Tree		
Oil		
Shared meal		
Bread		
Wine		
Cross		
Thorns		

Conduct this activity as a whole group activity. Ask the participants to help you determine the meaning of each symbol on the table. Focus their attention on the table with the symbols, and ask them questions such as:

- What does this (*symbol*) do for us or our family (e.g., light, water, oil, bread, shared meal, etc.)?
- What do you think of or what do you see when I say (*symbol*) or what do you feel... (e.g., shared meal, cross, etc.)?
- Who uses this (*symbol*) and what do you think it means to them?

[spoken text] Conclude by saying (in your own words), *It is probably clear from the variety of responses to the activity that symbols do not have a meaning by themselves. We bring experience and meaning to symbols. None of the objects by themselves can be a symbol unless we participate in that meaning through our own understanding and connection to events in our lives.*

Symbols remind us of stories – events which have been significant in some way for us. Some symbols are better at recalling a variety of stories than others. Those stories take on larger significance if they remind us of common stories.

3. Now work with the participants to identify where we find these symbols during Lent, and what these symbols mean to us as Catholics.

Take each symbol, one-by-one. Ask the participants to help you answer the questions: *When or where do you see this symbol at church? When do we use this symbol at church?* Then use the information on the handout, ***Lent in Word and Symbol***, to explain to the participants when and where we use that symbol during Lent. Give them examples of where the symbol is found in the Gospel story and in the ritual action during the liturgy. Then briefly present the meaning of the symbol for us as Catholics. You may want to put all of this information on newsprint, poster board, or a power point. Design the presentation similar to the chart in the handout: symbol – Gospel story – meaning.

Lenten Symbols: ashes, desert, light and fire, water, palm tree, oil, shared meal, bread, wine, cross, thorns.

4. Invite the participants to share with each other which symbol they like best and why.

Lenten Symbol Exploration

Option A: Lenten Symbol Creation

Whole Group: Families with Children

Age Group: Families with Children

Preparation

- If you choose the children's drawing activity, you will need: strips of paper, crayons, marking pens, and children's Bibles or copies of the Lenten Gospel stories
- If you choose the children's symbol creation activity you will need: an unlined 3x5 or 4x6 file card and 12" colored ribbon (purple) for each person, and creative art supplies (e.g., a variety of photo-filled magazines, construction paper, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, tape, pipe cleaners, etc.), children's Bibles or copies of the Lenten Gospel stories
- Copies of the handout, *Lent in Word and Symbol*

Lenten Symbol Creations

1. Select one of the following creative activities to help the participants prepare for Lent.

Option One: Draw Pictures of Lenten Symbols

Give the participants the opportunity to make reminders of the Lenten symbols by drawing pictures of their important symbols of Lent on a strip of paper (similar in size to a 3 or 4 frame comic strip). Provide long strips of paper on which the participants can draw their Lenten symbols. Ask the participants to select several symbols and then draw a picture of each symbol that helps them to remember Lent. (Write the list of symbols on newsprint or poster board for all to see.)

Use the handout, *Lent in Word and Symbol*, to suggest Lenten Scripture stories that go with each of the pictures. Give the participants the Bible reference to include on their symbol. Then remind them to read the passage several times during Lent. You could also ask them to read the Gospel passage that contains their symbol and write a short quote from the Gospel on their symbol.

Close by inviting each person to share his or her Lenten symbol strip with the group.

Option Two: Create a Lenten Symbol

Ask the participants to select one Lenten symbol that they think is most important for Lent or that teaches us the most about Lent (symbols: ashes, desert, light and fire, water, palm tree, oil, shared meal, bread, wine, cross, thorns). Using a variety of creative art supplies, help the children to create their own Lent symbol. They can use pipe cleaners to shape a symbol, or paper and crayons/markers to draw a symbol, or cut out pictures from magazines, etc. Draw, glue, or attach the symbols to one side of the file card.

Use the handout, *Lent in Word and Symbol*, to suggest Lenten Scripture stories that go with each of the symbols. Give the young people the Bible reference for their symbol, and ask them

to read the Gospel passage and write a short quote or prayer (inspired by the Gospel story) on the other side of the file card. Then attach the colored ribbon, so that the children can tie their Lenten symbol to their bed, lamp, etc. Tell them to attach the symbol to a place they will see every morning or evening. Then remind them to read their Gospel passage or prayer regularly during Lent.

2. Close by inviting each person to share his or her Lenten symbol with the group. (If there is time, ask them to share their Scripture quote or prayer with the group.)

Lenten Symbol Exploration

Option B: Symbols in Lenten Liturgies

Whole Group: Adolescents, Young Adults, and Adults

Age Group: Adolescents, Young Adults, and Adults

Preparation

Organize the participants into groups of four or five. Make copies of the handout, *Symbols of Our Lives*, *Lent in Word and Symbol*, and *Lenten Scripture Readings*. Decide if you want to explore just the Lenten Liturgies or if you want to explore the Triduum symbols as well and adjust the handout accordingly.

Participants also need copies of the Lent and Holy Week missalettes, and the Catholic Update *Lent: 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call* by Thomas Richstatter.

Symbols in Lenten Liturgies

1. Distribute the handout *Symbols of Our Lives*. Ask the participants to complete only the column that says, "Meaning to Me." Ask each person to identify the meaning of each symbol for him or her.
2. Invite participants to share the meaning of each symbol with their group. Ask the groups not to discuss the symbols, but to listen attentively to each person's reflections. Ask the groups to move through each symbol one-by-one, noting similarities and differences among the responses.

[spoken text] Conclude by saying (in your own words):

It is probably clear from the variety of responses to the activity that symbols do not have a meaning by themselves. We bring experience and meaning to symbols. None of the objects by themselves can be a symbol unless we participate in that meaning through our own understanding and connection to events in our lives.

Symbols remind us of stories – events which have been significant in some way for us. Some symbols are better at recalling a variety of stories than others. Those stories take on larger significance if they remind us of common stories.

3. Organize the participants into nine work groups with at least two people and no more than four people in each group. Assign each work group one of the following liturgies from Lent and Holy Week. Make the Easter Vigil the largest team (four-six people). If you have less than eighteen people, combine the First and Third, and the Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent.
 - Ash Wednesday
 - First Sunday of Lent
 - Third Sunday of Lent (Lectionary reading from John's Gospel)
 - Fourth Sunday of Lent (Lectionary reading from John's Gospel)

- Fifth Sunday of Lent (Lectionary reading from John's Gospel)
- Palm Sunday (Processional Readings, not the Passion)
- Holy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Easter Vigil

Distribute copies of the Lent and Holy Week missalettes to all of the participants. Distribute a sheet of newsprint and marking pens to each team. Guide the groups through the following process.

Step One: Using the missalette, ask the participants to read the Scripture readings for their assigned liturgy and to review the outline of the ritual where appropriate, e.g., Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil.

Step Two: Ask the teams to review the description of their liturgy in *Lent: 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call* by Thomas Richstatter (Catholic Update).

Step Three: Ask the teams to identify what symbol(s) emerge out of the readings and ritual actions and how the symbol(s) are used. Ask them to write their responses on the newsprint sheet.

Step Four: Ask the teams to determine what the symbol(s) mean for us as Catholics and what the symbol(s) teach us about the meaning of Lent. Ask the teams to write their responses on the newsprint sheet.

After the teams have finished their work, ask each group to share their report with the group. Proceed in the order of the liturgies (as listed above).

4. Distribute the handout, *Lent in Word and Symbol*, to each participant. Using the handout and *Lent: 40-Day Retreat – Rediscovering Your Baptismal Call* by Thomas Richstatter provide a “tour of Lent” for the participants. Use the reports from the teams in your presentation. Invite questions and reflections as you move through the Lenten liturgies. Distribute a copy of the handout, *Lenten Scripture Readings*, to each participant. Encourage the participants to read and reflect on the Scriptures for Lent.

Lenten Symbol Exploration

Option C: Words and Music in the Lenten Season

Whole Group: All Ages

Age Group: Adolescents, Young Adults, and Adults

Preparation

Organize a presentation by a parish staff person or guest speaker and the parish music director or other musician. This program is best done in church where the musician has access to an organ or piano.

Words and Music in the Lenten Season

Guide participants through the Lenten season by using the following process, repeating it for each Sunday of Lent:

1. Begin with a reading from the Lectionary (Old Testament or Gospel reading).
2. Share a brief reflection on the reading. Use a Lectionary commentary.
3. Connect the Lectionary reading to one or more of the symbols of Lent. (Use the Lenten symbols handout after the Adolescent and Adult session.)
4. Invite the participants in small groups to share a reflection on the reading using a question such as: *What does the reading say to us about the meaning of Lent? What are the implications of this reading for our experience of Lent and our lives as Catholics?*
5. Conclude by singing a Lenten hymn from the hymns that will be sung during the Lenten season.

Part 4. Sharing Learning Reflections and Home Application (20-25 minutes)

Advanced Preparation

- Determine what each group will bring back to the large group or to their small group to share as a result of their learning.
- Determine how each group will share their reports or projects so that they “teach” the other groups about the event and theme.

Suggestion: Invite the participants to gather in intergenerational groups to share their learning about the words and symbols of Lent.

Home Kit

Develop a Lent Home Kit that *extends* and *expands* the learning that has taken place through the intergenerational learning program. It should *engage* families and individuals in living their faith at home through traditions and celebrations, rituals, symbols, prayers, service projects, learning activities, and enrichment activities. Include specific activities on the event that you have selected as a focus for the session. These additional activities can include learning activities about the event, Scripture readings, table rituals, prayers, and so on.

Use a variety of design formats for your activities, such as a prayer card, stand-up card, poster, placemat, newsletter, booklet, magnet, bookmark, and artwork.

Included with this session are the following home activities:

6. Lenten Daily Prayers
7. Prayers for Every Day of Lent
8. Preparing the Lenten Prayer Space
9. Scripture Reflections during Lent
10. Table Prayers for Lent

1. Whole Group Sharing and Reflection

The whole group sharing experience provides an opportunity for each age group to share something they have learned with the entire group. Ask people to rejoin intergenerational groups from the All Ages Learning Experience OR ask family members to rejoin their own family and individual adolescent and adult participants to stay with their age groups from the In-Depth Learning Experience.

First, ask the participants to share what they learned in a small group setting or by inviting participants or groups, representing families, teens, and adults, to share projects or reflections with the entire.

[spoken text] Share the following in the words provided or in your own words:

Think of everything we have done in this session to learn about the Lent—the Scripture readings, the symbols, the traditions.

- What new insights did you gain into the Lenten season?
- What will you look for when you participate in the Lenten Season in the parish community?
- What is the most important “lesson” you have learned?
- How can the Lenten season help you to grow as a Catholic?

Review the Home Kit for the event containing prayers, rituals, service projects, family enrichment, and learning activities. Guide everyone in developing an individual or family action plan for living at home using the Home Kit, and planning for participation in the sacrament.

2. Reflection—Application Strategies

Prepare strategies and activities to guide individuals and families in *reflecting* on the meaning of their learning and their participation in the Church event and in *applying* their learning to daily living as a Catholic. The goal is to help people apply the beliefs and practices to their daily life, and report or “publish” their learning with others in the parish community.

Reflection and application activities and strategies can be included with the Home Kit. You can also include a time for feedback in your next intergenerational learning program

There are a variety of formats for reflection—application activities. Reflection tools include unfinished sentences, reflection questions, learning journals, and a structured reflection activities. Application tools include action plans, practice plans, “to do” lists, and resolutions.

Art and media strategies can also be used to express reflection and application. Consider activities such as bumper stickers, picture collages, “recipe for living” cards, posters, photos, and projects that create and bring back to Sunday Mass or the next intergenerational learning program.

Reflection Strategy Suggestions

- **Lenten Journal.** Adolescents through adults, as well as families, can use journals to record their experience of Lent—their thoughts, feelings, questions, hopes, dreams, faith practices, etc. Journals or poster-journals can record the actual Lenten experiences of individuals and families. Consider a poster-journal designed for the refrigerator so that all family members can record their actions and thoughts, feelings, and learning. Include the journal in the Home Kit.
- **Lenten Photo Collage.** Give each family a disposal camera in their Lenten Home Kit. Ask individuals and families to take photos of their “in-home” experience of Lent (praying, celebrating rituals, serving, etc.) Ask them to prepare a photo collage that presents their experience of Lent with descriptions or captions that explain their actions and commentary

on their feelings and/or thoughts about living Lent.

Ask them to bring their photos to Sunday Mass on a designated weekend or to a gathered program during the week. Be sure they put their name on the back of the photo. Develop a gallery or bulletin board of photos (in the church gathering space) as a way to publish people's learning. *Be sure to take photos of the display for the parish scrapbook.* After the display at church, encourage people to display their photos at home (on the refrigerator).

- Lenten "Recipe for Living" Cards. During Lent ask individuals and families to create practical strategies for living Lent that they have actually practiced. Distribute 3x5 file cards and ask people to write down one practical strategy on each recipe card. Ask them to return the cards on a particular Sunday during the offertory collection or during the week at gathered programs. Consider creating a Lenten or annual parish "cook book" of recipes for living the Catholic faith. Publish the book and distribute it to individuals and families. Include pre-printed file cards in the Home Lenten Kit.
- Lenten Scrapbook. Give individuals and families a small scrapbook in their Lenten Home Kit. Ask everyone to document their 40-day journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. The scrapbook can be filled with photos, artwork, prayers, reflections, etc. documenting the "in-home" experience of Lent (e.g., photos of their times of prayer or involvement in serving others, copies of prayers used during the year such as Lenten daily prayers, copies of completed reflection strategies, etc). Incorporate storytelling in the next gathered program so that individuals and families can share their scrapbooks and their learning and growth.

Example: Reflection on Lent

What did I see at the Masses during the Lenten Season?

- Think of the colors, decorations, symbols, and artwork used at Mass during Lent. Think of all the actions at Mass during Lent.
- What did you see at Mass during Lent?

What did I hear at the Masses during Lent?

- Think of the songs you sang during Lent. Think of the Scripture readings each week of Lent, especially the Gospel. Think of the message of the homily.
- What is Lent teaching you? What are the Lectionary readings teaching you about Lent?

How did I pray during Lent?

- Think of the prayers and the petitions at Mass during Lent.
- What do the Lenten prayers teach us about Lent. How can you keep the spirit of these prayers in your life during the Lenten season?
- Think of the ways you and your family prayed during Lent. What was the focus of your prayer during Lent?

How did you live Lent –at home and in the parish? How did you prepare for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

- What parish celebrations and programs did you participate in?
- How did you live Lent at home—prayer, rituals, service to others, etc.?
- What is one thing you learned about Lent this year? How did you grow closer to Jesus Christ during Lent?

Part 5.

Closing Prayer Service (5 minutes)

Close with a Lenten reading from the Lectionary or a Lenten prayer from the Sacramentary, or close the session by inviting the participants to renew their Baptismal promises.

Introduce the closing prayer by saying...

Lent is a time when we prepare to renew our Baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil. The themes of water and light permeate the Lenten season. Close the session by renewing your Baptismal promises together. In the early days of the Church, just before people were immersed in the baptismal waters, they turned to the west (the place of sin and darkness) and renounced Satan and evil. Then they turned to the east (the place of the rising sun which stands for the risen Christ) and professed their faith. Our prayer begins with everyone standing and facing west. Take turns reading each statement and responding together.

Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

We do.

Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

We do.

Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?

We do.

All turn and face east.

Do you believe in one God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

We do.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

We do.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

We do.

This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Through our Baptism we became joined with Christ, and members of the Church. As we strive to live as Christians, let us together ask for God's guidance as we share the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Our Father....

Each person should now come to the prayer table of symbols and trace the sign of the cross on his or her forehead, using water from the bowl.

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