

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

– SUNDAY 9 MARCH 2014

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Song suggestions:

Bread for the world, a world of hunger (625, Laudate)
Bread of life, hope of the world (78, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear about how Jesus spent 40 days in the desert. At the end of this time when he was tired and very hungry he was tempted with offers of bread, power and glory. What do you think Jesus did? Let's find out...

Opening prayer: God of life, you gave your Son Jesus strength in the desert. Give us the strength to do what we know is right and to stand up for what we believe in, even when it is difficult. Amen.

First reading (optional): Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

Psalm: Ps 50:3-6, 12-14 17 r. 3

Gospel acclamation: everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'. We suggest 'Change your lives and believe in him' by Christopher Walker (OCP Publications).

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

Jesus goes out into the desert to pray. He is there for 40 days and 40 nights and during this time he fasts.

How do you think Jesus feels at the end of this time?

Jesus is hungry, after all he's been fasting for 40 days. What does it feel like to be hungry?

Even though God created the world with enough food for everyone, many people around the world still go hungry.

Samai is five years old and lives in a village in Sierra Leone. Samai is clever and does very well at school. But his family find it difficult to buy enough food to feed themselves and still have enough money left to pay for Samai to go to school.

CAFOD has helped Samai's family learn how to grow their own food on unused swampland. Land which used to be used for mining diamonds.

Farming is a much better use for the land than diamonds. You can't eat a diamond!

People used to fight over the diamonds because everyone wanted to get really rich. Now, instead of fighting, they are farming so that they can grow enough food to eat.

The crops that Samai's family grow help them to have enough to eat and still have enough money for him to go to school.

How do you think Samai feels about that?

Jesus is tempted to turn stones into bread to eat. Even though he is hungry and this would be an easy way to get food, he says no.

Although having enough food is really important, Jesus says we also need the word of God in our lives.

What do you think this means?

It doesn't mean that it's ok for people not to have enough food.

But it does mean it is not enough for us just to be well-fed, we must also spend time listening to God and trying to live as God wants us to.

Lent is a time when we look at our lives and what we've done. We try to make our relationship with God better. We say sorry to God for what we have done wrong and we try to make a change to our lives to make the world a better and fairer place.

This isn't easy. Sometimes we'll be tempted to do the wrong thing, just like Jesus was in the desert, but we have to dig deep inside ourselves and try to find the strength to do the right thing.

What changes will you make to your life this Lent? And what difference will you try to make the world a fairer place so that everyone has enough to eat?

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

As we try to make a change to our own lives and to our world, we pray:

We pray for world leaders: that they may not be tempted by power and money, but instead may make wise decisions for the good of all people, especially those who are poor. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all our brothers and sisters throughout the world: that they may have enough food to feed their families and the chance to go to school to learn. Lord, in your mercy...

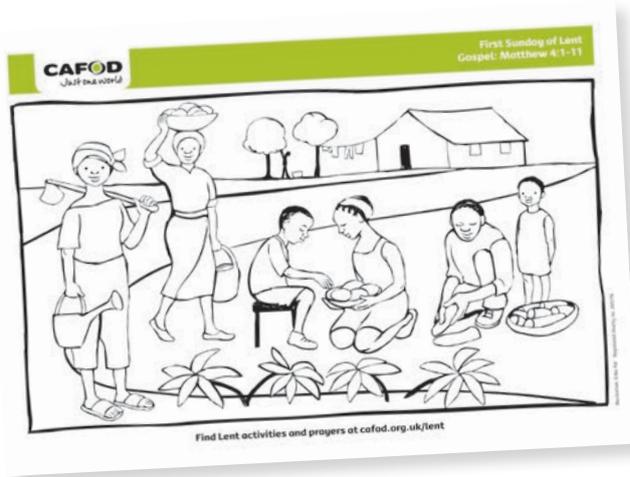
We pray for the work of CAFOD: that it may continue to help and support people to change their lives for the better. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may make a difference to our own lives and so help to make the world a fairer place for everyone. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Christ Jesus, help us to follow your example, to try to do what we know is right and to do all that we can so that everyone may have enough to eat. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the optional accompanying illustration of Samai and his family and to write or draw on the back what they will do this Lent to help make sure that everyone has enough to eat. The illustration is available to download from cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy



Children's liturgy resources for every Sunday are available from cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

Sign up for email reflections on each Sunday's gospel, to help you reflect as you prepare for children's liturgy at cafod.org.uk/pray

Ask the group to plant some seeds in solidarity with Samai's family. You could do it in the parish garden if there is one, or you could plant seeds in pots. You could raise money by selling some of your potted bulbs and seeds in a Big Dig garden sale after Mass.

Is there some land in your parish that is unloved or uncared for? Why not get your group involved in giving it some TLC? Just like the swampland that Samai's family use, you could change something unloved into something beautiful. Or you could offer to help the older people in the parish to look after their gardens. Imagine the transformation you could all see. See cafod.org.uk/bigdig for more ideas on how to get started.

Download our Lent calendar for primary school children and share today's reflection with the children. Print out the slides at cafod.org.uk/primary/food and give an action to each child to do during the coming week.

Ask the children to write a prayer for Samai's family and for all our global brothers and sisters who find it difficult to get enough food to eat.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Encourage the children to go online at home if they can to follow the Lent calendar – things to think about and daily actions throughout the season. Or ask the children to plant some seeds at home and see what they can grow. Ask the children to remember Samai and our global brothers and sisters in their prayers throughout the week.