



## What We Do in LENT

### Teaching Plan

#### Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *What We Do in Lent* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

#### Background

Saint Leo the Great described Lent this way: "What Christians should be doing at all times should be done during Lent with greater care." In other words, our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are reminders of who we are: brothers and sisters in Christ; sinners in need of God's saving love and mercy.

Help the children to look beyond simply giving up candy and help them see Lent as a time to put our love for God into action: by conversing with him (prayer), sharing blessings with others (almsgiving), showing true sorrow for sins (fasting and abstinence), and accepting God's forgiveness and grace to do better (reconciliation). All of these actions are enlivened by the Bible stories associated with Lent: Noah, the Exodus, the Prodigal Son, and ultimately, the Way of the Cross. Embrace Lent in this way and you can help children grow as loving disciples of Jesus all year long.

# Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

**Loving Jesus, we thank you for all you have done for us. Guide us to learn more about the season of Lent so that we can put our love for you into action. Amen.**

## Teaching Steps

Page(s)		
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets.</b> Say, <i>Lent is very important for us because of what is in the center of the picture. What is it?</i> (A cross)</li> <li>• <b>Discuss the art.</b> Ask, <i>What can you see people doing all around the cross?</i> Explain that these are some things we do in Lent. (Clockwise from top left: receiving ashes, praying the Stations of the Cross, Eucharistic adoration, sharing with others, praying the rosary, receiving Reconciliation)</li> </ul>	
2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Read aloud the first paragraph on page 2.</b> Ask, <i>What are some things you would like to get better at?</i> Discuss the role of practice, and how it can help.</li> <li>• <b>Read the second paragraph as the children follow along.</b> Ask, <i>What is a sin?</i> (Something we do wrong that moves us away from God) Point out that mistakes are not sins. Some might be accidents that we really can't help. Sins are deliberate choices we make to turn away from God.</li> <li>• <b>Discuss.</b> Finish reading the page together. Ask, <i>What does Pope Francis want you to become?</i> (An athlete for Christ) Ask, <i>What words or qualities come to mind when you think of a professional athlete?</i> (You might list these on a board or sheet of paper. Encourage all responses, but guide toward qualities, such as strength, speed, endurance, etc.) For each quality, ask what actions an athlete needs to take. For example, to get faster, a runner trains. To shoot free throws, a basketball player practices. Explain that as followers of Christ, our goal is to be happy with him in Heaven. So we, too, are called to take action.</li> </ul>	