

In the Divine Liturgy We Receive

Objective: The students will recall that Jesus prayed and fasted in the wilderness, discuss the concept of temptation, and discuss ways of serving in order to follow the greatest commandment.

For the Catechist

In the first unit the students learned about saying "Yes" to God by learning about the Mother of God and the disciples. In the second unit they learned that through Baptism they said "Yes" to God. In the last unit they learned that receiving Holy Communion is the way they say "Yes" throughout their life. In this lesson the students will learn that saying "Yes" involves living the Christian life of prayer and fasting and following the Greatest Commandment. Perhaps up until this lesson saying "Yes" was relatively easy. With this and the following lessons, the responsibility of our commitment is brought to light. In the following lessons they will unpack the meaning of the greatest commandment by learning the Ten Commandments.

"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him" (John 14:23).

The story of the temptation in the wilderness is presented as part of this lesson. From the story the children will see that Jesus was strong and could resist the devil because of prayer and fasting. A brief version of the story was presented in the Preschool book.

Satan/Devil/Lucifer. While we don't want to dwell on the devil, certain concepts should be understood:

1. Evil exists and evil spirits are called devils. Their leader is called Satan or Lucifer.
2. Jesus has won the victory over Satan and evil with His death and resurrection.
3. We may be tempted to do wrong, but the Holy Spirit is within us to help us be strong. Prayer and fasting help us grow in strength.

The Commandments. This lesson begins a unit that will teach the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are elucidations of the Greatest

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "We Have Seen the True Light" [Refer to the "Liturgical Prayers According to Jurisdictions" in the section "Introduction to Grade 2" for the correct wording to use in your parish.]

Introduction: Story of Lucifer's Fall
Need: Candy

Read Text Aloud: Have students read text aloud.

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic:* Praying, Fasting, and Following
- *Group:* Tug of Temptation
- *Craft :* "Following Jesus" Stand-Up

Closing: We Have Seen the True Light

Come Bless the Lord Icon Packets:

Packet I:

Packet II:

Commandment. In this lesson the students will learn the Greatest Commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, [and] You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31). The commandment places love as the cornerstone of what God asks us to do. The commandment, thus, is a positive statement. God asks us to DO something good, rather than to refrain from certain actions. While many of the Ten Commandments are phrased as negatives ("Thou shalt not..."), we understand them in a positive way. Respecting others by refraining from doing them harm is the first step in keeping the commandment to love them. Be sure to remind students, however, that respecting the rights of others is only the first step in loving them.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)

Pray Always

"As did the Jews before them, the early Church taught that believers should pray through the day, because they never stopped living in the heavenly realm. As a rule, Christians might gather once or twice a day for common prayer, but in addition to that personal, private prayer—the communication of each believer with the Lord—was considered indispensable. The usual times for prayer even then were in the morning, before the day's tasks were begun, at the evening at their conclusion, and before retiring" (DC 23).

Elements of prayer

"When you have determined a time and place for prayer, you then may wonder how to pray. The Fathers of the Church noted that what we have to say to God usually falls into four basic categories. First of all, we adore God: we express our worship of Him, we praise Him, we bless Him, we glorify Him. In other words, we tell Him how great we think He is. Besides this, we confess our sinfulness expressing sorrow for having failed His love. We tell Him that we know we are not so great. A third kind of prayer is thanksgiving, expressing gratitude for the many good things God has given us. We reflect on our blessings and thank Him for His generosity to us. A fourth style of prayer is supplication, asking God's blessings on the world, our loved ones, our community. Every prayer we know or may come across or which may spring spontaneously from our heart will include one or more of these elements. A well rounded prayer life will include them all" (DC 24).

Fasting Reverses the Fall

"There is another way which the dining table offers us as a means of non-verbal prayer, and that is fasting. Not eating, like feasting, is a way of using our mealtimes to glorify God who is our true nourishment. Christ Himself fasted, as the gospels record, and He told His followers to do the same. In that way, many Fathers taught, the Fall which was caused by eating out of turn is reversed" (DC 32).

Children and Fasting

"Our society teaches constant and unchecked consumption: if you want it, get it now! Children quickly absorb this principle from television, especially from the commercials aimed at them during children's programming. By teaching them to fast we provide a check on the untrammelled spirit of acquisition our culture endorses.

"Teaching children to fast can also help in another way. By enabling them to do without pizza or cheeseburgers, we are preparing them to say no to drugs or illicit sex. If we insist that they cannot survive without one kind of food when so many other kinds are available, can we reasonably expect them to say no in the back seat of a Pontiac?" (DC 34).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

[Gather at the icon corner.] *Today we'll say a prayer that we've prayed earlier this year. See if you can say it with me. It is "We Have Seen the True Light." As Christians, we follow the Light of the World, Jesus Christ. We truly have seen the True Light. We follow the True Light.*

Introduction

[Place candy on table.] *Today we are going to talk about something you all know but maybe don't know the name. Let's all form a line. [If you have a large class, choose part of the class for this exercise.] I want you to follow me for a few minutes. [Walk around table on which candy is placed. As you walk, continue speaking.] That candy looks good, doesn't it? I sure would like to eat it. ... Wouldn't you? [Allow responses. Ask students to take seats.] How many of you have ever wanted very much to do something even though it was something wrong? Maybe you reached for the candy you weren't supposed to have, [Reach for candy and pull back.] and before you took it pulled your hand back again. When you have feelings that you want to do something wrong, that is called "temptation." You are being "tempted" to do something wrong. Have you ever felt that? Have you ever been tempted? [Allow discussion. Seek ways to make the point that something that looks good at first may not be good and that they should think carefully before acting. Offer practical suggestions if appropriate, or ask the group to offer ideas of how to resist the temptations mentioned.] When you feel tempted, you can pray for help to the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, help me to do what is right." We pray for help whenever we say the Lord's Prayer. Do you know the phrase, "Lead us not into temptation"? We are asking the Lord to keep us from being tempted.*

Today we'll talk about fasting. What does it mean to fast? [Allow responses.] When we fast, we say "No" to food we usually enjoy. It makes us strong to say "No" and not to give into the temptation to eat whenever we want to. As Christians, we need to be able to say "No" to actions that are not what God wants, like stealing. As Christians, we practice saying "No" to food during fasting times, so we can say "No" when we are tempted to do things that are against God's laws. When we can't say "No" to something, it controls us. It is important to be strong so that we are not controlled by bad actions. Fasting gives us practice saying "No" so that we can say "Yes" to God.

Today we'll read about how Jesus was tempted. Before we read the story, let me ask you a question. Who is the devil? [Allow responses.] Before God made people, He made angels. Angels are heavenly spirits that serve God. One of them didn't want to serve God and said "No" to God. That angel was called Lucifer or Satan. Other angels also said "No" to God. God sent them all out of heaven and into hell. They became the devils. Devils work against God. Devils want evil and not good. Devils don't want us to follow God. Devils cause destruction. One day Jesus met Satan. We'll read about this today.

18

We Say "Yes" When We Pray, Fast and Follow

Jesus was sent to teach us about God. He said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself." That was the most important teaching He gave us.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

This is called the Greatest Commandment.

Before He began to teach, Jesus went away. Jesus went into the wilderness. He prayed to His Father. He fasted for 40 days.

Then the devil came to tempt Him. Here is the story.

76

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

This is called the Greatest Commandment.

What is a commandment? (It is a rule.) When we read in stories that the king commanded his army to march, we know that the army did so. A long time before Jesus, God gave His people commandments. You may know the story about Moses and the Ten Commandments. We'll learn more about these later.

What is the Greatest Commandment? (Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself [Mark 12:30-31]).

He fasted for 40 days.

Where did Jesus go? (To the wilderness) What is a wilderness? (A place where there are no people) What did He do there? (He prayed and fasted.)

[(Story is from Matthew 4:1-11) Read the story pausing to ask:]

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'

Jesus told the devil that bread may be important, but what is more important is God. In this passage, bread means not only food but also all the things we can have. Do you remember the story that taught us that lesson? (The Feeding of the Multitudes)

Satan left Jesus.

First of all, Satan is the name for whom? (The devil) Another name for the devil is Lucifer. Now, what happened in the wilderness? (The devil came to tempt Jesus.) What did Jesus say to evil? (No) What did Jesus say to His Father? (Yes) Jesus knew His Father's rules were only for good and not for evil.



he tempter or devil came to Jesus and said, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread."

Jesus said, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

Next the devil led Him to the highest point on the roof of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," said the devil, "throw yourself down. You will not be harmed."

Jesus said, "It is written 'You shall not tempt the Lord, your God.'"

Finally the devil led Him to a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms. "All this I will give to you," the devil said, "if you fall down and worship me."

Jesus replied, "Away with you, Satan! It is written, 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"

Satan left Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11).

77

He knew that the devil wanted to lead Him away from the Father.

Let's pretend that we're in the story. We're on top of a mountain, and someone is telling us that we could have every kingdom that we see below. Doesn't that sound like a good thing? (Yes) BUT, there is more. In order to have everything in the world, you have to worship the devil. Do you think it would be easy or hard to say "No" to the devil? [Allow responses.] We say that the devil tempted Jesus. We discussed this before we began our lesson.

Jesus was strong because He prayed and fasted.

Jesus was strong. Do you know what made Him strong? (He prayed and fasted.) It is important to pray and fast.

The Holy Spirit helps us pray, fast, and follow.

What are three things that unite us to God? (Prayer, fasting, and following) The Holy Spirit is our helper. Do you remember that Jesus said He would send us a helper? This is the Holy Spirit who helps us pray, fast, and follow God's rules.

Let's review. We learned that Jesus gave us the Greatest Commandment. What is it? (Love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself) What are two things that unite us to God? (Prayer and fasting) Who is the helper God sent so we could pray, fast, and follow? (The Holy Spirit)

Activity Tracks

Basic: Praying, Fasting and Following

Today we learned that praying and fasting make us strong so we can follow God's rules. Here is a crossword puzzle to remind us of what we learned. [If the children have difficulty with this, either do it as a group or have them work in pairs.]

Jesus knew God came first. He knew the devil wanted to lead Him away from the Father.



Jesus said "No" to evil. He said "Yes" to His Father. He showed us that it is important to follow God's rules. Jesus followed the Greatest Commandment.

Jesus was strong because He prayed and fasted. He showed us that it is important to pray and fast. When you can't say no to something, it controls you.

Prayer and fasting unite us to God. The Holy Spirit helps us pray, fast, and follow.



78

Praying, Fasting, and Following

A. Draw a line to the phrase that completes the sentence.

DOWN

1. Jesus showed us how to be ___ to God.
2. We say "Yes" to God when we ___ His rules.
3. We say "No" to God when we ___.
4. I want to say ___ to God.

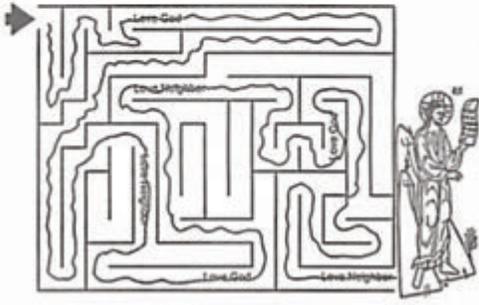
ACROSS

5. We say "Yes" to God when we ___.
6. Jesus said ___ to evil.
7. Prayer and fasting make us ___.
8. The ___ Spirit helps us.



Word Bank: you cannot do, help, pray, follow, strong, fast

B. Find your way to Jesus following the words of the Greatest Commandment.



Group: Tug of Temptation

Materials: Rope

When do you experience temptation? [Allow responses.] You have to be strong to resist temptation. The Holy Spirit helps us. When you are faced with something wrong to do, turn away from the temptation and say "Yes!" to God. We get stronger every time we resist temptation, every time we say "Yes" to God. Let's play a little game of tug of war to learn this lesson. I'm going to hold one end of the rope, and some of you will hold the other. Your aim is to get all the rope on your side. First, it will be my turn to pull the rope as I try to tempt you. After I speak, I want you to turn your heads from me, and as you pull against the temptation, say "Yes!" to God. [Have a few students hold one end of the rope and tug back and forth. As you say each of the sentences below, pull the rope (and students) toward you. Make sure the students dramatically turn from you. When the students turn away and say "Yes to God!" let go of a little of the rope. You may allow new children to hold rope after a few sentences.] Remember to turn away from temptation, and say "Yes" to God.

(1) You're in a store and no one is watching; you want to steal some candy. (2) You've broken a picture frame, and you want to blame it on your brother. (3) You're playing on the playground and want to cheat to win. (4) You're mad at your little sister and want to kick her. (5) You don't want to clean up your playroom and want to say you're sick (6) You see a dollar on the floor at home and want to take it for yourself.

Craft: "Following Jesus" Stand-Up

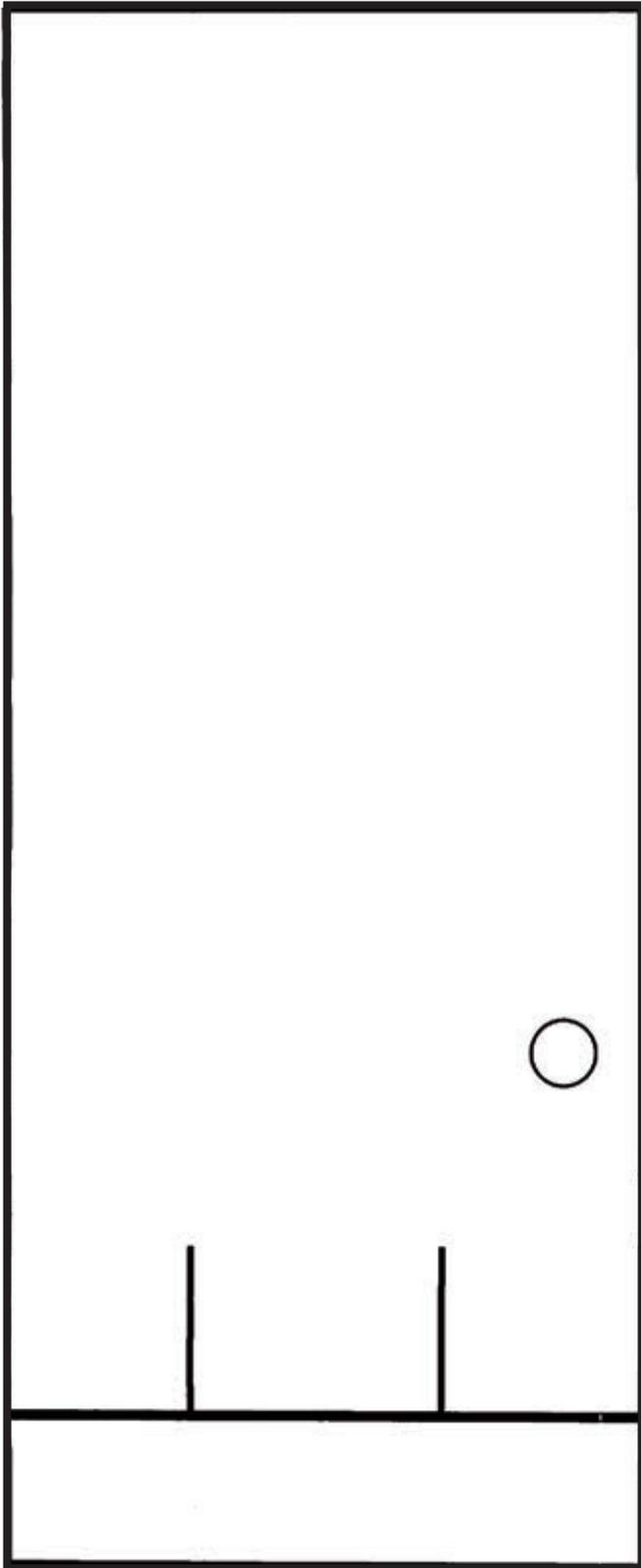
Materials: "Following Jesus" worksheet sheet, hole punch, yarn, markers, scissors.

In one of our first lessons, we learned that Jesus called people to follow Him. Do you remember some of the people who said "Yes" to Jesus? (Mary, the disciples, us) Today we learned once again that we are to follow Jesus. Here is a stand-up craft to remind you that you are a follower of Jesus. [Hold up sample.] Here is Jesus, and on this stand-up I've drawn myself. As you can see I'm connected to Jesus with the yarn. I am a follower of Jesus.



[Pass out activity sheets, have students color, cut and assemble. If they would like, they can make another follower of Jesus, maybe a brother or sister, and attach that stand-up also.]

Closing: Let's gather and pray "We Have Seen the True Light." Who is the True Light? (Jesus)



The bottom rectangle is to be cut out. The two vertical lines of each larger piece are to be cut. The bottom rectangle serves as a base when bent as a half circle, and placed into the cuts of the vertical lines. The circles are for hole-punches so yam can join the two.