

Mission Together

Lent Liturgical Prayer: Week Four



Introduction for teachers / leaders: Lent lasts for 40 days, echoing the period of time Jesus spent in the desert preparing for his public ministry. It is a time of preparation for the greatest feast in the Church year, Easter, when Jesus rose from the dead. During Lent, Christians devote more time to prayer, charity and sacrifice. Our Lent liturgical prayers include the Sunday's Gospel (in 2022 these are taken from Year C) and invite children to reflect on Jesus' words and actions. This liturgical prayer focuses on the fourth Sunday of Lent, when Jesus tells a now famous story about forgiveness and change – the Prodigal Son.

LITURGY PLAN

Setting the scene

Please refer to our guide: *How to Pray with Children* missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/

Opening hymn or recorded music

Our suggestions: *Freely, Freely (God forgave my sin, in Jesus name)*.

Introduction

Print the introduction on page 2 and ask a pupil to read.

Sign of the cross and opening prayer

Print the opening prayer on page 2 and ask a pupil to read.

Bible reading Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 *adapted for children from NJB*

Print the reading on page 2 and ask a pupil to read.

Bible reflection

See page 3. We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain.

Prayers of intercession

Print the prayers of intercession on page 4 and ask pupils to read.

Mission Together prayer

See to the right.

Sign of the cross

Closing hymn or recorded music

Our suggestions: *Freely, Freely (God forgave my sin, in Jesus name)*.

Follow up activities

Why is Lent a time to change; Activity workbook.

Download here <https://missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/lent/>

Mission Together Prayer

May all children
In the world
Share love
Share friendship and live
In the peace
Of God's love
Now and forever. **Amen.**

Mission Together is the children's branch of Missio, the Pope's charity for world mission.

23 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1NU missiontogether.org.uk

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Introduction

Reader: As we come together to pray, we remember that we are in Week Four of Lent. Lent is a special time of forgiveness, when we admit our bad choices, ask God to forgive us, and aim to make good choices in the future. Let's begin with our opening prayer, then hear a story Jesus told about a young man who had the courage to say sorry.

Sign of the Cross and Opening Prayer

Reader: God our Father, through our prayers, fasting and acts of kindness this Lent, we share your love with the world. Help us to always remember how much we are loved by you and help us to follow your Son, Jesus. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Bible reading: From the Gospel of Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Reader: 'Some people were grumbling because Jesus was kind to people they thought were sinners. So Jesus told this story:'

He said: 'A man had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "I don't want to wait until you are dead before I get a share of your money. I'd like it now." The father agreed. His son took the money, left home, and spent everything on wild living. When the money was gone the younger son was left with nothing. So he found a job feeding pigs. The son was treated badly and paid poorly. Even the pigs ate better than him! He remembered how fairly his father had treated his workers and how he made sure they had enough to eat. So the younger son decided to go back and ask to be forgiven and for work on his fathers farm.

As he made his way home, the father saw the younger son returning and was move with pity. He ran to his boy, and hugged and kissed him. The younger son said, 'Father, I have sinned. I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But the Father said to his servants, 'Bring the best robe out and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. We are going to have a celebration, because this son of mine was dead but now he is alive, he was lost, but now is found.'

The Gospel of the Lord **R/ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



Bible Reflection

We suggest this is delivered by a teacher / chaplain.

The story Jesus told has since become very famous. Many artists have painted pictures of it and musicians have written songs about it. It's thought that the story of the prodigal son became so famous because it teaches us all a very important lesson.

Q. Can anybody tell us what this lesson might be?

A. The lesson Jesus wanted to teach us through the story we just heard, is that God our Father is merciful, kind, and loving, and that if we admit our bad choices and say sorry, God will take away our sins and help us to change and start over again.

It's not easy admitting we have made bad choices and saying sorry to people we have hurt.

Q. How do you think the younger son felt before he decided to return home to his father?

A. The younger son probably felt a little worried and ashamed because he knew that his selfishness had hurt his father. It took the son a little while before he had the humility and courage needed to return home and ask for forgiveness.

Q. Can you remember what happened when the father saw his younger son returning home?

A. He ran to meet his younger son, he hugged and kissed him. Then he ordered that a robe and sandals be put on his son, who had returned home with nothing. Following this the father ordered that a great party take place to celebrate his son's return.

Q. How do you think the younger son must have felt?

A. The younger son must have felt very loved. He had no doubt been worried that his father would be angry, but instead his father was overjoyed that his son had returned to say sorry and start again.

Remember that when Jesus told this story, he wanted his followers to understand that the father in the story is like God our Father, and that he too is overjoyed when we say sorry for bad choices we've made and want to start again. Jesus wants us to know that God the Father will always forgive us, because we are his children and he loves us very much.

Let's remember that now as we pray together.



Prayers of Intercession

Reader: The response to our prayer is: **Hear our prayer.**

Reader: Heavenly Father, help us to remember always that you are loving and merciful and that we can always find a home with you, just as the prodigal son did. Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Reader: Heavenly Father, we pray for people who have made bad choices and feel too scared or ashamed to say sorry. We pray that they remember that you are a Father who is ready to forgive them and wants to help them start again. Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Reader: Heavenly Father, we pray for the children, families and staff in our school. May we all know how important it is to say sorry and forgive one another, so that our school is a place where your love and mercy is known. Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Reader: We pray for children overseas whom Mission Together helps: those who are poor, hungry, sad or scared. May they find hope in your love and may we always be ready to help them. Lord in your mercy. **R/ Hear our prayer.**

Reader: We end our prayers by saying together the ***Mission Together Prayer.***

**May all children
in the world
share love
share friendship and live
in the peace
of God's love,
now and forever. Amen.**

Closing hymn or recorded music.

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Fundraising ideas



Mission Together is the children's branch of Missio – the Catholic Church's official children's charity for overseas mission. Thanks to children in England and Wales, we can provide life-changing aid around the world in whatever form it's needed. That could be a new school, feeding programme, or a generator for a children's home. Mission Together helps all children, regardless of background or beliefs. That's how we show the all-embracing nature of the Catholic Church and the true meaning of 'mission'.

Fundraising is a brilliant way to involve everyone in raising money for Mission Together. Below are a few Lenten ideas but you can find other ways to get involved throughout the year by visiting our webpage <https://missiontogether.org.uk/fundraising-ideas/>

Please **share your** fundraising events with us @missioUK adding the hashtag #missiontogether

Ideas for Spring term

For ideas that require a prize, maybe your Governing Body could donate a small something?

Pancake races: hold a Pancake Day event with race, with a small entry fee. Everyone gets to enjoy their pancakes after the fun – as long as they didn't drop them!

Pancake flip fundraiser: If lockdown measures prevent the traditional pancake race, try a Fundraising Pancake Flip. Why not offer an Easter Egg prize? Pancake flips could take place on zoom or google classrooms. We'd also love to share your videos where safeguarding allows.

Spring flower sale: everyone loves the first signs of spring after winter! Why not pot some spring bulbs – snowdrops, mini daffodils, crocuses and hyacinths to sell to parents as Easter gifts?

Sponsored give-something-up: encourage pupils to give something up for Lent and either donate the money they save or get sponsored to do it. Alternatively, children can offer to take on extra chores or responsibilities in Lent for a donation to Mission Together.

Springtime Scavenger hunt: this is a great outdoor activity! Print off some sheets with springtime things to spot e.g. Snowdrops or crocus, tree buds, birdsong and birds nesting, cherry blossom. You can tailor the items to whatever suits your space and environment. Charge pupils to enter. Either get pupils to tick the items off or take pictures to prove they've found them! Every complete scavenger sheet is placed in a hat, with the pulled out winner receiving a prize.

Lent through a Lens: Run a photo competition for KS2. Challenge pupils to capture images of springtime. Charge for entry and provide a prize for the winner(s). Perhaps introduce different categories e.g. wildlife, nature, people. You could even have a category for grown-up competitors!

Easter bonnet competition: charge pupils to enter a competition for the best Easter bonnet. Prizes for the most fabulous fashionista creations! Alternatively you could get everyone involved in egg painting or Easter cake designs, and sell them after for extra fundraising!

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