

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

PREPARING FOR LENT

TOPIC: PREPARING FOR LENT – MAKING A PLAN; PRAYER, FASTING, AND ALMSGIVING
JESUS IN THE DESERT – UNITING OUR SUFFERINGS WITH CHRIST

MATERIALS

- Rocks
- Sharpies
- Bible

OPENING PRAYER:

Come, O Spirit of Fortitude, and strengthen all parents and encourage them in their vocation of service to their families and to each other. Strengthen especially those who are single, separated, or divorced, to have courage and remain in your care as they too serve their families. Lead them all to a future filled with hope. Our Father...

([Catholics For Family Peace](#))

ICE BREAKER

Questions?

Who is the most generous person that you know? Why?

Who is the funniest person that you know?

1. Ask everyone to share within their families.
2. Then, invite large group sharing
3. One by one, family members share their answers with the larger group.



FAMILY SHARING

- Ask each family to share about their *Senior Sharing* experience by explaining who they interviewed and what he/she said about their favorite memories of Lent when they were growing up.
- Ask how they felt about their experience.



REVIEW MAIN CONCEPT

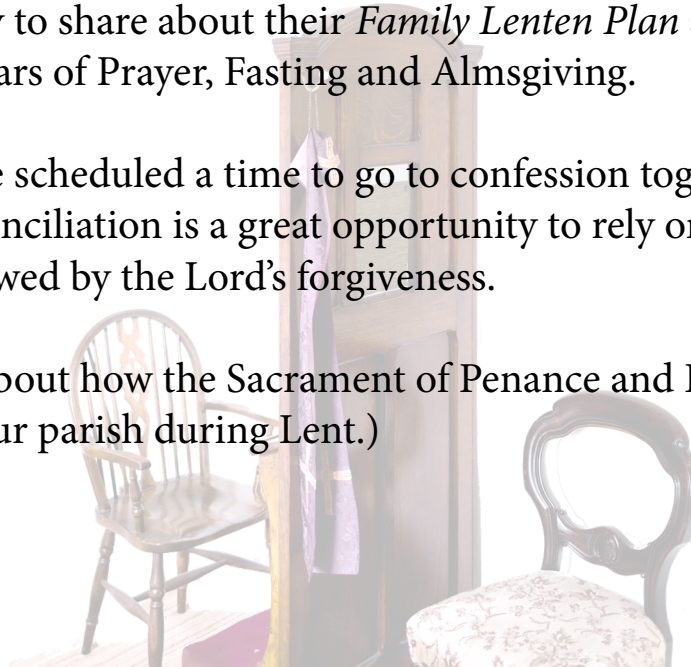
- Preparing for Lent
- Jesus in the desert

FAMILY SHARING

As a reminder, model for families by briefly sharing your own *Family Lenten Plan*. Then ask each family to share about their *Family Lenten Plan* and how it relates to the three Lenten Pillars of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Also, ask if they have scheduled a time to go to confession together. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is a great opportunity to rely on the Lord's mercy and grace and to be renewed by the Lord's forgiveness.

(Remind everyone about how the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation will be made available at your parish during Lent.)



CONTENT

Ask all the family members to find a comfortable place to sit.

Explain: At the last gathering we talked about the story of Jesus in the desert.

I am going to ask you to quietly relax as I say a prayer and then read the story of the Temptation of Jesus to you from Sacred Scripture. When I have finished reading we will sit in silence for a minute and think about what God is saying to us through this story.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, as we read and think about the story of Your life, we ask the Holy Spirit to come and speak to the hearts of all here, from the oldest to the youngest.

Calmly Read [Luke 4:1-13](#).

Wait at least 30 seconds.

Explain: Now I ask each member of your family to share privately about what stood out to them.

Share Guidelines:

- a. Respectfully listening to each family member as he/she is sharing their reflection is very important.
- b. Avoid interrupting or even correcting what another is saying (we're looking to listen, not critique).
- c. When each family member has had an opportunity to share his/her reflections, signal by raising your hand.
- d. Please continue to sit quietly while we wait for the other families to finish.

Give families time to share privately.



LENTEN ROCKS

1. Provide each family (or each family member) with three rocks and a sharpie.
2. Explain: For many reasons, rocks are symbols of Lent. As we just read, Jesus foiled Satan's attempt to get Jesus to change rocks into bread. Jesus fasted and prayed in the desert (also described as a wilderness) which, in Israel, is a rocky, arid region. Jesus called St. Peter the "rock" when He said, "On this rock [Peter] I will build my Church." Rocks are used to build strong foundations. Jesus is the cornerstone, which is the rock that holds up the whole house and the rock on which we, as Christians, build our lives. We will use our rocks to help us remember that because we love Jesus we unite our Lenten sacrifices and our good works with Him.
(Adapted from [Franciscan Penance Library](#))
3. Instruct each family (or each family member) to write their *Family Lenten Plan* actions/sacrifices on the rocks. There should be one rock to represent the Lenten Pillar of Prayer, one to represent Fasting, and one to represent Almsgiving. If the rocks are small, they can just write a word or two that gives the main idea.
4. Model by showing what you have written from your *Family Lenten Plan* on your rocks to represent the Lenten Pillars. The rocks should be placed on your home altar (or in your prayer space).
5. Ask families to place their rocks on their home altars to remind them of their Lenten Pillars.

FAMILY SHARING

As a reminder, model for families by very briefly sharing again about your own crucifix that you placed on your home altar. Then ask each family to share about their crucifix as well.

PRAYER

God, heavenly Father,

Look upon all the families gathered here and hear our prayers during this holy Season of Lent.

By the good works You inspire in us, help us to follow Jesus' example to discipline ourselves through fasting and almsgiving and to be renewed in spirit through prayer. We unite all our Lenten sacrifices and our difficulties to You because we love You and we know that You love us. We are Your children and You rejoice when we give our hearts to You! We ask all this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

REMIND

Remind families about the next meeting date and time.

