

First Sunday of Lent

Adam and Eve disobey God

INTRODUCTION

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. The word 'Lent' comes from a very old word which means springtime. It is the time of year when the days are getting longer as summer gets closer. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts for forty days. Over the next few weeks the readings we will hear encourage us to say 'yes' to God and 'no' to our own selfishness.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Say Candle Prayer 1: *Flicker, flicker little candle.*

SORRY

Lent means springtime, a time of year when new life begins and everything starts to grow. We can make a fresh start too, and try extra hard to be good. Together let us sing Sorry Song 1: *Dear Lord Jesus hear our prayers.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 5: *We have come to hear you, Lord.*

GOSPEL (cf Genesis 2:8-10, 3:1-14, 22-24)

Adam and Eve lived very happily together in the Garden of Eden. They could eat the fruit from any tree in the garden except the fruit from the tree of good and evil which grew in the middle of the garden.

Now, the Devil hated God, and loved to spoil the good things that he had made. One day he disguised himself as a snake and slithered up to Eve.

'Why don't you taste the fruit on the tree in the middle of the garden?' he hissed.

'We must not because God asked us not to,' answered Eve.

'Do not listen to God,' said the snake, 'Eat it and you will become as wise and powerful as he is!'

So Eve picked a fruit, ate some, and shared it with Adam. Later, when God called to Adam and Eve, they hid from him because they were ashamed and embarrassed.

'Did you disobey me and eat the fruit from the forbidden tree?' God asked them.

'The snake made us do it!' said Eve.

'No. You chose to disobey me,' said God sadly, 'Now you must leave this beautiful garden, for your disobedience has allowed death to come into

the world.' So Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden.

DISCUSSION

Today's story is all about temptation, when you think about or do something that you know is wrong. In the story, who was tempted and what did they do wrong? Like Adam and Eve, we are all tempted sometimes to do something wrong.

God wants us to choose to do what is right, but this is not always easy. During Lent we make promises – we may give up something nice, or promise to do something good. Whatever we do, we try to keep in touch with God, to be less selfish and more generous.

Prompt the children to discuss any Lenten promises they have decided to try to follow.

The emphasis should be on doing things for Jesus, rather than simply on giving things up. If they give up biscuits, sweets etc, there should be a positive motive. For children it is often easier to achieve short term goals rather than to try to make one promise for the whole six weeks. They could have a different 'promise' or 'act' for each day or for each week.

ACTIVITY

Either photocopy and colour in the picture, or compile a large picture with the individual characters from the story, with cut-out leaves etc. which can be coloured and pinned onto the completed scene.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
there will be times during Lent
when we might find it difficult
to keep our promises.
But if you are there to help us
then we will keep on trying.