

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – First Sunday in Lent
Intergenerational Gospel Lesson

Scripture: Luke 4:1-13

Background

Luke's "take" on the temptation of Jesus was probably borrowed from the one Matthew offers (Matthew 4:1-11). It's interesting that Luke switches the sequence of the last two temptations and that the Gospel of Mark (Mark 1:12-13) does not detail what the temptations were.

Today, many people are becoming ambivalent to, if not put off by, blaming the Devil for tempting Jesus. Temptation happens. What is important about this passage is that Jesus stared down each temptation and chose a better way. Perhaps the questions for us are: where or when am I inclined to be a show off? Where do I need to be in charge of things? Where am I so sure I am absolutely right and others are absolutely wrong? Then, as we consider our community, what can we do to be more in sync with what Jesus came to teach us?

Before

Be thinking how to pair people so that very young children are matched with either a parent or an adult they trust. This is especially important for children too young to write proficiently. They can dictate what they are thinking and the adult can scribe for them. The adult needs to be a person who will be eager to notice the insights gained from the child's perspective.

In an intergenerational setting, when people might not know each other well the gathering helps to break the ice. It should be fun, make people comfortable, and help entry into the event. Select the activities that you think best suit your people and time frame.

Gathering: Write each of the following words, plus any words that resonate with you, on two slips of paper.

- Lent (not the past tense of to lend)
- ashes
- purple
- 40 days
- temptation
- repent
- sin
- forgiveness
- fast (not the opposite of slow)
- holy

Supplies Needed

- Name tags
- pencils or pens
- slips of paper with the words found in this section on them. Have two slips of paper for each word.

When people arrive, tell them to make a name tag and pick one of the prepared slips of paper. (In order to pair a child with an adult, you may want to put one set of the words in

a bowl marked “adults” and another bowl marked “children.” If there is not an even number of people, the leader takes one of the slips. When all have gathered, ask everyone to find the other person who has the same word so they can be partners and come up with a definition of the word they chose. Then ask each pair to state the definition, telling them it is okay to say they do not have a clue what the word means. The rest can help if one pair is stuck. If all are stuck, appoint a person who will ask your clergy person and get back to the group at some point.

Preview: Tell the group what you have planned for this session: beginning and ending in prayer, hearing and reflecting on today’s Gospel passage (commonly named, The Temptation of Jesus), and a few questions and selected activities. Let them know what time you expect to be finished and answer any questions.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, we come together today grateful that you are here with us as we try to figure out how we can make this a Holy Lent for us and for those in our community. Amen.

The Story: Luke 4: 1-13. Options: Identify one person to read the entire passage; or you read verses 1-2 and verse 13 and ask for three people to read verses 3-4, verses 5-8, and verses 9-12; or tell the story using the following as a guide:

Supplies Needed:

- Either a Bible or the passage printed out for each pair partnered in the gathering time. (You can find a NRSV copy at the end of the lesson)

Jesus had been baptized and heard that God was pleased with him. Jesus knew he had work to do, but what WAS the work? So Jesus went off by himself to pray and figure out what he needed to do. Have you ever had this happen? You are trying HARD to do the right thing and all kinds of OTHER ideas come into your head. We call these other ideas: temptations. Here are the three “temptations” Jesus said no to:

(1) Turning stones into bread. “A lot of people would have food if I did that. That would be good, BUT it would just be a magic trick, not something others could learn how to do. Hmm. Bad idea.”

(2) Become boss of the whole world. “I could tell everyone what to do and demand how people would live, BUT then how would people figure out how to do the right thing? Hmm. Bad idea.”

(3) Throw myself off the top of the temple and have God save me. “I certainly would get everyone’s attention and show the loving power of God, BUT how would people learn how to live? And plus: someone might try to do the same thing and get hurt. Hmm. Bad idea.”

Now that Jesus had said no to these temptations, he was ready to begin to help us learn how to do things God’s way.

Questions:

Tell the groups you are going to give each group a question along with some clues on the other side of the index card.

The group is to come up with a way to pantomime their answer to the rest of the group. They will read the front of the card and then present their silent skit. The rest of the group will try to discover what they have offered.

Supplies Needed:

- Index cards

Question One

Front side of card:

We all need to eat. Food is important.
What else do we need to be healthy?

Back side of card: (some suggested answers)

Exercise, work to do, time for fun,
help people who need our help

Question Two

Front side of card:

We are not the boss of the world.
So what are some things we are in charge of doing?

Back side of card: (some suggested answers)

Taking care of pets, brushing our teeth,
Listening in church, remembering to say, “Thank you” to God

Question Three

Front side of card:

We aren't expected to do magic tricks.
What are some things we can do:

Back side of card: (some suggested answers)

Making friends with people who need a friend.
Sharing and helping other people.
Making time to pray and reading the bible, etc.

Snack Break: Invite the group to come together, have a snack and visit for a few minutes while they enjoy their snack.

Supplies needed:

- Pretzels
- juice, and coffee



Pretzel legends:

Pretzels have been around since at least 210 A.D. when they were understood to represent arms folded across the chest in prayer. Later, pretzels were seen to represent a monk in prayer and the three holes represented the Trinity. People often give up chocolate for Lent, but few give up pretzels.

Our Response: Tell the group that Lent is often understood as a time to “give up” things — and this can be good. Tell them Lent can also be a time to add good things.

Supplies needed:

- large piece of paper
- a felt marker

Offer to scribe on a big piece of paper.

Label two columns: one: “Stuff to give up,” the other “Stuff we could take on.” Ask the group to call out things, telling you which column they go under. (Idea starters: too much TV, junk food under “give up” and read a good book, save some money to give to people who need it under “take on.”)

A Lenten Mural: Invite the group, working together, to design a mural.



Supplies Needed:

- butcher paper or other large piece of paper
- felt markers or crayons
- a few paper plates

The above is simply a suggestion. Obviously, the group needs to come up with their own ideas about what they want to draw. Hang the mural when it is done.

Prayer Partners: Invite people to choose partners to pray for each other during Lent. As the group forms pairs, ask each to write what they want the other to pray for them during Lent. Then exchange lists to take home for prayers. (If you did the opening activity of splitting people into pairs, maybe you could use these couples to become prayer partners as a way of having young and old praying for one another.)

Supplies Needed:

- Paper
- pencils or pens

Closing Prayer: Ask the group to stand in a circle holding hands. Tell the group you will begin the prayer and when you have finished you will squeeze the hand of the person on your right indicating you have finished. That person may either add to the prayer or remain silent and squeeze the hand of the person on their right when they are ready. Continue around the circle until it gets back to the leader who says, simply, “Amen” OR you can end by all saying the Lord’s Prayer together.

Luke 4: 1-13

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' ⁴Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone."'

5 Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.'⁸Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."'

9 Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you",¹¹ and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."'¹²Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'¹³When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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