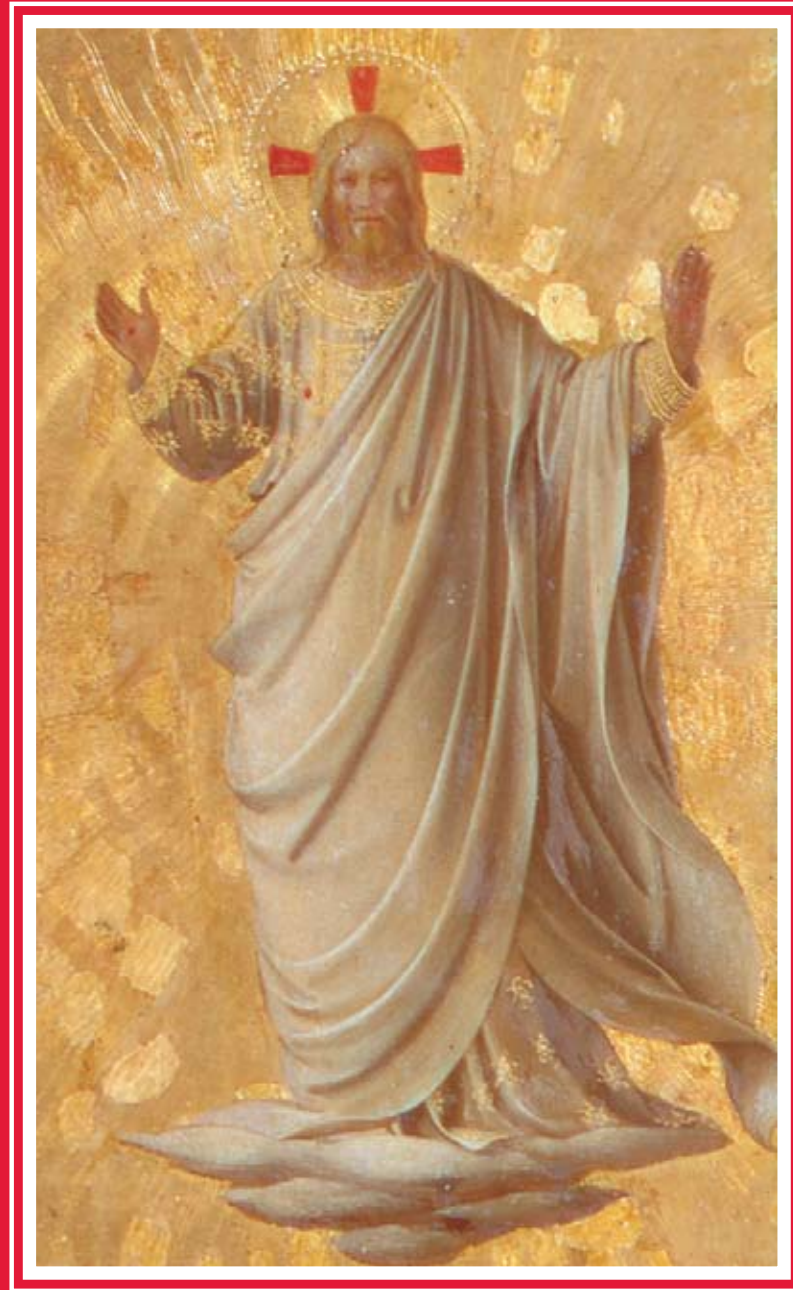


FOLLOWING CHRIST



TEACHER'S MANUAL

Faith and Life Series

Third Edition

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES

Catechism of the Catholic Church References

Advent: 524, 1095
Christ's Whole Life as a Self-Offering: 606–18, 621–23
Cross: 312, 599, 620, 622
Fasting as Church Precept: 2043
Forms of Penance in Christian Life: 1434–39
Jesus as Our Teacher and Model of Holiness: 468–69, 516, 519–21, 561
Lent: 538–40, 1095, 1438
Liturgical Seasons: 1163–65
Liturgical Year: 1168–71, 1194
Penance: 1430, 1460
Sacrifice: 2099–2100
Self-Control: 2339–42

Scripture References

Example of Crucified Christ: Phil 2:1–16
Running the Race of Faith: 1 Cor 9:24–27

Summary of Lesson Content

Lesson 1

Self-denial means sacrificing our own will, or something we desire, for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Lesson 3

Fasting and abstinence are forms of penance. Penance is a form of sacrifice and purification to help us grow closer to Christ. Penance strengthens us to do his will.

Fasting is giving up food. The Church defines fasting as eating one regular meal and two small meals that do not exceed the one regular meal in any given day.

Abstinence is refraining from eating meat.

Lesson 2

The doctrine of the Cross calls us to die to our sinful ways, so that we may live in Christ.

In Baptism, original sin is washed away and the new life of grace is poured into the soul.

Bearing the crosses (trials and difficulties) that come our way is a kind of self-denial and is pleasing to God.

Lesson 4

Advent and Lent are the penitential seasons of the liturgical year.

Penance can make up for past sins and help prevent future sins.

The primary forms of penance include fasting, abstinence, almsgiving, and works of charity.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES

LESSON ONE: SELF-DENIAL

Aims

The students will learn that self-denial means sacrificing our will, or something we desire, for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Materials

- *Activity Book*, p. 25
 - Crucifix
- Optional:
- “Lift high the cross,”
Adoremus Hymnal, #606

Begin

Hold up a crucifix and read Philippians 2:1–16. Explain that Jesus’ death on the Cross is the greatest act of love. Love is not just an emotion, but a gift of self. Jesus gave of himself completely, even unto death. The Cross, for Catholics, is a sign of our salvation, of God’s great love for us, and of our hope.

Through our trials and sufferings, we share in the promise of the Resurrection. Pass the crucifix around to the students and allow each of them to silently look at the wounds of Christ and reverence the Cross.

Develop

1. Read paragraphs 1–3.

2. Have the students name some of their trials, or crosses. These will vary from student to student (e.g., math, my brother, parents’ divorce, etc.).

3. Tell the story of a man who prayed to Jesus telling him that his cross was too heavy. Jesus heard his prayer and agreed to exchange his cross for another. The man entered a room, and Jesus took his cross away. This man started looking at all the other crosses. Some were huge, made of concrete, some were made of lead, others were covered with thorns, and some were too awful even to view. Then, in the corner, this man saw a small cross; it looked light in comparison with the others, and about his size. He went over, and could pick it up, and saw that it was a good fit. He told Jesus that this was the cross that he wanted. It was, of course, the cross he had originally carried.
4. Self-denial is very important because often we become focused only on ourselves. We become proud and fail to see the needs and sufferings of others. We should sacrifice in true love and concern for others (as Jesus did). To have true joy, we should do things in this order: Jesus, others, me.

5. The students may make collages in the shape of a cross, reflecting the various “crosses” in their daily lives, or in our society.

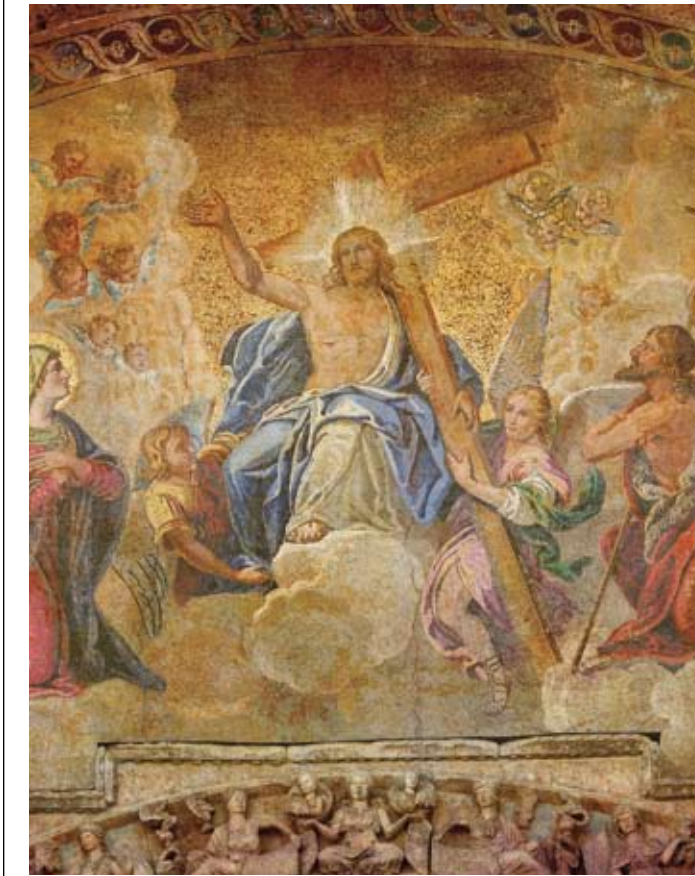
6. Teach the students the Stations of the Cross (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 81 or p. 396). This is a means of uniting ourselves with Jesus’ suffering, and meditating upon his greatest act of love for us. Pray the Stations with the students. You may wish to have the class make a set of Stations for your classroom. (These can be used during Lent.)

Reinforce

1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 25 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 87).
2. Have the students make a set of Stations of the Cross for the classroom or to take home.
3. Have the students share ways of making sacrifices as acts of penance and love.
4. Have the students work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 83).

Conclude

1. Teach the students to sing “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Prayer before a Crucifix (on the facing page).



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though we may not be able to see it at the time.

Bearing the crosses (that is, trials and difficulties) which we do not choose but which come to us anyhow in the course of life is a most perfect kind of self-denial, more pleasing to God than the acts of self-denial we choose for ourselves. For in all things it is most perfect to accept the will of God, even when we do not like it very much. Jesus’ entire life was one of obedience to the will of the Father, no matter how hard it was or what it required of him, even his death. “Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done” (Lk 22:42).

And why are we willing to set out on such a way of life? In following the example of Jesus we are showing our love for God by willingly and, yes, even cheerfully accepting whatever he permits.

Fast and Abstinence

We are encouraged to choose some **penance** for ourselves. To help us, the Church requires **fasting** and **abstinence** from certain foods on penitential days. To abstain, in this case, means not to eat meat. If we are fourteen years old or more, we must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

In the United States, the bishops have declared abstinence from meat on all Fridays of Lent. In other seasons, Friday remains a day of penance on which we are supposed to practice some kind of self-denial, and the Church advises us to make Friday a day of abstinence all year round.

Fasting, in general, means not eating at all. When the Church requires us to fast, however, it means that only one full meal a day should be eaten. In addition, two smaller meals may be taken, but those taken together should not equal another full meal. In the Church, there are two days of required fasting: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This applies to anyone eighteen to sixty years old.

Penitential Seasons

Advent and **Lent** are special seasons in the Church year in which we are reminded to renew our spirit. They are called penitential seasons.

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and is a season of special preparation for celebrating the birth of Christ. The Church suggests that we do some form of penance as part of this preparation.

The season of Lent begins six and a half weeks before Easter and is a season of preparation for the Passion, death, and Resurrection

“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

(Matthew 6:16–18)

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CHAPTER 7

The Cross and True Riches

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

Matthew 16:24

The path through life to heaven is often compared to climbing a mountain, and the mountain-top is heaven, God’s holy mountain. In Psalm 43, the pilgrim on life’s journey cries out to God:

Oh, send out your light and your truth; let them lead me, let them bring me to your holy hill, and to your dwelling! (Ps 43:3)

Christ our Savior offers us a way that will lead to peace, joy, and our final goal of total happiness with God. The way that leads to this wonderful state of perfection, or holiness, is based on Jesus’ words: “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23).

Self-denial means doing something we would rather not do or refusing some pleasure we would like for the sake of some greater good, for example, taking time to help your brother with his fractions or giving up dessert sometimes. Another example is giving your schoolwork your best effort, although it may not be easy and you may have to give up much of your free time to do it. Your schoolwork (or perhaps a particular subject) may take on the nature of a cross, especially if it is difficult.

Now we have come to a great mystery—the doctrine of the Cross. It is the principal sign of Christianity. As a result of original sin, it is necessary for us to put to death in ourselves a certain way of living which Saint Paul calls “the old man” and to put on “the new man,” Jesus.

The old man is Adam, who misused the gifts of God and so brought sin and disorder into the world. As you know, this sin is passed on to all of us as Adam’s children. We are born in the state of original sin. Through Baptism, original sin is washed away and we are given the life of grace. However, original sin has left in us many wounds and disorders. These wounds can only be healed by God’s grace through a lifetime of right living, prayer, and self-denial.

This is not always easy. When Jesus asks us to love our enemy and to do good to those who hurt us, he is not asking us to do something that comes naturally or easily. But, by the power of God, it is not impossible. For with God “all things are possible” (Mt 19:26).

Our daily cross is all the things which, naturally speaking, we dislike. Our cross may be a penance we choose for ourselves or suffering that God allows in our life—perhaps an enemy at school or some sickness. Such sufferings are permitted for our good or the good of others,

“God loves a cheerful giver.”

2 Corinthians 9:7

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PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus,
I cast myself upon my knees in your sight,
and with the most fervent desire of my soul
I pray and beseech you to impress upon my heart
lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity,
with true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment,
while with deep affection and grief of soul
I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate
your five wounds,
having before my eyes that which David, your prophet, spoke of you, my Jesus:
“They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones.”

Preview

In the next lesson, the students will learn more about their daily crosses.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES

LESSON TWO: DAILY CROSSES

Aims

- The students will learn that the doctrine of the Cross calls us to die to our sinful ways, so that we may live in Christ.
- They will learn that, in Baptism, original sin is washed away and the new life of grace is poured into the soul.
- They will learn that bearing the crosses (trials and difficulties) which come our way is a kind of self-denial and is pleasing to God.

Materials

- *Activity Book*, p. 26
- Optional:
 - “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606

Begin

- Review the doctrine of original sin. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, we are all born with original sin. Its effects are absence of grace, suffering, death, and concupiscence (tendency to sin). In Baptism, original sin is washed away and we are filled with grace, but the wounds of this sin
- remain—we still suffer and die, and we still have a tendency to sin. Through accepting our sufferings and offering them to God, and uniting our sufferings with those of Christ, we can overcome our tendency to sin with the help of God and his grace.

Develop

1. Read paragraphs 4–9.
 2. God gives us free will. Often, the sufferings we have, we have brought upon ourselves by our choices. For example, is Sunday night and we want to enjoy ourselves, but we still have homework to do because, by our own choice, we did not do it earlier. We can do penance by working diligently and making a good choice in the beginning (such as doing our homework as soon as we get home on Friday night). By making good choices, we can sometimes avoid suffering (e.g., not fighting with an enemy at school). By making good choices and sacrificing our immediate pleasures for a greater good, we bear our crosses well.
 3. Some sufferings we do not choose; they are given to us (e.g., an illness). Some people often think that such suffering is pure evil or unnecessary. Seeing someone we love suffer is often harder than suffering ourselves. However, from such a
- suffering, a greater good can come about if we unite ourselves with Jesus and his sufferings. In suffering with Christ, we share in his great love, and we enter deeply into the mystery of redemption. We can also use this opportunity to suffer on behalf of another (i.e., offer our cross for another person’s good). For example, I could offer my suffering to God as a penance or act of love for the conversion of a sinner or for a prayer request.

4. Jesus himself suffered greatly. He accepted the Father’s will in his life, and was obedient unto death on the Cross. So, too, we must accept God’s will. Accepting God’s will in suffering is of greater value than our own self-imposed sufferings. However, in choosing our own, we are made ready and able to accept God’s will because we are used to denying ourselves. Have the students list some self-imposed sufferings and some which are given to us by God’s will.

Reinforce

1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 26 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 87).
2. Have the students work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 83).
3. Have the students pray the Stations of the Cross or write their own prayers for each of the stations (see facing page).

Conclude

1. Lead the children in singing “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Prayer before a Crucifix (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 79).

CHAPTER 7

The Cross and True Riches

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
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The path through life to heaven is often compared to climbing a mountain, and the mountain-top is heaven, God’s holy mountain. In Psalm 43, the pilgrim on life’s journey cries out to God:

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Christianity. As a result of original sin, it is necessary for us to put to death in ourselves a certain way of living which Saint Paul calls “the old man” and to put on “the new man,” Jesus.

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This is not always easy. When Jesus asks us to love our enemy and to do good to those who hurt us, he is not asking us to do something that comes naturally or easily. But, by the power of God, it is not impossible. For with God “all things are possible” (Mt 19:26).

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“God loves a cheerful giver.”
2 Corinthians 9:7

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of the Lord. Just as Jesus fasted for forty days, we too take on some penance during Lent to make up for our sins and to prepare our hearts to celebrate the great Easter feast.

Saint Paul compares the spiritual life to a race and the Christian to an athlete. Like an athlete, the Christian is asked to practice certain spiritual exercises. If an athlete will give up a great deal just to train for a race, how much more should we Christians be ready to practice self-denial for the sake of the Kingdom of God!

Besides, what the athlete gives up in training is not always so great, and his self-discipline is often very satisfying, invigorating, and enjoyable. His muscle tone, increased skill, and sense of well-being make it all worthwhile.

It is the same way with the Kingdom of God. The crosses we bear can include the many little things which make up our daily

lives, such as not always having our own way, forgiving an unkind word, turning from fun to duties at the proper time, not overeating, and the like. We are not expected to make life one big penance with no pleasures. After all, it is God who created the things in which we find pleasure. But, like a good athlete, we must keep an eye on the coach—Jesus—and not forget ourselves and break training.

By God’s grace, penance can make up for past sin and help prevent future sin. It helps eliminate those things that take us away from God or are obstacles to our final goal—union with God in his Kingdom.

Words to Know:

self-denial penance fasting
abstinence Advent Lent

Rules of Fast and Abstinence in the United States

— The days and times of penance for the universal Church are each Friday of the whole year and the whole season of Lent.

— Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Abstinence is to be observed on all the Fridays during Lent.

— The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those eighteen years old to sixty years old.

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve to be served—to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask any reward except that of knowing that I do your holy will.

—Saint Ignatius Loyola

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though we may not be able to see it at the time.

Bearing the crosses (that is, trials and difficulties) which we do not choose but which come to us anyhow in the course of life is a most perfect kind of self-denial, more pleasing to God than the acts of self-denial we choose for ourselves. For in all things it is most perfect to accept the will of God, even when we do not like it very much. Jesus’ entire life was one of obedience to the will of the Father, no matter how hard it was or what it required of him, even his death. “Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done” (Lk 22:42).

And why are we willing to set out on such a way of life? In following the example of Jesus we are showing our love for God by willingly and, yes, even cheerfully accepting whatever he permits.

In the United States, the bishops have declared abstinence from meat on all Fridays of Lent. In other seasons, Friday remains a day of penance on which we are supposed to practice some kind of self-denial, and the Church advises us to make Friday a day of abstinence all year round.

Fasting, in general, means not eating at all. When the Church requires us to fast, however, it means that only one full meal a day should be eaten. In addition, two smaller meals may be taken, but those taken together should not equal another full meal. In the Church, there are two days of required fasting: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This applies to anyone eighteen to sixty years old.

Penitential Seasons

Advent and **Lent** are special seasons in the Church year in which we are reminded to renew our spirit. They are called penitential seasons.

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and is a season of special preparation for celebrating the birth of Christ. The Church suggests that we do some form of penance as part of this preparation.

The season of Lent begins six and a half weeks before Easter and is a season of preparation for the Passion, death, and Resurrection

Fast and Abstinence

We are encouraged to choose some **penance** for ourselves. To help us, the Church requires **fasting** and **abstinence** from certain foods on penitential days. To abstain, in this case, means not to eat meat. If we are fourteen years old or more, we must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

(Matthew 6:16–18)

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THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus carries his Cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls a second time.
8. Jesus speaks to the women.
9. Jesus falls a third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross.
12. Jesus dies on the Cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross.
14. Jesus is placed in the tomb.

Preview

In the next lesson, the students will learn about fasting and abstinence.

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CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES

LESSON THREE: PENANCES

Aims

- The students will learn that fasting and abstinence are forms of penance. Penance is a form of sacrifice and purification to help us grow closer to Christ. Penance strengthens us to do his will.
- They will learn that fasting is giving up food. The Church defines fasting as eating one regular meal and two small meals that do not exceed the one regular meal in any given day. Abstinence is refraining from eating meat.

Materials

- *Activity Book*, p. 27
- Optional:
• “Lift high the cross,”
Adoremus Hymnal, #606

Begin

- Many Catholics are familiar with the phrase “offer it up.” This is a reminder to accept a daily cross and to give it as a gift to God. Offering up a suffering is a great act of love, recognizing our dependence upon God’s will. By offering up our sufferings we unite ourselves to God’s will and live for his greater glory.

Develop

1. Read paragraphs 10–12.
2. Review the words *penance*, *fasting*, and *abstinence*, as defined in the glossary of the student text (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 395).
3. Thoroughly explain the laws on fasting and abstinence and the obligation to do some kind of penance or self-denial every Friday. Abstinence means to avoid eating meat. Fasting, in general, means not eating at all. When the Church requires us to fast, however, it means that only one full meal a day should be eaten. In addition, two smaller meals may be eaten, but those taken together should not equal another full meal. Discuss the rules of fast and abstinence found in the student text.
4. There are three ways to live in the spirit of penance:
 - Doing Penance (self-denial)—The greatest penance is receiving the Sacrament of Penance in renouncing our sins
- and uniting ourselves with Jesus. Another is the acceptance of the daily cross (whatever sufferings God allows for our own good). We should also offer up additional prayers for our own good and the good of others.
- Fasting and abstinence on the days prescribed by the Church—We may do more than the prescribed law, such as not eating meat and desserts on Fridays.
- Almsgiving—Almsgiving is giving of our resources to those in need. Usually, this means giving of our money, but it can also mean giving of our time and talents to help others in need. We may do almsgiving by collecting clothes or food for people. We may help an elderly neighbor with yard work or spend time volunteering in a nursing home.
5. You may review the spiritual and corporal works of mercy with the students (see the facing page).
6. Arrange for a class project to exemplify this lesson.

Reinforce

1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 27 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 87).
2. Have the students work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter.
3. Have the students do a class project, such as:
 - Doing penance by offering additional prayers
 - Fasting for a day or abstaining from desserts
 - Collecting goods for the poor

Conclude

1. Lead the children in singing “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Prayer before a Crucifix (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 79).

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(Matthew 6:16–18)

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Q. 30 *What is abstinence?*

To abstain from something is to give it up voluntarily. A day of abstinence in the Church is one during which we abstain from eating meat (CIC, Canon 1251).

Q. 31 *What is penance?*

Penance is an act of self-denial or prayer that helps strengthen us to do God’s will and, by his grace, to make up for sin (CCC 1434, 2043).

Q. 32 *When are the days and times for penance for the universal Church?*

All Fridays of the year and the time of Lent are days and times of penance for the universal Church (CCC 1438).

Q. 33 *What are the days when both fasting and abstinence are required in the universal Church?*

The days when both fasting and abstinence are required in the universal Church are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (CIC, Canon 1251).

Q. 34 *In the United States what other days are days of required abstinence?*

Other days of required abstinence in the United States are all Fridays during Lent (CCC 1438).

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of the Lord. Just as Jesus fasted for forty days, we too take on some penance during Lent to make up for our sins and to prepare our hearts to celebrate the great Easter feast.

Saint Paul compares the spiritual life to a race and the Christian to an athlete. Like an athlete, the Christian is asked to practice certain spiritual exercises. If an athlete will give up a great deal just to train for a race, how much more should we Christians be ready to practice self-denial for the sake of the Kingdom of God!

Besides, what the athlete gives up in training is not always so great, and his self-discipline is often very satisfying, invigorating, and enjoyable. His muscle tone, increased skill, and sense of well-being make it all worthwhile.

It is the same way with the Kingdom of God. The crosses we bear can include the many little things which make up our daily

lives, such as not always having our own way, forgiving an unkind word, turning from fun to duties at the proper time, not overeating, and the like. We are not expected to make life one big penance with no pleasures. After all, it is God who created the things in which we find pleasure. But, like a good athlete, we must keep an eye on the coach—Jesus—and not forget ourselves and break training.

By God’s grace, penance can make up for past sin and help prevent future sin. It helps eliminate those things that take us away from God or are obstacles to our final goal—union with God in his Kingdom.

Words to Know:

self-denial penance fasting
abstinence Advent Lent

Rules of Fast and Abstinence in the United States

— The days and times of penance for the universal Church are each Friday of the whole year and the whole season of Lent.

— Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Abstinence is to be observed on all the Fridays during Lent.

— The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those eighteen years old to sixty years old.

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve to be served—to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask any reward except that of knowing that I do your holy will.

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SPIRITUAL AND CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Spiritual:

- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Admonish sinners
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive offenses willingly
- Comfort the afflicted
- Pray for the living and the dead

Corporal:

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Harbor the harborless
- Visit the sick
- Ransom the captive
- Bury the dead

Preview

- In the next lesson, the students will review the penitential seasons.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES

LESSON FOUR: PENITENTIAL SEASONS

Aims

- The students will learn that Advent and Lent are the penitential seasons of the liturgical year.
- They will learn that penance can make up for past sins and help us prevent future sins.
- They will learn that the primary forms of penance include fasting, abstinence, almsgiving, and works of charity.

Materials

- *Activity Book*, p. 28
- Appendix, pp. B-7– B-10
- Optional:
 - Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606

Begin

- Review the liturgical calendar with the students using Appendix, pp. B-7–B-10.
- seasons of the Church. During these seasons, the vestments and cloths used in the Mass are primarily purple.
- Review that the liturgical color of purple should remind us of penance. The seasons of Advent and Lent are the penitential

Develop

- 1. Finish reading the chapter from the student text.
- 2. Discuss some penitential practices done during Lent and Advent. (See box on facing page for ideas.)
- 3. Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 with the students. Use examples from modern day sports, such as football, to help put this lesson in context. For example, in football, to play the game you must first know the rules (like our Creed). You must exercise and practice (virtues) and give up things in order to be dedicated to this sport: players must diet, give up some relaxation time for practice, etc. (this is like penance). You must actively participate in the game and not be a bench warmer (sacraments) and you must want to win in order to play well (prayer). In the game, the object is to get the ball (grace) and when you reach the end zone (death), you must have the ball in order to get a touchdown (enter heaven). You may fumble the ball or have it intercepted (sin), but you can get it back through an interception (Sacrament of Penance). The challenge is to work together as a team (in the Church) to score some points and win the game (the joy of heaven for all of eternity with the Communion of Saints). Our sure guide in this game of life is the coach (Jesus) and his umpires call the shots (Magisterium).
- 4. You may review some of our reasons for doing penance:
 - Overcome our sinfulness
 - Atone for sins (unite ourselves with the suffering of Jesus, who paid the price for our sins)
 - Offer our sufferings for others—for their conversion or intentions, for souls in purgatory
 - For love of God and neighbor
 - To grow in virtue
 - Out of obedience, in accord with the liturgical season

Reinforce

- 1. Have the students work on *Activity Book* p. 28 (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 87).
- 2. Have the students work on the Memorization Questions and Words to Know from this chapter. You may wish to provide the students class time to prepare for the quiz.
- 3. Have the students review Advent and Lenten penitential practices.
- 4. Lead the students in praying the Stations of the Cross (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 81).

Conclude

- 1. Lead the children in singing “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606.
- 2. Lead the students in praying the Prayer before a Crucifix (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 79).

though we may not be able to see it at the time.

Bearing the crosses (that is, trials and difficulties) which we do not choose but which come to us anyhow in the course of life is a most perfect kind of self-denial, more pleasing to God than the acts of self-denial we choose for ourselves. For in all things it is most perfect to accept the will of God, even when we do not like it very much. Jesus’ entire life was one of obedience to the will of the Father, no matter how hard it was or what it required of him, even his death. “Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done” (Lk 22:42).

And why are we willing to set out on such a way of life? In following the example of Jesus we are showing our love for God by willingly and, yes, even cheerfully accepting whatever he permits.

Fast and Abstinence

We are encouraged to choose some **penance** for ourselves. To help us, the Church requires **fasting** and **abstinence** from certain foods on penitential days. To abstain, in this case, means not to eat meat. If we are fourteen years old or more, we must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

In the United States, the bishops have declared abstinence from meat on all Fridays of Lent. In other seasons, Friday remains a day of penance on which we are supposed to practice some kind of self-denial, and the Church advises us to make Friday a day of abstinence all year round.

Fasting, in general, means not eating at all. When the Church requires us to fast, however, it means that only one full meal a day should be eaten. In addition, two smaller meals may be taken, but those taken together should not equal another full meal. In the Church, there are two days of required fasting: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This applies to anyone eighteen to sixty years old.

Penitential Seasons

Advent and **Lent** are special seasons in the Church year in which we are reminded to renew our spirit. They are called penitential seasons.

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and is a season of special preparation for celebrating the birth of Christ. The Church suggests that we do some form of penance as part of this preparation.

The season of Lent begins six and a half weeks before Easter and is a season of preparation for the Passion, death, and Resurrection

“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

(Matthew 6:16–18)

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Q. 30 *What is abstinence?*

To abstain from something is to give it up voluntarily. A day of abstinence in the Church is one during which we abstain from eating meat (CIC, Canon 1251).

Q. 31 *What is penance?*

Penance is an act of self-denial or prayer that helps strengthen us to do God’s will and, by his grace, to make up for sin (CCC 1434, 2043).

Q. 32 *When are the days and times for penance for the universal Church?*

All Fridays of the year and the time of Lent are days and times of penance for the universal Church (CCC 1438).

Q. 33 *What are the days when both fasting and abstinence are required in the universal Church?*

The days when both fasting and abstinence are required in the universal Church are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (CIC, Canon 1251).

Q. 34 *In the United States what other days are days of required abstinence?*

Other days of required abstinence in the United States are all Fridays during Lent (CCC 1438).

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of the Lord. Just as Jesus fasted for forty days, we too take on some penance during Lent to make up for our sins and to prepare our hearts to celebrate the great Easter feast.

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Lent and Advent are the two penitential seasons of the liturgical year. The penances we practice should demonstrate and deepen our love for God above all worldly goods, specifically those which we are sacrificing. Traditionally, there are three forms of penance (see Mt 6:3, 6, 16):

- Prayer: We place a special emphasis on prayer, as we repent of our sins and pray to become closer to God.
- Fasting: We refrain from specific foods or activities, which may be hindering our relationship with God or causing us to sin (e.g., eating too much at meals, watching television, or spending time on the computer).
- Almsgiving: Even if we cannot give much (see Lk 21:1–4), giving something of our own to others is an important practice during these seasons.

The heart of our penance should be to increase our fervor and love for God and neighbor. Our practices during Advent and Lent should therefore bring us closer to God and enable to fully celebrate Christmas and Easter.

Preview

In the next lesson, the students’ understanding of the material covered in this chapter will be reviewed and assessed.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES
REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

Aims

The students’ understanding of the material covered in this chapter will be reviewed and assessed.

Materials

- Quiz 7, Appendix, p. A-9
- Optional:
• “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606

Review and Enrichment

1. The students should understand the glory of the Cross of Christ. They should know what our individual crosses are. They should understand that we have self-imposed sufferings and those given by God for our greater good.
2. The students should understand that self-denial means putting others first: God, others, and then one’s self.
3. The students should know that penance includes sacrifices, prayer, fasting, abstinence, and almsgiving.
4. The students should know the rules of fasting and abstinence, according to the Church.
5. The students should know that the penitential seasons of the liturgical calendar are Advent and Lent. They should be aware of some of our penitential practices during these liturgical seasons.
6. The students should be able to fill in a liturgical calendar.
7. The students should understand how our Faith, like a sport, requires penances and discipline.

Name: _____

The Cross and True Riches

Quiz 7

Part I: Answer in complete sentences.

1. Why should we practice self-denial?
We should practice self-denial to heal the wounds left by original sin, to do penance for our sins or the sins of others, to strengthen our ability to do good, to show our love for God.

2. Give three examples of acts of self-denial. Answers will vary.

3. What is the most perfect kind of self-denial?
The most perfect kind of self-denial is bearing the crosses which we do not choose.

4. On days the Church requires abstinence, what are we not to do?
On days the Church requires abstinence, we are not to eat meat.

5. On days the Church requires us to fast, what are we to do?
On days the Church requires us to fast, we are to eat only one full meal a day; two smaller meals may be eaten, but those taken together should not equal another full meal.

6. What is the penitential season in the Church year that prepares us to celebrate the birth of Christ?
Advent is the penitential season in the Church year that prepares us to celebrate the birth of Christ.

7. What is the penitential season in the Church year that prepares us to celebrate the Passion, death, and Resurrection of the Lord?
Lent is the penitential season in the Church year that prepares us to celebrate the Passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord.

Part II: Yes or No.

1. No Is it always easy to do good?

2. Yes With the power of God is it possible to do good and even love our enemy?

3. Yes Can practicing self-denial strengthen our ability to do good with the help of God?

4. Yes Can our cross be a penance we choose for ourselves or suffering that God allows in our life?

5. Yes Can penance make up for past sin and help prevent future sin?

6. Yes Is it good to practice self-denial on Fridays?

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A-9

Assess

1. Distribute the quizzes and read through them with the students to be sure they understand the questions.
2. Administer the quiz. As they hand in their work, you may orally quiz the students on the Memorization Questions from this chapter.
3. After all the quizzes have been handed in, you may wish to review the correct answers with the class.

Conclude

1. Lead the children in singing “Lift high the cross,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #606.
2. End class by leading the students in praying the Prayer before a Crucifix (see *Teacher’s Manual*, p. 79).

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CROSS AND TRUE RICHES
ACTIVITY BOOK ANSWER KEYS

Name: _____

The Cross and True Riches

Penance is an important part of being a follower of Christ. List ten penances that you could do and tell how each would help you become more like Christ. Some examples are given to start you off.

1. Keeping silence for one hour: Answers will vary.

2. Doing an extra chore: _____

3. Giving up a dessert: _____

4. Kneeling while praying: _____

5. _____: _____

6. _____: _____

7. _____: _____

8. _____: _____

9. _____: _____

10. _____: _____

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Name: _____

Fast and Abstinence

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is penance?
Penance is an act of self-denial or prayer that helps strengthen us to do God’s will and, by his grace, to make up for sin.

2. Why does the Church require certain days of fasting and abstinence?
The Church requires certain days of fasting and abstinence to help us see the importance of fasting.

3. What does “to abstain” mean?
To abstain means not to eat meat.

4. What does “to fast” mean?
To fast generally means not to eat anything, but when the Church requires it, is means that only one full meal and two smaller meals may be eaten in a day.

5. On what days must we abstain?
We must abstain on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and every Friday of Lent.

6. On what days must we fast?
We must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

7. What does Matthew 6:16–18 teach us about fasting?
Matthew 6:16–18 teaches that we should not show off when we fast. We should fast for God in secret.

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Name: _____

The Cross

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What does Jesus mean when he says “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me”?
Answers will vary.

2. What value is there in self-denial?
Answers will vary.

3. What does Saint Paul mean when he tells us to put on the “new man”?
Saint Paul means that we should put to death in ourselves our life of sin and live a life of grace.

4. Can we bear little crosses daily?
Yes

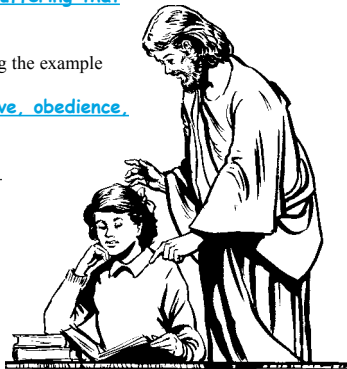
5. How can we accept God’s will?
We can accept the suffering that comes our way.

6. What do we show by following the example of Jesus?
Answers will vary: love, obedience, etc.

7. List some of your daily crosses.
Answers will vary.

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Name: _____

The Penitential Seasons: Advent and Lent

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. When is Advent?
Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve.

2. What are we preparing for during Advent?
During Advent, we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ.

3. Why do we do penance during Advent?
We do penance to help us to prepare.

4. How does Advent prepare us for the coming of our Lord?
Answers will vary.

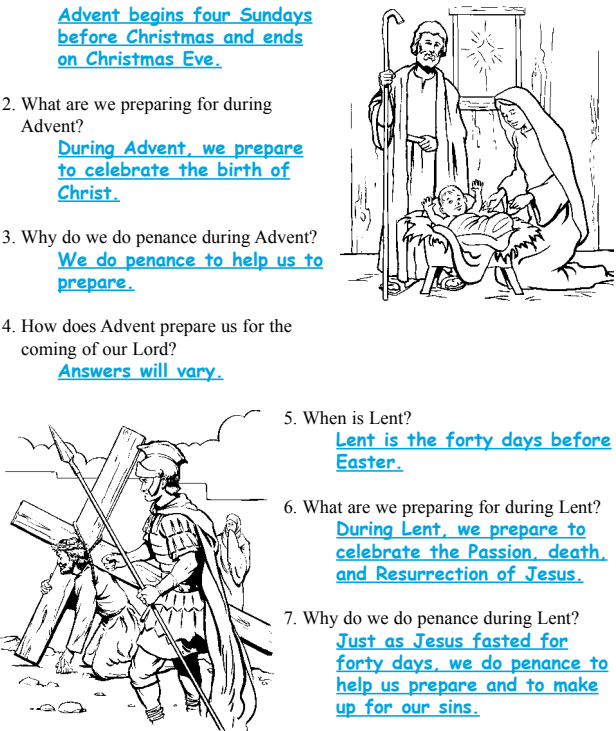
5. When is Lent?
Lent is the forty days before Easter.

6. What are we preparing for during Lent?
During Lent, we prepare to celebrate the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

7. Why do we do penance during Lent?
Just as Jesus fasted for forty days, we do penance to help us prepare and to make up for our sins.

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TEACHER'S NOTES