

Celebrating Lent

Engage: Page 123

- ▶ Together share stories about a time you were lost. **Ask:** *How did you feel when you were lost?* (Possible answer: scared, alone) **Say:** *Committing a sin is like getting lost. When we sin, we wander off the path that God has chosen for us.*
- ▶ Read aloud the title Celebrating Lent and the text in the box. Discuss the questions. Then read aloud the page. **Ask:** *What is conversion?* (the process of getting back on the right path) **Say:** *Lent is really a season of hope. Rather than dwelling on the sins we have committed, we reflect on how we can turn back to God so that we can fully experience the joy of Easter.*
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Pages 124–125

- ▶ Drop a small stone into a shallow dish of water and note how the water ripples outward. **Say:** *Every time we choose to do something other than what God wants us to do, the effects of our decisions ripple outward.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title and the first paragraph. Together look online to find a map of the size of the Roman empire during the Middle Ages.
- ▶ Read aloud the section The Crusades. **Ask:** *Why did the Crusaders face opposition?* (They were trying to establish a Christian kingdom in a land that was sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Francis of Assisi and the Sultan. Explain that there was animosity between Christians and Muslims as a result of the ongoing Crusades.
- ▶ Have your child read aloud Ready for Confirmation. Then read aloud from the Bible 1 John 1:5–10. Remind your child that we can always turn to God for forgiveness. **Say:** *God cleanses us of our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Every time we celebrate this sacrament, we get a fresh start.*
- ▶ Read aloud Acknowledging and Asking on page 125. Explain that during his papacy, Pope John Paul II was acutely aware of the Church's past sins. **Say:** *By holding the Day of Pardon during Lent, Pope John Paul II reminded us that Lent is an important time for us to repent for our sins and turn our minds and hearts back to God.* **Ask:** *What can we learn from this example by our Church leaders?* (We can see that it is never too late to ask forgiveness for our sins.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the Past Meets Present feature. **Say:** *We have to know our strengths and our weaknesses before we can present ourselves truthfully to others and to God. This is one of the things Jesus was doing during his 40 days in the desert. He can help us get to know ourselves during the 40 days of Lent too.*
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Explore: Pages 126–127

- ▶ Ask your child to stand up and hold a large stack of books. **Say:** *Many people choose to give up something during Lent. Doing so can help us remember that too much of a good thing can be a strain. Giving up something allows us to develop healthy habits.*

- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article title Lent Past and Present and the first three paragraphs. **Ask:** *Why does the Church suggest that we reflect on our baptismal promises during Lent?* (to help us identify areas in our lives in which we may need to turn our minds and hearts back to God)
- ▶ Read aloud the Sacred Art feature. **Ask:** *Why might some people have suggested that the star is a symbol of God's presence?* (Possible answer: God's love is a light that we can experience, even amid the darkness.)
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving on page 127. **Say:** *In addition to fasting from food, fasting from bad behavior is another way to prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter. When it comes to almsgiving, we might not have a lot of money to donate to charity. Emphasize that young people can share other resources, such as their time and talents, instead.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud RCIA. Encourage your child to pray for people who are entering their final period of discernment about whether or not to join the Church.
- ▶ Read aloud the Our Catholic Character feature. **Say:** *Receiving ashes is a reminder to turn our lives back to God.* Point out that in Old Testament times, people often wore ashes any time they needed to repent.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

Reflect: Pages 128–129

- ▶ Read aloud the title A Contrite Heart and the paragraphs in the left column. **Ask:** *What do we do when we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation?* (We confess our sins and ask for God's mercy and forgiveness.)
- ▶ Pray the prayer aloud together. **Say:** *We can pray the Act of Contrition whenever we want to express sorrow for our sins.*
- ▶ Read aloud the introductory paragraph in Where Do I Fit In? **Ask:** *What does the use of the verb am suggest about healing?* (It is an ongoing process. We always need it.)
- ▶ Together read aloud How Am I Healed? **Ask:** *When we are healed, how do we see other people?* (as divine images) Invite your child to spend a minute or two reflecting silently about a situation in which a choice he or she made hurt someone. Have your child imagine the person and ask for his or her forgiveness. **Say:** *We always have the opportunity to ask others for forgiveness.*
- ▶ Allow time for your child to write a prayer in the section Turn Toward God.

Respond: Page 130

- ▶ Have your child read aloud the directions and answer each question. Point out that he or she can use the page references for help.
- ▶ Ask your child to list, define, and use in sentences the terms under Say What? Use the Glossary if necessary.
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Allow time for your child to complete his or her prayer. **Say:** *Prayer is one way to strengthen the virtue of fortitude, the gift that helps us do the right thing when we are tempted to do otherwise.* Together pray the Sign of the Cross.
- ▶ Invite your child to pray a 3-minute Retreat at www.loyolapress.com/retreat.