

LESSON NO. 2 TITLE: LENT - PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

Achievement Objective

Students will be able to: recognise Lent as a time when people prepare for Baptism and a new way of life of prayer - karakia, fasting and almsgiving.

Learning Outcomes:

The students will:

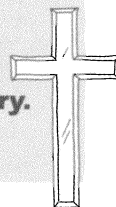
- 1 recognise *Lent* is a time when the *catechumens* prepare for their Baptism at Easter
- 2 recognise that *Lent* is a time when the baptised prepare to renew their baptismal commitment

Preparation for the Lesson:

- Scripture Reading Acts 7:54 - 8:3
- Paper for Roundtable charts
- Fax or email
- Art materials for Baptismal candle wall display
- Word chart for song 'A New Heart for a New World'
- Students' Home Activity, page 24 - copy for each student

By recalling or preparing for baptism and by repentance this season disposes the faithful, as they more diligently listen to the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery.

Constitution on the Liturgy #109



Teacher's Notes:

The Church teaches that *Lent* has two themes. The first theme is preparing for baptism and the second theme is repentance.

Lent is a special time of preparation for the *catechumens*, that is the people who are preparing to be baptised at Easter and for the candidates to be received into full Communion. Those people who are already baptised support the *catechumens* by their Lenten penance of prayer - karakia, fasting and almsgiving and by welcoming them into the parish community. During *Lent* they also prepare themselves to renew their own baptismal promises at Easter.

In the early days of the Church Easter was the time in the Church's year when people were baptised. It was a very serious commitment for people to be baptised. To be baptised was to take on a whole new way of life, the life of following Jesus Christ. By doing this they were very likely to be persecuted by those who did not understand or tolerate the Christian way of life. They were often ridiculed and ostracised from society or even put to death. Therefore their preparation for Baptism was very thorough. They would gather together frequently for prayer - karakia and instruction about what it meant for them to follow Jesus.

Today Christians in Aotearoa New Zealand are not likely to be put to death, although they can be ridiculed and laughed at for being Christian. It is very important that Christians take their baptism seriously. At Easter the *catechumens* are baptised and everyone else renews their commitment to their baptism. *Lent* is the time of preparation for this. During *Lent* both the baptised and the *catechumens* grow in their understanding of what it means to live in a committed way to Jesus Christ.

Their prayer, fasting and almsgiving help them deepen their commitment to Christ, to repent and turn back to God. The prayer, fasting and almsgiving of the community also supports the *catechumens* as they prepare for their Baptism.

Teaching and Learning Experiences:

- Teacher and students discuss the meaning of the word *catechumen* and write a definition for the Wall Glossary.
- Teacher explains the two themes of *Lent*
 - the *catechumens* prepare for their baptism at Easter and those already baptised prepare to renew their baptismal promises at Easter
 - repentance - a *conversion of heart* and turning back to God.
- Students do a Roundtable exercise, see Instructions page 46, to write what they think people are committing themselves to through Baptism. Share charts. Read charts again and add any ideas they have heard during the reporting back that they missed from their original charts.

Ideas could include that people commit their lives to:

 - Jesus Christ
 - the community of the Church
 - worshipping God through the celebration of the Eucharist every Sunday and the celebration of the Sacraments
 - living according to the values taught by Jesus - love - aroha, peace - rangimarie, justice - tika, forgiveness - hohou rongo, mercy
 - turning away from sin
 - co-operating with the Holy Spirit - Te Wairua Tapu to bring about God's Kingdom or Reign - Te Rangatiratanga on earth through service and witness
 - continuing the mission of Jesus on earth.
- Students write, fax or email the local parish or parishes of which the school is a part, to find out if there are any *catechumens* preparing for Baptism at Easter this year. Students could send them cards of support via the parish and write their names near their prayer focus to remember to pray for them, particularly during *Lent*.
- Students listen to Acts 7:54 - 8:3 then discuss what can make it difficult for baptised Christians today to be faithful - pono to their baptismal promises. Consider attitudes in society and the struggles within a baptised person.
- Students make a large Baptismal candle to display on the wall. On and around the candle write and illustrate ways the *catechumens* prepare for their Baptism and ways those already baptised prepare to renew their baptism at Easter:
 - listening to the Word of God - Te Kupu a Te Ariki,
 - being instructed in the teachings of Jesus and the Church,
 - prayer - karakia,
 - celebrating the Eucharist,
 - penance,
 - fasting,
 - almsgiving.

Consolidation and Extension Activities:

- Sing 'A New Heart for a New World'
- Students' Home Activity

Suggested Assessment Examples:

- LO 1&2 Refer to Students' Home Activity