

CEC E-Newsletter

Catholic Education Center, llc

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www.catholiceducationcenter.com



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Living Lent with our Students

How quickly Lent has come upon us! As teachers of the Faith, we should teach our students about this Liturgical Season.

Lent is 40 days, which lead up to Easter (it begins on Ash Wednesday and Sundays are not counted). It is a penitential season noted by the purple liturgical color.

There are many things we can focus on during Lent. We can teach the traditional themes of Penance, Prayer, and Charity/Almsgiving.

Penitential practices may include prayer, fasting and giving up something (for example a food or a bad habit). With elementary aged students, a Lenten calendar can be helpful tool to keep students focused on their penances and provide a visual reinforcement.

Prayer is a very important part of Lent. There are various Lenten devotions (like the Stations of the Cross, praying the Sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary, praying an Act of Contrition Daily, praying before the crucifix, etc.) Our

prayer should united us with our Lord. We can contemplate His sufferings and great love for us, resolve to sin no more and pray for strength and renewal in our Faith.

Charity and Almsgiving are wonderful opportunities to put our Faith in Action. Whether students do individual projects, or you coordinate a class project (try focusing on the works of mercy), keeping service to Christ at the center of your actions is important.

May you have a blessed Lent!

Suggested Websites

Lenten Resources from Catholic Mom:

<http://www.catholicmom.com/lent.htm>

Mass Readings:

<http://www.usccb.org/nab>

Holy Spirit

Interactive:

<http://www.holyspiritinteractive.net>

Silk.Net

<http://www.silk.net/RelEd>

Upcoming On Site Training Opportunities

The Catholic Education Center, LLC, is now booking on site training events for the Fall. Catechist Training Days book quickly, so book early!

Parishes and Schools looking to host regular on site training of online classes will want to reserve dates soon. Be sure to check out our coupons for training discounts!

To book on site training at your parish or school, call Colette Lienhard at the Catholic Education Center, LLC at 703-785-2319 or book online at: www.catholiceducationcenter.com

10 Great Lenten Activities for Teachers and Students

1. **Daily Prayer:** Add a time for silent reflection and an Act of Contrition to your daily prayer. Ideally, pray before a crucifix. There are many wonderful prayers fitting for Lent, perhaps a new prayer each week would be suitable.
2. **Create a classroom Lenten Calendar.** Each day, add a virtue, penance, act of charity, additional prayer or Scripture verse for the day. Students can create their own calendars, too!
3. **Pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays.** For younger students, pray the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary. Children can write their own meditations, color pictures, and do dramatizations.
4. **Do a collection for the poor.** There are many worthy charities in our Diocese that would benefit from collected goods—from food to toiletries or money.
5. **Do a hands-on project for charity,** such as beautify a Church garden, volunteer to help decorate the Church for Lent, Clean the pews, assist with the many tasks that are necessary for Easter (such as preparing candles for Easter Vigil, folding worship sheets/ bulletins, make presents/cards for the RCIA catechumens or candidates, etc.)
6. **Read the Passion of Christ from the Bible** (younger students will need an appropriate children's Bible). Students can create their own "children's bible". You can do the same with the Mass Readings for Holy Week and Easter. Students can create a "missal" that they can take to these liturgies to help them better follow along.
7. **Make the opportunity for your class to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.** This will take some coordination to do a review of how to make a good confession, do an examination of conscience and arrange for a priest to hear confessions.
8. **Make a pilgrimage and have a retreat!** Your pilgrimage may be as far as your local parish church – or you may take the opportunity to coordinate a field trip to the National Shrine or the Franciscan Monastery. Once there, depending on the age of your students, you may focus on one thing (e.g. the Crucifix, a stained glass window, the Stations of the Cross, etc.) or use this opportunity for a full retreat. Ask your priest if he would like to speak to your students, or if he would arrange for a short period of Adoration. I recommend for teachers to make the staff room a place of retreat. Focus on making it a place of holiness and a time for faith-sharing during Lent.
9. **During daily activities** (e.g. classroom quiet work, driving in your car, etc.) listen to religious music or talk radio. When at home, watch EWTN, or find time for spiritual reading. Even if you only take 5 minutes a day, you will find this time fruitful.
10. **Seek opportunities to witness your Faith.** Whether you begin Lent wearing Ashes, or do something subtle for yourself like wearing a purple bracelet, or go to greater lengths (like visit your elderly neighbors and let them know that during Lent you are looking to help in additional ways—such a yard work, cooking meals, etc.). Sometimes, Lent allows us to renew and refresh in various ways—from a good Spring cleaning (each weekend tackle a new room, work in the garden, take time to thank God for His mercy and generosity and resolve to share this with others, etc). Don't let a week go by that you don't take time for yourself to benefit from Lent, and share your time, talent and resources with others.

Holy Week and Easter: Teaching for Outside the Classroom

Unfortunately, often the “Easter Break” prevents us from celebrating some of the holiest days of the year with our students. If possible, discuss with your students:

CHRISM MASS: Celebrated on Holy Thursday morning at the Cathedral. At this Mass, all the priests of the diocese come together and renew their service to the Church. In addition, the Bishop will bless the Oil for Catechumens (used for exorcisms and baptisms), the Oil for the Infirm (used for the Anointing of the Sick), and consecrate Sacred Chrism (used for anointings at Baptisms, Confirmations and Ordinations). Chrism is made of balsam (a sweet fragrance) and olive oil (a sign of eternal life), it is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

MASS OF THE LORD’S SUPPER: celebrated on Holy Thursday evening. At this Mass, we commemorate the first Mass celebrated by our Lord at the Last Supper. Often included in this ceremony is the washing of feet (where we get the title Maundy Thursday—from the Latin *Mandatum novum da nobis* “I give you a new commandment” Jn 13:34 when Jesus washed His Apostles’ feet). After the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, the altar is stripped, and the Eucharist is reposed. This is the last Mass celebrated until Easter.

TENEBRAE: means “darkness” in Latin. It is the public singing of Matins (a night office) and Lauds (a morning office) - part of the Liturgy of the Hours. Many parishes will hold Tenebrae services.

GOOD FRIDAY: usually celebrated at 3:00, the hour of our Lord’s Passion. This is not a Mass, but includes a communion service. Upon entering the Church, you will notice the Eucharist is not present and we do not genuflect to the tabernacle. We may bow to the altar, or reverence the Crucifix. During this ceremony, we venerate a cross (crucifix). We do this by touching or kissing the cross, genuflecting, or another form of reverence.

HOLY SATURDAY: there is no Mass. Often RCIA will have Ephpheta rites for the catechumens, and perhaps a prayer service will be held in your parish.

EASTER VIGIL: celebrated after sun down on the vigil of Easter (Holy Saturday night). This is an awesome liturgical experience, with the many readings that highlight Salvation History, the initiation of catechumens and candidates into the Church with the Sacraments of Initiation, and the glorious celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. This is a very long service, but truly a memorable experience.

EASTER SUNDAY: Sunday morning Mass of the Resurrection. Truly a joyous event, in stark contrast to Lent. Easter Sunday is an Octave (8 days) and includes Low Sunday (the second Sunday of Easter, now often called Mercy Sunday). Of note, for those celebrating the Feast of Divine Mercy, the novena begins on Good Friday.

**The Catholic Education Center, LLC, plans to expand its course offerings this next year!
To offer suggestions for courses,
please email us at: catholiceducationcenter@yahoo.com**

Scripture and Catechesis

Catechesis thrives with dependable Biblical resources. Consider *Veritas Scripturae: The Bulletin of the St. Jerome Biblical Guild* (available in the Teacher Resources of the Catholic Education Center website: www.catholiceducationcenter.com). Founded by Salvatore J. Ciresi, the St. Jerome Biblical Guild explains and defends Scripture with fidelity to the Magisterium. The electronic bulletin, *Veritas Scripturae*, presents bite-sized articles (400 words each) that are germane to the catechist: "Scripture Memorization & Exegesis," "Inerrancy Basics," "The Church Fathers & Scripture," "St. Thomas Aquinas & Revelation," "The Magisterium Speaks," "The Pontifical Biblical Commission," "Addressing Bible Difficulties," "The Biblical World," and "Book Recommendation." *Veritas Scripturae* is free of charge. Send an e-mail to salciresi@aol.com and place "VS" in the subject line.

The Catholic Education center, LLC, is honored to welcome Salvatore J. Ciresi as a new instructor! The Catholic Education Center, LLC, is expanding its course offerings this Fall (2011) to include courses on The Bible, The Church, Methodology, and Medical and Moral Theology.

Salvatore Ciresi is the founder and director of the St. Jerome Biblical Guild and publishes *Veritas Scripturae* (published on the Catholic Education Center, LLC, website). He earned his M.A. in Theological Studies with a Scripture concentration from the Notre Dame Graduate School of Christendom College, where he serves as an adjunct professor. Sal is the past co-host of "Cross Talk" (a Catholic radio program in Virginia), was a contributor on behalf of the Arlington Diocese to the 2005 revision of the *National Catechetical Directory*; a former board member for a private



Catholic School, a past columnist for the Arlington Catholic Herald, and a contributor to *The Latin Mass: The Journal of Catholic Culture and Tradition*.

Salvatore Ciresi, will offer the course **CAT220: An Introduction to the Bible**, which presents and overview of the Scriptures to equip teachers and catechists who utilize the Bible in the Classroom. Watch for more details in our next newsletter.

Register for:

CAT101: Catholic Education: What Every Teacher Needs to Know,
 CAT102: The Creed, CAT103: The Sacraments, CAT104: The Moral Life
 and CAT105: The Life of Prayer
 (or CAT102-105 if you have already taken CAT101) over the Summer
 to complete the course requirements for your
 Basic Catechist Certification (Diocese of Arlington),
 and receive a **\$50.00 discount***!

*coupon limited to online registrations only. One coupon per person. Coupon may not be used with other coupons/discounts. You must register for all courses at one time. Registration will be valid until October 2011.

You must attach this coupon to your registration form, which is available at:
www.catholiceducationcenter.com under Registration Forms.