

Assembly Notes

Lent Week Two



SLIDE ONE – HOLDING SLIDE

TEACHER'S NOTES

This presentation lasts up to 20 minutes. **We recommend you deliver the whole assembly but please feel free to use the slides and script as time and circumstances allow.**

To reduce time omit extension tasks.

Missio have produced an assembly for each week of Lent. The Scripture contained in each presentation corresponds with the Sunday Gospel reading for that week. The assemblies also reference the principles of **Catholic Social Teaching**.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is based on Scripture, Tradition and Church Teaching as given by popes, bishops and theologians. It offers a set of principles to help us think about how we should interact with others, the choices we make, and how we interact with creation. For more information about Catholic Social Teaching please visit www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk



ASSEMBLY BEGINS ON SLIDE TWO – SCRIPT OVER PAGE

N.B. This and corresponding Lenten assemblies are prepared by Missio, the Pope's official charity for overseas mission. Missio is the only Catholic charity which assists the 40% of the global Catholic Church too young or too poor to support itself. Its mission is to follow Christ's example - helping everyone in need, regardless of background or belief. Through lived examples in this assembly, pupils can see how Missio is supporting Church-based projects around the world that are witnessing to God's great love for us all, especially the poorest, the forgotten, the marginalised, and the most vulnerable.

SLIDE TWO

IF YOU HAVE USED MISSIO'S LENT WEEK ONE ASSEMBLY, OMIT THE FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION TO LENT AND MOVE DIRECTLY TO SLIDE THREE

On Ash Wednesday, Christians around the world enter into a special time of the year. Can anybody explain what time of year that is? **Lent.**

Can anybody explain what we are called to do in Lent and what these acts prepare us for?

Lent is a time of fasting, charity, and prayer. Lent lasts 40 days and prepares us for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter.

There is an important action we are called to practise during Lent. If we were to do this Jesus tells us that it would not only change our lives around for the better, but the lives of those around us, and the world too.

EXTENSION – Ask if anybody can guess the action. It isn't love, although love is closely bound up with it. An extra clue: the Bible tells us that John the Baptist referred to this action often and even shouted the word aloud in an effort to encourage people to practise it.

The action is **'to repent'** – [Click PowerPoint to reveal the word on screen.](#)

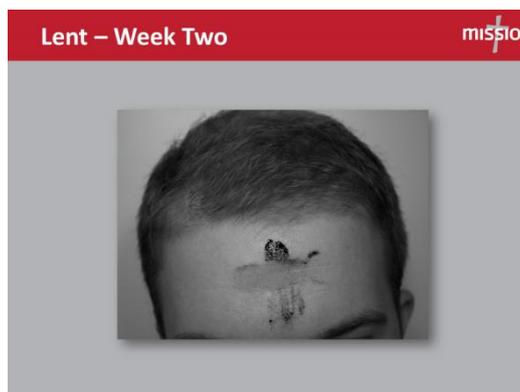
Many people think that repent means saying sorry, then doing something to make up for the offence you've caused. This description isn't wrong, but it only explains part of the meaning of repent. The full meaning challenges us to go even further than saying sorry and making amends. It calls us to change our way of thinking. This is where big changes are possible.

EXTENSION – Here is an example. Imagine if I acted unkindly towards someone I disliked, then felt ashamed of myself and said sorry. This might help the situation in the short term and make me feel better, but unless I change the way I think about that person and how I behave towards them, the chances are that I would continue to be unkind to them.

When John the Baptist and Jesus called for repentance they were appealing for us all to:

- Recognise when we fail to show love
- apologise and make amends *and then*
- Change the negative thoughts and behaviour that caused us to act without love in the first place.

Now look at the image on the screen: the ash cross Christians receive on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, symbolises to others that we are repentant, but actual repentance takes place behind the symbol, when we change our minds and hearts.



SLIDE THREE

OMIT THIS FIRST PARAGRAPH IF YOU HAVE USED THE INTRODUCTION TO LENT ON SLIDE TWO

In last week's Missio assembly we looked at a word referred to often in Lent, 'repent'. We heard how repent means more than saying sorry and then doing something to make up for the offence you've caused. The full meaning of repentance challenges us to go even further, it calls us to change our negative ways of thinking. If we were to do this, Jesus tells us that it would not only change our lives for the better, but the lives of those around us, and the world too.

Lent – Week Two missio

Jesus took Peter and the brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain. His appearance changed right before their eyes. Sunlight poured from his face. His clothes were filled with light. Then the disciples realized that Moses and Elijah were also there in deep conversation with Jesus.

Peter spoke out, "Master, this is a great moment! What if I built three memorials here on the mountain—one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah?"

Over the last few years, people across the world have had to change their thinking about the environment. Global warming provides evidence that misusing the planet causes long-term damage, risking the existence of plants, animals, even humanity.

But as frightening as global warming is, one positive effect is that it has encouraged many to value the world more. When we are at risk of losing something we've failed to appreciate, whether a friendship, a talent, or the environment, our eyes are opened to the specialness of the thing and we make more effort to cherish it.

This idea of having our eyes opened to see how much something means to us is captured well in the **Gospel reading heard on the Second Sunday of Lent**. Notice this message as we listen to the reading now.

Read Scripture – you could ask a pupil to do this. [Click to reveal text in sequence](#).

Following the reading ask pupils for their thoughts on how the disciples' eyes were opened.

The Scripture we've just heard informs us that the disciples were filled with awe when they recognised for the first time the holiness and beauty radiating from their friend Jesus.

EXTENSION – Ask pupils to reflect on a time when they too were taken aback by the wonder of something. Suggestions might be a beautiful sunset, or a new baby. Or it may have been something ordinary that they saw in a new light, such as an insight into somebody that they had not noticed before. It is at times like these we notice the holiness and beauty around us.

SLIDE FOUR

Reflecting on Bible passages such as the one we've just heard and trying to follow the example of Jesus can help us to look for the holiness and beauty around us. But the Church also encourages us to do this through **Catholic Social Teaching**.

Catholic Social Teaching provides us with lessons on how we can build a world in which all people, not just Christians but people of other faiths and none, have the chance to develop into fulfilled and loving people.

Catholic Social Teaching asks us to pay close attention to the problems that people face; things like climate change, poverty, loneliness. It focuses on different principles through which we can consider ways to resolve these problems and build God's kingdom of peace, love, and justice on earth.

The principles of **Catholic Social Teaching** include ([click to reveal](#)): Human Dignity, Care of Creation, Community and Participation, Dignity of Work, Preferential Option for the Poor, Solidarity.

Let's take a brief look at the principle of **Care of Creation**.



SLIDE FIVE

Over the last few years, great efforts have been made by governments across the world to tackle global warming.

EXTENSION – Ask pupils to consider the effects of global warming. Suggestions might be: drought, famine, floods, migration of millions of people, increased tension and a rise in conflicts.



But it isn't just global warming that negatively affects human beings. The spaces we live in every day influence how we view life. [Click to reveal image](#).

Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that the world is a gift from God and given to us to look after and cherish. If we open our eyes, we can see great beauty in the people and places around us. This lifts our spirits and brings out the best in us.

If we fail to take responsibility for the spaces around us and are constantly surrounded by dirt and disorder, we can start to feel neglectful and aimless. Maybe there's been a time your home was affected by building work, or during a camping trip you were unable to wash yourself or your clothes for a few days. After a while our self-esteem suffers and that can make us unsettled.

Big businesses recognise the huge impact our environment has so they spend millions of pounds constructing buildings, shopping malls, and offices to bring out the best in their employees and impress clients. Some of the most opulent of these are in capital cities. Nairobi is one such city.

SLIDE SIX

Nairobi is the capital of Kenya. Like many capitals around the world it is a city of financial inequality where the divide between the rich and the poor is great. Not far from luxury office blocks are slum districts like the one pictured here.

The lady on the right had lived in Kenya's countryside along with her husband and their children. But due to increasing droughts and failed crops, they, like many others, were forced to move to the city. Work is hard to find and poorly paid. The family ended up renting this one-room shack with no running water, or electricity, or toilet. There are no street lights in the slums, there are no proper roads and pavements, just dirty alleyways littered with rubbish and human waste.

EXTENSION – Ask the pupils to imagine what it would be like to live in these conditions. How would it make you feel?

[Click to reveal image of the family](#) – This is the family together. The little girl with the red socks is called Mary Ann. Like many children living in the slums she did not attend school as her parents couldn't afford uniforms, shoes, and books. Mary Ann spent her days wandering around the shacks and encouraged by some older children became addicted to the discarded industrial glue that's frequently dumped in the slum.

Thankfully, Mary Ann and her family were helped by a group of nuns. [Click to reveal first image again](#). These missionary nuns manage a special school which is partly funded by Missio. Mary Ann was given a free place at the school. Here she is provided with education, healthy meals, clothing, healthcare, and the help she needs to recover from her addiction.

The nuns that are helping Mary Ann and her family are fulfilling the role God assigned them and us: **to deliver his love to the world**. This is what it means to be a missionary. **A missionary delivers the love of God to others through their words and actions.**

SLIDE SEVEN

This is a healthier and happier Mary Ann with her school friends, proudly wearing her school uniform. There are many ways this Lent you could also take steps to be a missionary of God's love, and if you think that there's little difference you can make, then set yourself the task of changing that way of thinking. **Repent!**

Consider these three Lenten acts.

[Click to reveal words in sequence](#).

FASTING – Fasting doesn't always mean giving up food. We can fast by giving up some of our time to do something positive. Having heard about the influence our environments have, why not organise a community clean-up of your school grounds, a local playground, your church? You could even use separate bags for plastics and paper, and drop them off at your local recycling point.



CHARITY – Consider how you could fundraise for Missio and help millions around the world who live in hardship. Maybe organise a Scavenger Hunt. People pay to enter and each receives a list of items they need to scavenge (e.g. 5 discarded crisp packets). Give a prize to the person who brings all the items to you first.

PRAYER – Remember to pray, which, in a way beyond understanding, connects us to one another and to God, our source of strength and love.

SLIDE EIGHT

Mindful of the power of prayer, let us close our assembly with a reflection on creation and mission. Think carefully about the words of this prayer as we say them together.

[Click to reveal the verses in sequence.](#)

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

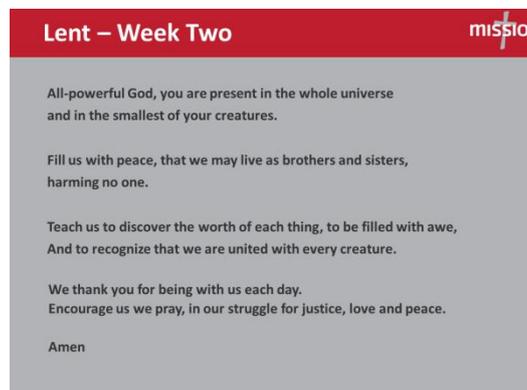
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe, And to recognise that we are united with every creature.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Amen

An abridged version of A Prayer for Our Earth by Pope Francis



Lent – Week Two missio

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Amen

If you have any comments about this or any of our resources, or if you would like to invite Missio into your school to deliver a workshop or assembly, please email education2@missio.org.uk. Below is some feedback from some recent school visits:

‘You taught us how to try to become missionaries ourselves, about what it means to be merciful and what we thought it meant to have peace. I think that we have learned how to try and live out what Jesus told us to do, “Love your neighbour as I have loved you.”’ —Year 8 pupil

‘We would like to thank Missio for your visit. It was great. Many of my GCSE pupils are now using Missio as an example of how Christians can fulfil their vocation.’ —RE Curriculum Leader

‘The talk delivered from Missio was very interesting. I learnt about the meaning of peace and its true meaning – to restore a bond. I enjoyed working together creating our own definition of peace.’ —Year 9 pupil

‘THANK YOU so much for today. The students and I were really inspired! The LSA in the class also said how brilliant you were and really enjoyed Period 1.’ —Head of Religious Education