

Early Years

LENT/EASTER – GIVING

Come and See for yourself

EXPLORE

Life, especially family life, or life in school, is full of opportunities for self-giving.

When children are young, parents have to do everything for them and sacrifice their own needs for those of their children. The quality of the parents' loving care lays the foundation for their children to grow into people capable of giving love to others.

When parents are old and infirm, they become dependent on their children to look after them. So, life is a cycle of being cared for and caring for others, of dependence and independence, of receiving and giving. Self-giving is essential if individuals and relationships are to grow and develop.

- Q Recall a time when you had to give up your own needs in order to help someone else.
- Q What were the costs?
- Q What were the rewards of the giving?

REVEAL

Lent is the season when Christians practise both giving and giving-up, to identify with the complete self-offering of Jesus which is remembered in the liturgy of Holy Week and the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil).

In his Gospel, Matthew makes it clear that in loving and caring for other people we are loving and caring for Jesus.

Word of God

“For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick, and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly, I tell you, as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Matthew 25:35-40

- Q What does this scripture passage say to you?
- Q Have you been moved by the need of another or ignored the need of another?
- Q Do I really believe that everyone is made in the image of God?

Catechism of the Catholic Church

“Lent: By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert.” (CCC540)

“The seasons and days of penance in the course of the Liturgical Year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church’s penitential practice. These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works).” (CCC1438)

No one was an eyewitness to Christ’s Resurrection and no evangelist describes it. No one can say how it came about physically. ...although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles’ encounters with the risen Christ. It remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history.” (CCC647)

RESPOND

- Q How can you give of yourself to your pupils in a way which encourages them to give to others?
- Q Is there any situation where you find self-giving difficult?
- Q What can you do to make it easier to give yourself more whole heartedly in that situation?

Prayer and Reflection

Lord, when I am hungry
give me someone to feed;
When I am thirsty
give water for their thirst.
When a burden weighs upon me
lay upon my shoulders
the burden of my fellows.
Lord, when I stand
greatly in need of tenderness,
give me someone who yearns for love. May your will be my bread;
Your grace my strength; Your love my resting place.
(Quaker prayers, Peace and Service, The Society of Friends)

LENT/EASTER – GIVING: GROWING – TOPIC OVERVIEW

NURSERY & RECEPTION 4 WEEKS | Looking forward to Easter

TEACHERS' NOTES	
<p>Lent is a time to work at growing spiritually in preparation to celebrate the death of Jesus and his resurrection at Easter. This process involves growing in many ways. It is not always easy.</p> <p>Scripture: Ephesians 4:15-16 <i>We must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ from whom the whole body joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.</i></p> <p>Catechism of the Catholic Church 520: Jesus presents himself as our model. He is the perfect person who invites us to become his disciples and follow him.</p>	
ABOUT THE TOPIC	
<p>Prior learning: experience of activities that are good to do together</p> <p>This Topic: learning outcomes</p> <p>Know and understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring is a time when things begin to grow – Explore • Lent – a time to grow in love to be more like Jesus and to look forward to Easter – Reveal <p>Acquire the skills of assimilation, celebration and application of the above – Respond</p>	
SCRIPTURE	TRADITION
<p>John 13: 34-35 <i>God's Story 1</i> pages 32-33 (Notes page 48)</p> <p>John 19: 25-27 <i>God's Story 1</i> (Notes page 49)</p> <p>Acts 2: 23-24 <i>God's Story 1</i> page 35 (Notes page 49)</p> <p>Luke 2: 51-52</p>	<p>Ash Wednesday, Lent, Easter, new life</p>
SOME QUESTIONS OF MEANING & PURPOSE	CORE VOCABULARY
<p>How do things grow? What do things need to grow? How do I grow 'Inside'?</p>	<p>Grow, spring, different, Lent, Good Friday, cross, Easter Sunday</p>
RESOURCES	AREAS OF LEARNING
<p><i>God's Story 1</i> <i>Church's Story 1</i> CAFOD 'Grow it, Love it, Respect it' posters Once There Were Giants by Martin Waddell ISBN: 978-0744578362</p>	<p>Areas of Learning (England) Areas of Learning (Wales) Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)</p>
COME & SEE WEBSITE	STANDARD INDICATORS
<p>Various pictures of baby/adult animals, seeds/plants etc. Time lapse film of a seed growing, a chick hatching or similar Montage of pictures showing how people live as Jesus asks.</p>	<p>Learning about religion Beliefs, teaching & sources Celebrations and ritual Social and moral practices and way of life</p> <p>Learning from religion Engagement with own & others' beliefs & values Engagement with questions of meaning</p>

RE CURRICULUM DIRECTORY	LITURGICAL/PRAVERS LINKS	SONGS/ HYMNS TO SING
<p>Area of Study 1: Knowing and loving God, the scriptures, creation, the trinity, Jesus Christ, son of God, the Holy Spirit</p> <p>Area of Study 3: Liturgy, prayer</p> <p>Area of Study 4: The dignity of the human person, human community, love of God, love of neighbour</p>	<p><i>Sign of the Cross</i></p>	<p>See John Burland Grid <i>This is the wood of the Cross (Taine) Jesus Remember Me (Taizé)</i></p>
<p>POINTS TO REMEMBER</p>		
<p>In Explore, teachers should stress growth rather than change throughout. It is enough for young children to know that Good Friday celebrates the day on which Jesus died.</p>		

EXPLORE

Spring is a time when things begin to grow.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Early learning Goals (England/Wales)

STANDARD INDICATOR

Some children will begin to **talk about** their own experience of 'growing'.

Some children will begin to **talk about** how they feel about 'growing'.

Some children will begin to say what they **wonder** about growing, themselves and in nature.

KEY WORDS

grow, spring, different

COME & SEE WEBSITE

Various pictures of baby/adult animals, seeds/plants etc.

Time lapse clip of a seed growing

A chick hatching or similar

RESOURCES

- *Church's Story 1*
- *Once There Were Giants* by Martin Waddell
- CAFOD resource '*Grow it, Love it, Respect it*' posters Farm

NURSERY FOCUS: Recognise growth in nature..

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

- Spend time looking at a variety of things that grows in spring time – e.g. twigs with buds, bulbs, seeds.
- Display picture and talk about *Church's Story 1* page 38.
- Go on a Nature Trail emphasising the wonder of growth and new life.
- Using books, pictures, songs etc. explore the miracle of growth to heighten the children's awareness of how a small, seemingly lifeless seed can become a living plant.
- Look at a time lapse clip of a seed growing or a chick hatching from egg etc.
- Tell stories, read poems, sing songs about growing e.g. *Once There Were Giants* by Martin Waddell.

RECEPTION FOCUS: Recognise growth in nature and discover the ways in which things grow.

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

- Plant some cress or something similar that grows very quickly. Focus on what is happening over time.
- Visit a farm or look on the internet for lambs and chicks. Consider incubating eggs in school to enable the children to experience the chicks hatching.
- Drama, dance about being a growing seed as for nursery, but include emphasis on conditions for growth. Have different groups acting out various stages and conditions for growth.
- Look at and use the CAFOD resource 'Grow it, Love it, Respect it' posters.
- Tell stories, read poems, sing songs about new life e.g. *Once There Were Giants* by Martin Waddell.

NURSERY & RECEPTION

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Plant cress or something similar that grows very quickly. Focus on what is happening over time.
- **Reception** In different pots, change the conditions for growth e.g. no light, no water, no warmth etc. Observe and record what happens during Week 1.
- Plant some summer flowering bulbs outside in the school grounds or in patio pots. Look after them and monitor their growth over time.
- Go on a Nature Trail emphasising the wonder of growth and new life. Record findings in an appropriate way. Take photographs or a video.

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

- Make the role play area into a green house. Provide plant pots, seeds, watering cans, compost, trowels etc.
- Play with a farm set, matching animals with their young.
- Set up a vet's station to care for animals.
- Provide opportunities for artwork - painting, collage etc. showing how things grow.
- Have pictures of various adult animals and their babies. Play matching games or create a drag and drop activity.

REFLECTION ON SIGNIFICANCE

Gather around the display or focus. Have a quiet moment together to reflect on and appreciate Spring as a time when things begin to grow. Reflect on the things which help to make things grow e.g. food, water, sunlight etc.

REVEAL

Lent: a time to grow in love to be more like Jesus
and to look forward to Easter.

CONTENT: – scripture – tradition – prayers

AREAS OF LEARNING

Early Learning Goals (England/Wales)
Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

KEY WORDS

Lent, Good Friday, Cross, Easter Sunday

STANDARD INDICATOR

Some children will begin to **recognise** the stories of Good Friday and Easter Sunday as religious stories.

Some children will begin to **recognise** the Cross, the words of the Sign of the Cross and the Easter garden.

Some children will begin to **recognise** that Christians try to 'grow more like Jesus' particularly during Lent.

RESOURCES

- *Church's Story 1*
- *God's Story 1*
- Heart shapes
- A tree or a small branch
- material for making an Easter Garden; a tray, soil, spring flowers, stones a piece of white cloth
- Egg shapes

NURSERY FOCUS WEEK 1: learn about Lent; a time for growing in love.

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

Introduce Lent as a time when Christians think about growing in love. Talk about *Church's Story 1* pages 39-41.

Display the text '*I love you and want you to love one another,*' John 13: 34-35, alongside the pictures from *God's Story 1* pages 32-33. Talk about the different ways people are showing love – focus on their expressions, actions, words etc.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What do you see?
- Q What room is this?
- Q What is the same in your house and what is different?
- Q What are the people doing and why?
- Q Do you do any of these things at home?

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Make a list of all the way's children can grow in love: e.g. sharing and helping, giving time, love, etc. Talk about what other ways love can be shown to others?
- Talk about the pictures *Church's Story 1* pages 40-41. What kind of things can we do to show love?
- Give children heart shapes on which to draw, write or scribe what they think love is. (Loving others means doing things and expecting nothing in return.)
- Create a Lenten tree for the children to add signs of growth in love, by sharing, caring and helping.
- Create a display of the way we can care for others and grow in love and understanding.

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

- Add leaves to the Lenten tree – showing acts of kindness to others etc. (Adults in the classroom can reward children they have seen showing how they have grown in love during Lent with leaves or blossom to put on their Lenten tree.)
- Role play activities that demonstrate caring and sharing

NURSERY FOCUS WEEK 2: Good Friday and looking forward to Easter.

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

Teaching point

Six and a half weeks is a long time for very young children, so it is better perhaps to observe a 'mini' Lent of two or three weeks, depending on whether they are Nursery or Reception children.

It is enough for young children, to know that Good Friday celebrates the day on which Jesus died.

By placing a cross in a place of honour, enshrined with growing plants and flowers, we may begin to lead young children to recognise the cross as something special to be venerated with love and respect. They will begin to have a sense of death and life and 'life through death'.

Good Friday

Place a Cross draped in a purple cloth on the prayer focus. Display the picture from *God's Story 1* page 34 or *Church's Story 1* pages 42-43. What do you see in the pictures?

Introduce Good Friday. The day on which Jesus died is called Good Friday. On Good Friday people go to church to remember Jesus and to listen to the story of how he died. The Cross is special because it helps us to remember God's great love for everyone.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What can you see in the picture?
- Q Where is the Cross?
- Q Why do you think they have candles? (Make a link to lighting a candle when listening to God's Word.)
- Q What do you think the people are doing?

Good Friday is a special day because it helps us to remember the day that Jesus died on the Cross.

When he was dying, Jesus saw Mary his mother and his best friend standing near. He said to them, "Take care of each other." And they did.

Based on John 19: 25-27.

It is a sad day because people remember that Jesus died on the Cross. It is a good day because people remember how much Jesus loved us all. The Cross is special because it helps us to remember Jesus' great love.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q How did Jesus die?
- Q Who was there with him?

- Q What did he say to them?
- Q How do you think they felt?
- Q Who was Jesus thinking about?
- Q What does the story tell you about Jesus?

Easter

Talk about *God's Story 1* pages 35, noticing the Easter garden as well as the words based on Acts 2: 23-24. Easter Sunday is a happy day. The priest wears white vestments. White is the special Easter colour. 'Alleluia' is the special Easter prayer. Some churches have an Easter garden to help people remember that Jesus died and was buried, but God his Father gave him new life. Jesus rose from the dead. Spring flowers are a symbol of new life. Easter is the Church's celebration of new life for Jesus and for everyone.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What do you see? (Easter garden, cross, flowers, empty tomb.)
- Q What are the children doing?
- Q What is the priest wearing?
- Q What do you think the people are doing?

The Easter Garden is a symbol of the Easter events. Read this story to the children:

The Easter Garden

Jesus dying was not the end of the story. When Thomas and Jane got to church on Easter Sunday, they were surprised. It looked so different from when they had been there on Good Friday. The colours were different, everything was bright and golden with flowers and banners. Everyone in church stood up and sang a hymn.

Father Smith was smiling as he said, "Good morning and a Happy Easter to you all. Today is a day to be full of joy. Today, we remember God his Father giving Jesus new life on the first Easter day." after Mass, they went to look at the Easter garden. Beautiful flowers bloomed all around; yellow daffodils, red and pink tulips, blue grape hyacinths and a beautiful green fern.

There was a cross draped with a white and gold cloth and a beautiful golden candle – and two wonderful surprises. Their Lenten tree from school was standing there in the middle of the garden. On its branches were the leaves and flowers that told of the many ways they had tried to grow during Lent. Beneath the tree was a basket full of chocolate Easter eggs, their favourites. "There's pLenty for everyone," Father Smith told them.

Easter Sunday, the day when Jesus was given new life by God his Father, really is a day to celebrate. Everyone is happy.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Why were the children surprised when they went to church on Easter Sunday?
- Q What did Father Smith say to everyone at the beginning of Mass?

- Q What did they do after Mass?
- Q What surprised the children?

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Make a rustic cross from twigs.
- Help children to make the Sign of the Cross. (From my head to my heart, from shoulder to shoulder, I love you, God.)
- Make an Easter garden.
- Decorate a banner with the words; 'Alleluia, Jesus is alive.'
- Set up an Easter Egg hunt with the words on egg shapes e.g. love, kindness, share etc.
- Provide hot cross buns for snack times. (Check for allergies)

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

- Prepare cross and egg shapes with appropriate words on them for the children to decorate.
- Paint images of Easter.

RECEPTION FOCUS WEEK 1: Learn about Lent: a time to grow more like Jesus.

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

When people listened to Jesus and saw what he did, they knew what goodness, love, care and helpfulness really meant. Luke's story (based on Luke 2: 51, 52.) tells us that Jesus lived in Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and grew up there. He listened to them, learned from them, did all that they showed him which would help him grow in caring and loving. He grew to be the most loving person there ever was. He was loved by his Father in heaven and by everyone around him.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Who helped Jesus to grow in love?
- Q How did Jesus learn to grow in love?

Talk about the pictures from *Church's Story 1* pages 39-41. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. A Cross is made on our foreheads with ashes to show that we want to grow more like Jesus. Lent is the Church's season of preparation for the celebration of Easter. During the forty days of Lent, Christians are encouraged to work at growing more like Jesus by caring, sharing and helping. This helps us to think about other people. Lent is also a special time when we think about Jesus, how he grew in love and we try to grow in love, goodness, kindness and helpfulness like him.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What do we call this special time?
- Q When does Lent start?
- Q What do we try to do during Lent?

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Display the pictures from *Church's Story 1* pages 40-41 of children living as Jesus asks them to. Talk about what is happening in the pictures and add speech bubbles.
- Explore the ways children can grow to be more like Jesus during Lent. Talk about how we can do things for others and grow in love e.g. pray for them, help them in some way. Write or draw what they can do on leaves and hang them on a Lenten tree.
- Ask the children to draw pictures of sharing, caring and helping, put these on a large cut-out cross with the caption 'Grow in love'
- Make a Lenten promise card showing how 'I want to grow in love like Jesus by...'

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

- Role play ways of caring, sharing and helping others.

RECEPTION FOCUS WEEK 2: Good Friday and celebrating Easter.

WHOLE CLASS CORE INPUT

Jesus dies on the cross

Place a Cross draped in a purple cloth on the prayer focus. At the end of Lent, we remember that Jesus died on Good Friday because he loves all of us. During his life some people became jealous of Jesus. They made a plan to get rid of him. Jesus knew that whatever happened, God his Father loved him.

This is the story of what happened on Good Friday.

Mary, Jesus' mother, and his friend John stood beside the cross as he died. Jesus said to his mother, "John will now be your son. Take care of him." Then he said to John, "Mary will be your mother now." When Jesus died, John cared for Mary.

Based on John 19:25-27

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Who was there with Jesus when he died?
- Q What did Jesus say to them?
- Q What does the story tell you about Jesus?
- Q What does the story tell you about Mary?
- Q What does the story tell you about John?

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Talk about Good Friday using pages 42-43. Make a collage of the picture with the title 'Jesus died on Good Friday because he loves us.' Put pictures of the children around the Cross; either ones they have drawn themselves or their photos.

Easter

Change the purple cloth on the prayer focus to a white cloth. Explain that this is a sign of Jesus' new life, his risen life.

Display the picture and the text from *God's Story 1* page 35 and talk about what is happening.

Display the picture and the text from *Church's Story 1* pages 44-45 and talk about what is happening.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Why is everyone happy?
- Q What is the priest giving out?

ADULT DIRECTED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Make an Easter Garden – Include fresh flowers – eggs, chicks and lambs which are signs of new life.
- Decorate hard boiled eggs with signs of new life and put them into an Easter basket. These can then be used in an Easter Egg hunt.
Plant quick growing seeds as signs of new life: e.g. cress or grass. This could be used in the Easter Garden.
- Sing John Burland's songs Early Years CD 1 Tracks 8-10

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

- Continue to role play ways of caring, sharing and helping others.

RESPOND

Remembering, celebrating and responding the ways we grow and that Lent is a time to grow more like Jesus and look forward to Easter

Remember

Start the session with a moment of quiet reflection. Provide each child with the opportunity to engage with questions of meaning and purpose related to *Growing*.

Using the display, children may be able to contribute to the following by use of discussion, role play, drama, art, cue cards etc.

Ask the children if there is anything they wonder about

- How during Lent, they 'grow' inside.
- Good Friday or Easter Sunday.

Provide the opportunity, possibly by one of the means above, for the children to remember

- That spring is a time when things begin to grow.
- The ways in which we can grow in love to be more like Jesus.
- Lent as a time for growth.
- Lent as a time to get ready to celebrate Jesus new life.
- Good Friday, the day Jesus died on the cross.
- Easter Sunday when God his Father gave Jesus new life and he rose from the dead.

Rejoice

Remember to plan an end of topic celebration. (Download the Rejoice and Gather Form on the Come and See website.)

Renew

The teacher helps each child to make an individual response to what they have understood and celebrated from their own experience and of the experience of the Church community.

Apply their learning

What can I do to grow in love?

Some suggested ideas

After a time of quiet reflection and prayer invite the children to:

- Live out the ways in which they have grown in love.
- Take home their Easter garden and eggs to share with their families.

Teacher evaluation

This is ongoing and will inform future teaching and learning, which will include assessment for learning.

STANDARD SUMMARY

Some children will begin to **talk about** their own experience of 'growing'.

Some children will begin to **talk about** how they feel about 'growing'.

Some children will begin to say what they **wonder** about growing, themselves and in nature.

Some children will begin to **recognise** the stories of Good Friday and Easter Sunday as religious stories.

Some children will begin to **recognise** the Cross, the words of the Sign of the Cross and the Easter garden.

Some children will begin to **recognise** that Christians try to 'grow more like Jesus' particularly during Lent.

CHURCH TEACHING

This is an outline of the teaching of the Church covered in **GROWING**:

- Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent.
- Lent: a time to grow in love to be more like Jesus and to look forward to Easter.
- Jesus who is the example we follow in goodness, love, care and helpfulness.
- Lent is a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
- Jesus died on Good Friday.
- Jesus rose from the dead at Easter.
- Easter is the church's celebration of Jesus' new life.