Lesson Plan: Introduction to Lent

Grades: K-3

Length: 30 minutes

Materials Needed

* Butterfly cut outs (see below)
* Toilet paper rolls
* Jumbo popsicle sticks

Resources Consulted

* <http://www.hhmi.org/coolscience/forkids/butterfly/>
* <http://catholicblogger1.blogspot.com/2010/01/lesson-plan-pre-k-k-lent.html>

Students will be able to:

* Relate Lent to Spring and new life
* Describe some of the actions and events that take place during Lent

Procedure

Introduction

* Begin class with prayer (either your own or the one below)
* *Lord, during this Lenten season, may we remember you and all the sacrifices you made for us. Whenever we are faced with difficult decisions and temptation, help us to turn to you and remember to choose the choice that will make you smile. Thank you for your strength and graces. (Take 3-5 prayer intentions) We ask this in your name. Amen.*

Body

* What does Lent mean?
  + The word lent comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word: lencten. What does lencten sound like? Lengthen! What is lengthening at this time in the year? The days! During springtime, the days are getting longer—they are lengthening. What other things happen during springtime? Plants start growing, warmer weather, animals come out from hibernation—there seems to be new life! This is similar to what happens at Easter. We get new life with Jesus’ death and resurrection. So Lent, just like springtime, essentially means a time of change and new life!
* What are some different things we do during Lent?
  + May mention giving things up—but the big picture is that we want to do something beautiful for God. We want to make God smile by doing little things extra or by not doing something that may hurt others or ourselves.
  + In our class, to help remind us to do these extra things, we have a this bean jar—every time we do something that will make God smile, you can put a bean in the jar. Of course, I will trust everyone to be honest, and not just put one in for no reason. Please take this seriously and only add a bean when you have truly done something good. At the end of Lent we will see how full our jar is!
* Can you think of anything else that changes into something beautiful in the spring? Butterflies! We are going to create this butterfly to remind us of Lent. The caterpillar has to spend time in a cocoon—growing and changing so that he can become something beautiful, just like we spend Lent growing and changing so that we can become something beautiful for God.
* Students will make their butterfly
  + Cut out and color their butterfly from heavy paper. Use any colors, but make both halves look the same
  + Put a small hole at the top of the butterfly’s head
  + Color the toilet paper tube to look like a cocoon (green/brown/black markings)
  + Take a piece of pipe cleaner and shape it like the letter V. Put one point through the hole in the butterfly’s head and twist so it looks like antennae
  + Glue the butterfly to one end of the popsicle stick and let the glue dry
  + Curl the butterfly’s wings and slide it into the cocoon

Closure

* Clean all the materials up
* Finish the class in a short prayer, thanking God for new life!

