



5th Sunday of Lent

Philippians 3:8-14

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Some things to think about...

During Lent, we focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Can you think of an example of these you've been able to do during Lent, or would like to do now? For example, making time for prayer, giving something up for Lent or giving to charity? What have you done this Lent as Mini Vinnies?

In this letter to the Philippians, St Paul reminds us to put God first in our lives. Are there times when it's hard to focus on God? What might distract us?

Lent is a time to put Christ at the centre. Catholics go to Reconciliation (Confession) so they can ask forgiveness for the times they haven't focused on God and loved one another. Easter is a fresh start, feeling closer to God and to others.

Activity

Now that you've thought about what you've achieved in prayer, fasting and almsgiving, each of you can write these down on a heart and decorate it. Put it on a display so you can inspire others during Lent and Easter.

Perhaps this Lent you can go to a Reconciliation service - Have a look at the SVP Reconciliation materials on the website with your teacher or guardian.

Teacher's Notes

The three penances for Lent are almsgiving, fasting and prayer. These three things help us improve in (respectively) love of neighbour, love of self and love of God. Inform students that fasting isn't necessarily not eating a particular food for the period of Lent, but any form of self control - whether it's not watching a favourite TV show, or doing extra chores around the house to help our parents, or being extra nice to our siblings.

Reconciliation is an important theme during Lent. Catholics are encouraged to go to Confession before Easter. This reading from St Paul, which remind us to put Christ at the centre above all else, is a good opportunity for you to talk to your Mini Vinnies about Reconciliation, have a chance to reflect, and perhaps have a Reconciliation service in your parish or at school.

We have SVP reconciliation resources on our website for you to use.