

How's Lent Going? A 5th-grade class reports on their plans vs. reality

Our readers

March 22, 2024

*At the beginning of Lent this year, **America** asked Ms. Shelley Brown, the 5th-grade teacher at St. James/Seton Catholic School in Omaha, Nebr., to poll her students about what they would be doing, or giving up, for Lent. We wanted to expand our view of Lent with the hope of finding a more immediate approach to the season of the kind that children can provide: “I am doing this, I am not doing that.”*

Three weeks later, Ms. Brown checked in with her students to see how their pledges and promises were going. We found their responses to be edifying—both for those who had kept their promises (inspiration!) and for those who had not (we’re not alone!).

Below are the 5th-graders’ hopes for Lent followed by the reality of their Lent. The first entry is their response on Ash Wednesday, and the second is their response on March 7. And we kept most of their original syntax because... why not?

Student 1: Reading the Bible more.

Reading the Bible more makes me feel more holy and reading the Bible more makes me closer to God, Jesus, Mary and all the angels that got to heaven and now is getting others to heaven.

Student 2: I'm going to limit myself on screen time to 30 min. This will bring me closer to Jesus because it gives me more time to pray.

I gave up playing my video games for all of Lent. I failed 1 day but then the next I got back to not playing. What I do for the time I'm not playing is praying.

Student 3: What I'm adding for Lent is giving up some free time to pray and how it will bring me closer to God. I'm giving up some free time to talk to him.

I forgot to pray for 5 minutes and the next day I decided I would pray for ten minutes and help around the house for a little bit.

Student 4: I am giving up my favorite game on my iPad, and it will bring me closer to Jesus and my faith because I will not be distracted by it. I also play it often, making a true sacrifice and I will be tempted to play it like Jesus was tempted by Satan, but will fight the temptation. Therefore, I will act like Jesus and give him my love by giving up something I really want. Those things will not only bring me closer to Jesus but will also bring me closer to my faith.

I gave up my iPad and video games and my challenge is going awesome. On the first Monday in the car, I played my dad's phone for 1 minute, but then had to get off. I think Jesus helped me since we had to go inside. Now, I'm back on track and haven't messed up since.

Student 5: I am giving up watching my favorite show and adding 5 minutes of prayer daily. It will bring me closer to my faith and Jesus because of the daily prayer.

For Lent, I gave up watching my favorite TV show, it has been going mid, not the best, but not necessarily bad. I forgot once last Saturday because my friend was over and we were having a lot of fun.

Student 6: I am giving up chocolate.

I gave up chocolate for Lent. It is going well but on the second day, I accidentally ate a brownie and my dad, mom and brother keep eating chocolate in front of me.

Student 7: I am going to try to eat more food that is good and less that is not. It can bring me closer sort of because children cannot fast at least I could try to eat healthier

My Lenten challenge is to eat better. It's been going good for the most part, but for a little bit, I started eating more junk food.

Student 8: I could go to church more occasionally on Sundays, this will help me become closer to Jesus by knowing and cherishing his words.

My Lenten journey is going “okay,” what I added was to go to church more occasionally. My sacrifice is hard because on Sunday mornings my parents are tired and don’t want to go anywhere till the afternoon.

Student 9: I am going to pray every night for Lent. It will bring me closer to God because I am praying. Praying is God’s favorite thing.

My Lenten challenge is going pretty good. My Lenten challenge was to pray EVERY night. I have a cross in my room to remind me to pray. Honestly, it is harder than I thought, but I am doing pretty good!

Student 10: I will read a saint story every Monday for their sacrifices.

I chose that I would read a saint story every Monday for Lent but I learned that it’s easier to say more than to do.

Student 11: My Lenten challenge is to pray for 5 min every day.

I try to pray 5 minutes every day, but sometimes I forget. When I forget, I pray for ten min. So the reason for me to do it is because I sometimes don’t pray at all like when there is no school I forget to pray. So I thought it would be okay to pray more, so I can get better at praying more often than not. I get mad a lot. So when or if I get mad I can pray to calm me down or I can ignore someone before I get mad. Praying can help me and other people. By the way, I hope your magazine is awesome!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! BYE!



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