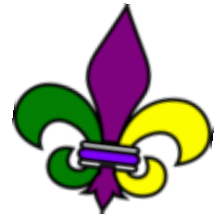




Choose the Child ~

Educating & Empowering Children to
Change the Culture



Fat Tuesday Respect Life Lesson

Concept/Objectives: The celebration of *Mardi Gras* brings much excitement and joy to many. Using the king cake, we teach the children the meaning of the cake and its Catholic roots. Like the hope we have to get the king cake baby in our piece of cake, the hope in new life is very much anticipated. Also, although someone cannot be seen or may appear different, they must be respected and loved.

Spiritual Works of Mercy:

Bible Verse: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you."
Isaiah 60:1

Corporal Works of Mercy: Have the students bring in beads to donate to St. Michael Special School.

Materials:

- King cake (with baby) large enough for every child to have a piece
- Napkins or plates
- Mask for at least 1-2 children

Opening Prayer:

Dear Jesus, our beloved King, thank you for the gift of our Catholic faith and the gift of life created by You. May we always have faith in you, stand for justice in this world and never doubt the power of prayer. You came into this world as a helpless baby - Help us to treasure life from creation until natural death. We ask this in your name....Amen.

Procedure/Discussion:

King Cake

1. Show the king cake to the class. Discuss.

Anticipatory Questions:

- a. Where do you think the king cake got its name?
 - b. What do the colors of sugar mean?
 - c. What does the baby in king cake represent?
2. Read the paragraph to the students about the Catholic roots of the king cake or have a student read it aloud. (see next page)

Read to students:

"King Cake*" - With end of the Christmas season, the community of New Orleans anticipates the beginning of the Mardi Gras season. With that, are thoughts of beads, parades, and king cake! Many aspects of Mardi Gras have Catholic roots and is an exciting time in New Orleans. The king cake has many Catholic "symbols". The actual name "king cake" refers to the 3 kings of the Epiphany. The epiphany is God, the son revealed to the world as Jesus Christ, the human being. The three colors of sugar on the king cake represent the three Kings who visited Jesus shortly after His birth. The three colors of the king cake are also meaningful and are found on all king cakes. Green symbolizes faith, purple symbolizes justice and gold symbolizes power. The traditional king cake always includes a baby inside. This baby, which everyone is hoping will be in their piece of cake, symbolizes the infant Jesus. What a gift for Catholics in New Orleans to be able to continue a celebration of our faith weeks after the Christmas season.

3. Further discuss the anticipatory questions.

4. Encourage the students to actively pray during the Mardi Gras season when they eat king cake. If their piece has green sugar - pray for an increase in faith in the world; purple sugar - pray for an increase in justice in the world; gold sugar - pray for an increase in God's power in the world.

Activity:

King Cake

1. Serve the king cake.

2. Ask them what they hope to find in their piece of king cake? Why? (possible answers: the baby - it's the only one in the cake) -We anticipate Jesus with our whole heart because He is the only Christ Child and He came as a baby to save each one of us.

3. Have the students start eating at the same time once a blessing has been said. The student who receives the baby should raise his/her hand. Have the student tell how he feels about having the baby in his piece.

4. Discuss the importance of the respect that we give to expectant mothers and their unborn babies.

Mask Activity

1. Have a student volunteer to come to the front of the class and put on the Mardi Gras mask.

2. Discussion Questions:

a. Is she any less important because part of her identity is hidden?

b. How should we treat him?

c. If we can't see an unborn baby, should we treat him differently than babies that we can see.

Just like our friend here, the unborn baby is hidden from us but she deserves to be respected.

Also, others who have disabilities deserve to be treated with respect.

Closing Prayer: Our Father

*<http://www.neworleansshowcase.com/hisofkincak.html#.WIFWv9-nHIU>