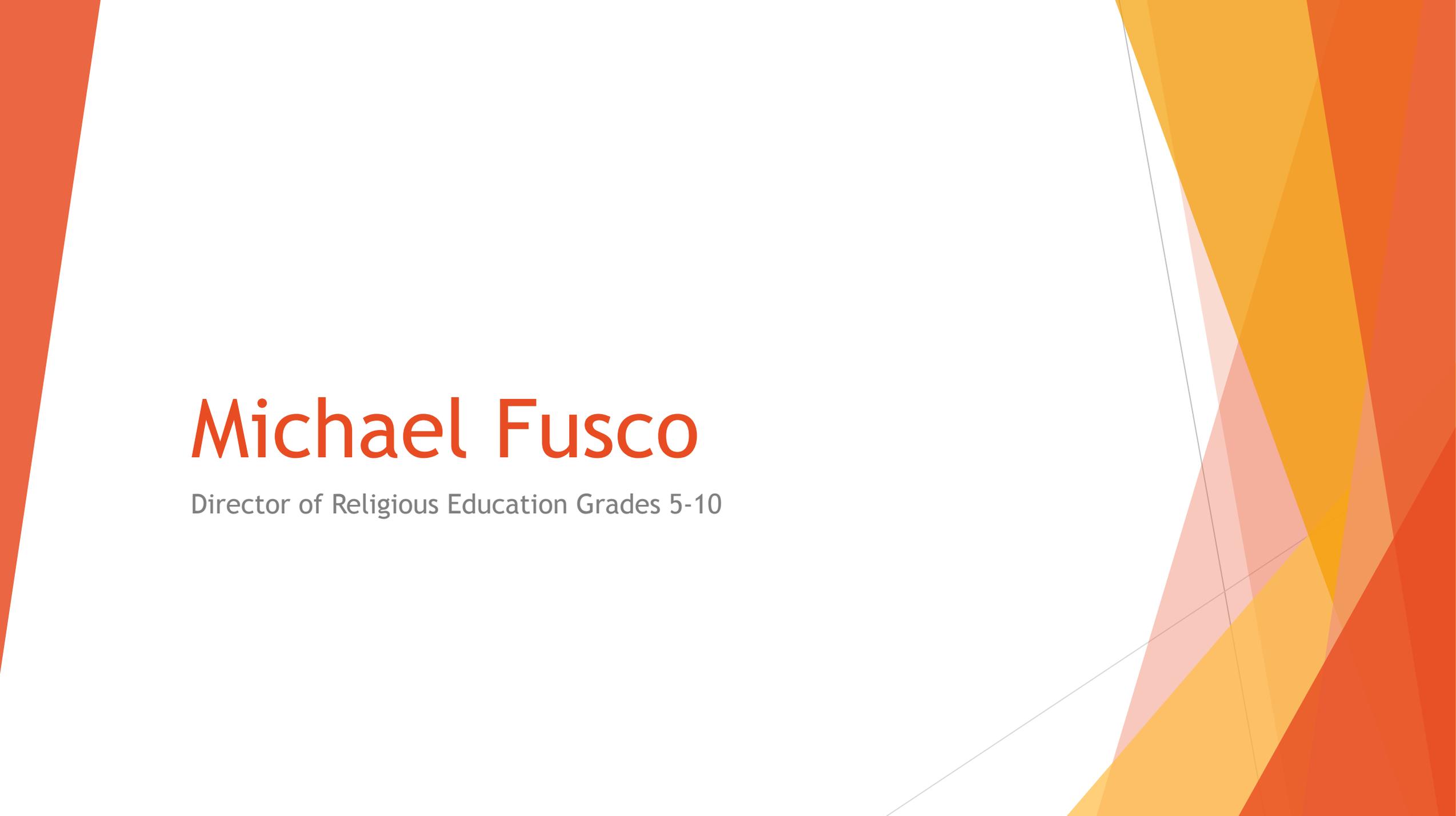




Spotlight Lesson 7
Saint Helen's Grades 5-8
Prayer, Fasting and
Giving

The background features abstract geometric shapes in shades of orange and yellow, primarily on the right side, with a white background on the left.

Michael Fusco

Director of Religious Education Grades 5-10

Welcome and Rules for Livestream

- ▶ Have Fun!!
- ▶ Learn something from this event
- ▶ The chat room is to be used sparingly. You are welcomed to greet each other but during the session we request that it not be used unless we ask you to use it.
- ▶ Chat will be monitored by Saint Helen's staff
- ▶ Feel free to pass this along to others for their use. You can watch as many times as you like!

Opening Prayer

God, You are my God, and I seek You earnestly (Psalm 63:1). I seek You as I undertake this fast. I bow before You and ask You to purge me of all unworthy thoughts, words and deeds. Forgive my sins as I forgive those who have sinned against me. Keep me strong and alert during my fast. Protect me from the Evil One, deliver me from temptation and steer my mind and heart away from all distractions. Help me to bring my spirit, soul, body and mind to you and focus on You, to Whom all praise belongs, Amen.

Goals of the Lesson

- ▶ Take a deep dive into the three components of Lent.
- ▶ Learn more about how we can pray in Middle School.
- ▶ Learn how to Fast and what not to do!
- ▶ Learn how to give more and how giving leads us to Jesus.

The BIG Three

Prayer

Fasting

Giving

Prayer

- ▶ What type of prayer do you think you can do more of during lent?
 - ▶ Say the Our Father Prayer everyday until Easter
 - ▶ Say a decade of the Rosary everyday until Easter
 - ▶ (Do you even know how to say the Rosary??)
 - ▶ Personal Prayer - Just talk with God for 10 min each day
 - ▶ Petition Prayer - Pray for the same person each day for 10 min
 - ▶ Read a passage from the bible each day until Easter
- ▶ Type your answer in the chat!!

Prayer

- ▶ Don't know the prayers??
- ▶ <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/catholic-prayers>
- ▶ Click on the link here and all the major prayers are right here for you to read.
- ▶ Bookmark this on your phone browser so you can access it easily
- ▶ Prayer takes effort!! Just like going to practice for a sport or a play, you need to be intentional.
- ▶ Schedule time for prayer on your phone! It will remind you to pray.
- ▶ Ask your parents to pray with you!

Giving

- ▶ How can a middle school student give more during Lent?
- ▶ We all know what the term giving means. Giving of our time, talent or money.
 - ▶ What are ways you can give to other people and kids in school?
 - ▶ Be real in your answers.
 - ▶ Name one way you can help others this Lent.
 - ▶ Would you rather do chores around the house?
 - ▶ Would you rather work with your parents and volunteer at a charity?
 - ▶ Would you rather work with your school on a service project?
 - ▶ Would you rather work with your parents and make sandwiches and deliver them to Saint Helen to be delivered? (let me know if you plan to do this)

Type your answers in the chat

Fasting

- ▶ Probably the most difficult to understand and do for lent but it's the one you should try to do as it will help you with your prayer life and in giving to others!
- ▶ If we were to meet an early Christian and ask about his or her most important spiritual discipline, the answer might surprise us. Or part of the answer. Because there's a good chance "fasting" would be high on the list. In fact, the New Testament contains about 20 references to fasting (depending on the version or translation you're using). It was an important and valued part of early Christian experience.
- ▶ Early Christians fasted and prayed for clear direction and during special seasons of need. Fasting wasn't only for special occasions, however; it was a way of exercising self-control and dethroning one's all-too-human appetites while also aspiring to a new level of intimacy with and devotion to God. Fasting and prayer go together beautifully.
- ▶ by Bob Hostetler Posted in Holiday Prayers

Fasting

- ▶ What exactly is Fasting and why should we do it?
- ▶ Fasting is the act of doing without for a period of time. Mostly it is associated with not eating. We go without meat on Friday in Lent.
- ▶ Why?? Back in the day, meat was a luxury and going without it made the sacrifice front and center in your day.
- ▶ Fasting is voluntarily going without food – or any other regularly enjoyed, good gift from God – for the sake of some spiritual purpose. It is markedly counter-cultural in our consumerist society. We come from the “get more” club. We want more of the things we like.
- ▶ Fasting has a purpose! We fast or give up something to bring us closer to Jesus.

Fasting

- ▶ Plan what you will do instead of eating or what you are fasting from.
- ▶ Fasting isn't merely an act of self-deprivation, but a spiritual discipline for seeking more of God's fullness. Which means we should have a plan for *what positive pursuit to undertake* in the time it normally takes to eat. We spend a good portion of our day with food in front of us. One significant part of fasting is the time it creates for prayer and meditation on God's word or some act of love for others.
- ▶ The BIG three Prayer, Giving and Fasting - Fasting points us toward the other two. Make a plan to do the other when you are fasting!
- ▶ You are capable of amazing things. You play sports, build robots, play video games, do high level theatre. **YOU CAN DO THIS!**

Fasting

- ▶ Maybe giving up food for a certain period of time is not for you or you really need to eat to prepare for a test or sports. What else can you “fast” from?
 - ▶ Video games
 - ▶ Social media
 - ▶ Watching TV
 - ▶ Time on your computer or tablet
 - ▶ Using your phone/texting or FaceTime friends
- ▶ Type in the chat one way you can fast or if you want to fast from food and replace it with prayer or giving to others. What do you plan to do?

Fasting: What is NOT

- ▶ It is not a diet.
- ▶ It is not something you do for a reward
- ▶ If you are fasting and grumpy or unhappy change what you are doing
- ▶ It is not to be a burden

Angela and the Echo Team

Our very own Angela and her pals from the Echo house show us what Fasting is not and how it can lead us to a better relationship with Jesus

Matthew 6:16-18

- ▶ **16** “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **17** But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, **18** so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Action: What can we do for Lent?

- ▶ Look at the three penance practices of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, and almsgiving. What one can you do and what would it be?
- ▶ **What are ways you can pray more? Who can you pray for today?**
- ▶ What can you go without?
- ▶ What are ways you can help those less fortunate?
- ▶ Sit you your family and produce a lent plan. Write out exactly when and where you will do things. Tell others about it so they can do it with you.
- ▶ Really stick to it and make this the best lent ever for you and others.

Middle School Youth Day with the High School and Peer Ministers

- ▶ 10:00 am Mass. Gather by the media booth. All students will sit in this area.
- ▶ Parents are encouraged to attend and worship with us!
- ▶ Youth day is 11 am to 12:30 pm in the gym and parking lot outside the gym area.
- ▶ What to expect? Food, fun, games, ministry and a time to meet new people. Hang with the high school kids and meet our Peer Ministry team.
- ▶ Please RSVP on the email to let us know you are coming so we can plan for food.
- ▶ This is open to all students grades 5-10. Bring a friend!

5th-6th-7th-& 8th Grade...

We invite you to join our High School Youth Group on:

Sunday, March 20th from 11 AM-12:30 PM

GYM/YOUTH ROOM & OUTSIDE (weather permitting)



Join us first at the 10 AM Mass. We will be sitting in front of the media booth.



GAMES!
GREEN BAGELS
HOT CHOCOLATE
FUN!



MEET & PARTNER UP WITH OUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

All are welcome! Bring a friend.

Please be sure to register by 3/16!

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, my Father, thank You for being with me as I fasted. Stay with me as my fast ends, that I may not wane in my devotion to You. Remind me always of the purpose of Your fast, as You revealed through Isaiah: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke, to share my food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter, to clothe the naked and not to turn away from you. Then, let it be so that my light will break forth like the dawn, and my healing will quickly appear, that my righteousness will go before me, and the glory of the Lord will be my guard, that I will call, and You will answer, that I will cry for help, and You will say: Here I am. Amen



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