

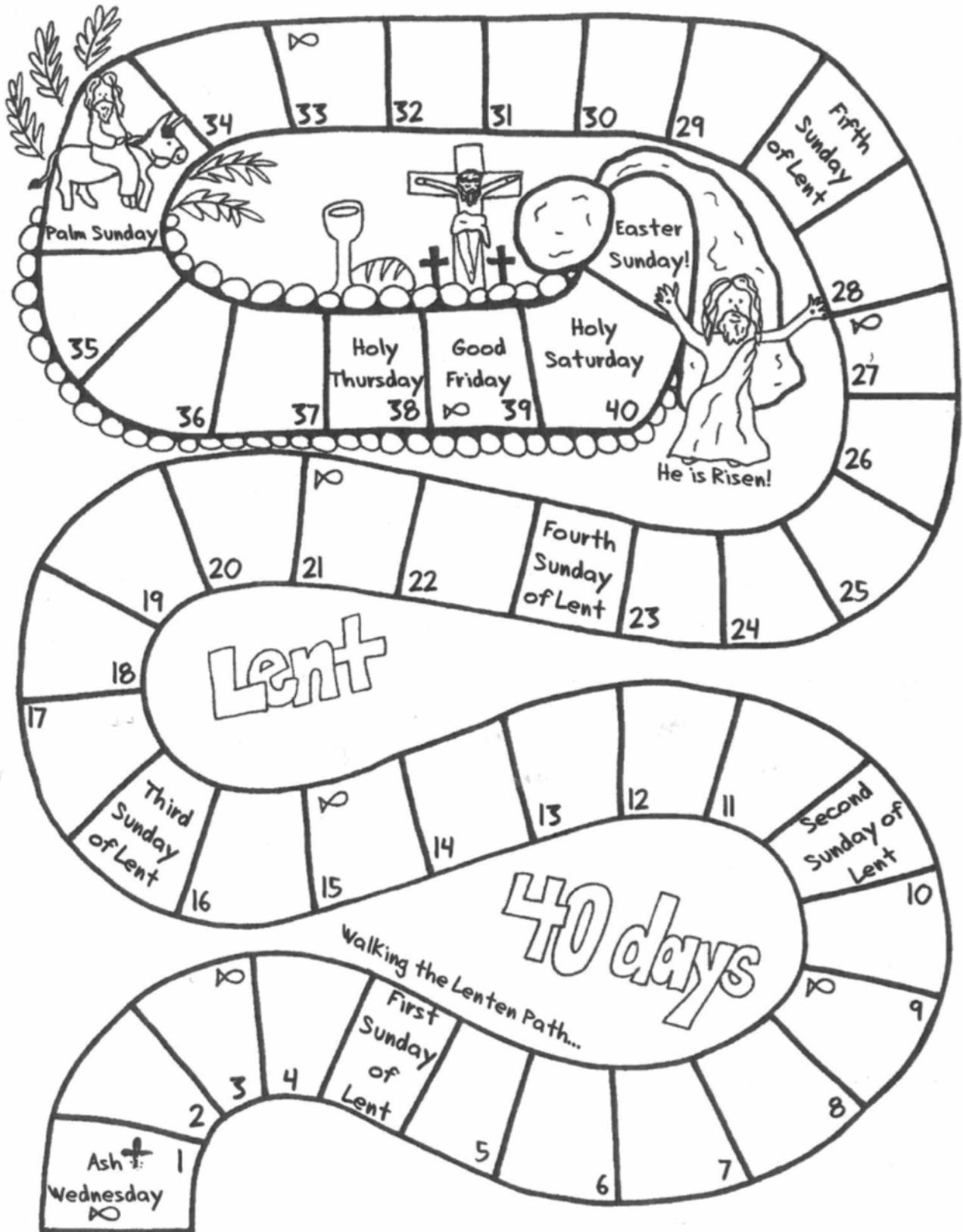
Lent 2018

Daily Activities for Families

Quick and easy suggestions for making Lent more meaningful this year

St. Margaret's Church - Annapolis, MD - www.st-margarets.org

Lenten Road Map



Use this Lenten map to show your daily progress. Color a block each time your family completes a daily task.

Ash Wednesday — Feb. 14

Blessing- Parents, bless your children by making the sign of the cross on their forehead before they go to bed at night or when they leave for school each day during Lent, reminding them Christ is with them.

Fasting Thursday, Feb. 15 —

Fast from TV.

Friday, Feb. 16 —

It's compliments day for each member of the family. Offer them an honest, kind word.

Saturday, Feb. 17 —

Pray for the winter relief guests at the church, that they may find a permanent home soon.

Sunday, Feb. 18 — See special Sunday guide - page 7

Monday, Feb. 19 —

Purge an unnecessary item from your room in a bag and save to donate to charity.

Tuesday, Feb. 20 —

Make a card to send to out of town family to remind them you love them.

Wednesday, Feb. 21 —

Contribute to or pay the bill of the person behind you in line or in the drive thru.

Fasting Thursday, Feb. 22 —

Give up sweets/desserts.

Friday, Feb. 23 —

Each family member names a person or situation to pray for, and then hold hands and pray a family prayer.

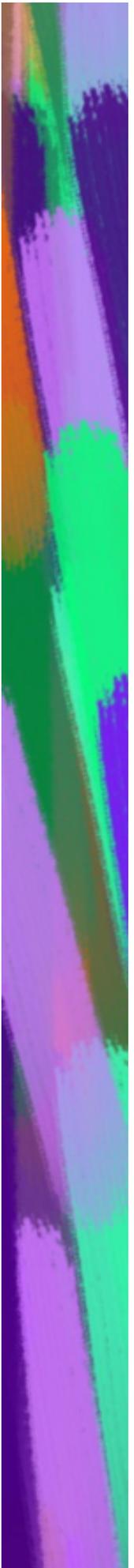
Saturday, Feb. 24 —

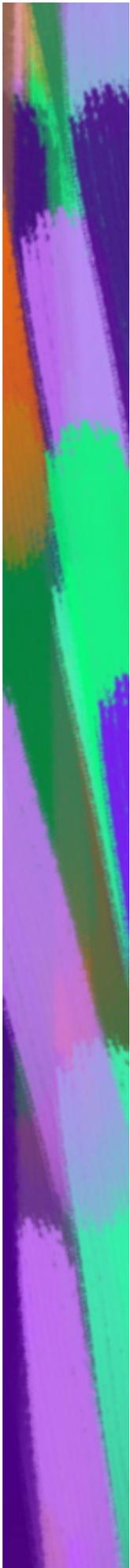
Family members write a thank you to note to the Rector or Sunday School teacher.

Sunday, Feb. 25 — See special family guide - page 8

Monday, Feb. 26 —

Check your pantry and bring donations to St. Margaret's for the Light House.





Tuesday, February 27 —

Take treats to a neighbor.

Wednesday, February 28 —

Go for a family neighborhood walk and pick up any trash you find.

Fasting Thursday, March 1 —

Give up looking at your phone for the evening.

Friday, March 2 —

Pay a compliment to a stranger.

Saturday, March 3 —

Call a family member you haven't heard from in a while.

Sunday, March 4 — See special Sunday guide - page 9

Monday, March 5 —

Say I love you to someone you love.

Tuesday, March 6 —

Say please and thank you to someone and really mean it.

Wednesday, March 7 —

Make a promise to smile at someone at school, on the street, or somewhere in public just because.

Fasting Thursday, March 8 —

No using of social media.

Friday, March 9 —

Give someone a big hug.

Saturday, March 10 —

Bake something for someone who needs it.

Sunday, March 11 — See family guide - page 10

Monday, March 12 —

Write positive sticky notes to post at home, at work, or at church.

Tuesday, March 13 —

Send an encouraging email, note, or text to someone who needs it.

Wednesday, March 14 —

Say a special prayer for a pet (either yours or a neighbor's or family member's)

Fasting Thursday, March 15 —

Fast from using the computer and spend that time with your family.

Friday, March 16 —

Write down 3 to 5 things for which you're grateful.

Saturday, March 17 —

Read together before bedtime.

Sunday, March 18 — See family guide - page 11

Monday, March 19 —

Do something for your church - attend a class, a rehearsal, a fun activity, or a Fellowship meal. Strike up a conversation with someone you don't know.

Tuesday, March 20 —

Look at old family photos and discuss what was happening and why it is important.

Wednesday, March 21 —

Work together to make a favorite family meal/dessert.

Fasting Thursday, March 22 —

Fast from buying anything that is unnecessary.

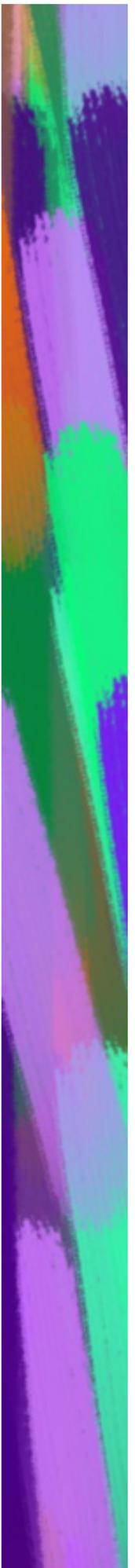
Friday, March 23 —

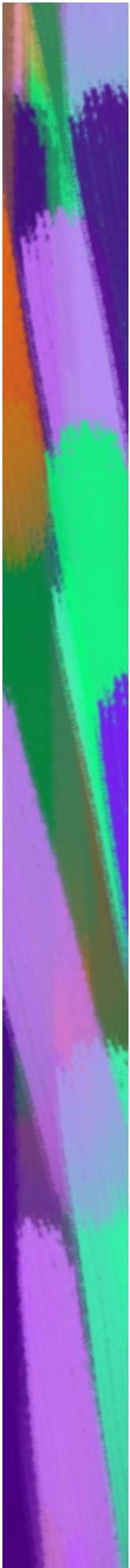
Clean one area of your home together, with each family member contributing.

Saturday, March 24 —

Ask everyone to find something in the house that is purple. When you have a little pile of purple objects, explain how purple is the color of Lent. Purple symbolizes the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus. It is also the color of royalty and symbolizes the kingship of Jesus in our lives.

Sunday, March 25 — See Sunday family guide - page 12





Monday, March 26 —

Jesus was very brave to travel to Jerusalem knowing what he had to do. During family time, talk about brave people you have known. Who is the bravest person you know and why?

Tuesday, March 27—

Work together. Take an empty jar and fill it with pennies (1 for each blessing you can name).

Wednesday, March 28—

Need bubbles for this activity—Family members think about something they wish they hadn't done or something they are worried about and, in your heads or out loud, ask God to help them with it or to forgive them. Then blow some bubbles and watch them float as a symbol of the freedom that Jesus gives them.

Thursday, March 29 —

Perform the washing of the feet as Jesus did for his disciples and discuss the significance of the action.

Friday, March 30 —

Ask your children to tell you in their own words what happened to Jesus on Good Friday. Hearing what their minds are thinking will help you understand what you may need to explain better or how you can relate the story to them in a different manner, if necessary.

Let them know it is okay to focus on the feelings of sadness, gratitude, and repentance that come along with Good Friday and help them process these feelings. Talk to your children openly about how Good Friday makes you feel.

Sunday - April 1 - Easter -- Alleluia

Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

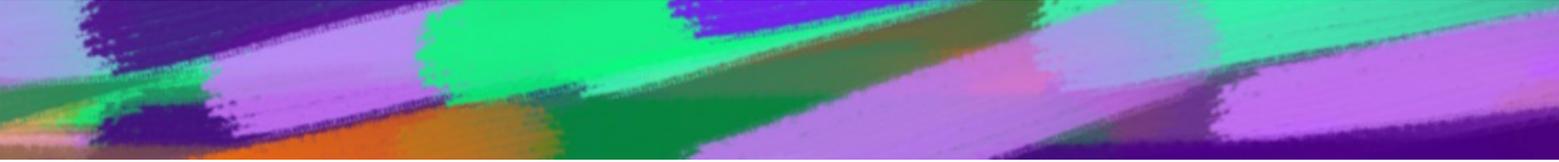
Discussion & Activity: Attend an Easter worship service. Ask family members to list things that happened in worship that help them be aware of God's love.

Sometimes Easter can be just a day when we eat chocolate, go to church, and are happy for a short time. But Easter gives us reason to be joyful every day. Look at a picture of a butterfly. Think about the beauty that emerges from a dull chrysalis.

Decide on one or two Easter actions to continue during the next weeks that help spread the news of God's love. Ideas include continuing to give to a charity, taking food each week to a food pantry, praying for one another, writing a note each week to someone who might be lonely.

Prayer:

God: We say together "Alleluia" because Jesus rose from the dead. We see new life around us, and we give thanks to you for all the signs of new life. Help us be joyful this Easter and never forget the wonderful gift Jesus gave to us all. Amen.



Ash Weds./Sunday Family Guides

from the Church of England's Going for Growth by Mary Jane Pierce Norton

Be sure and take a look at all of the activities coming up each week to prepare!

Week 1 -- Jesus Is Tempted

Scripture: Read together Matthew 4:1-11

Symbol: Rock

Discussion & Activity: When we read about the temptations of Jesus, we are reminded that we all face temptations in our lives.

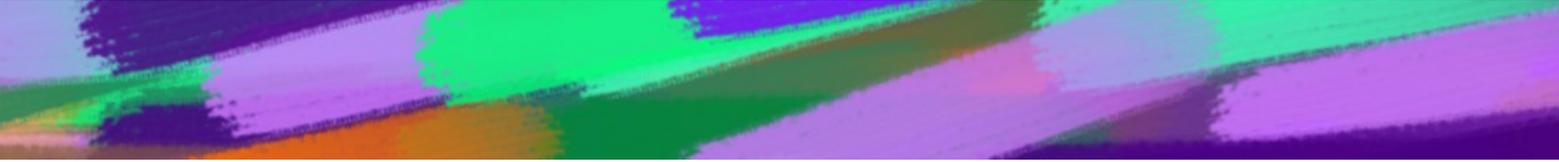
Pass a small rock around to family members. Think about how hungry Jesus might have been and how tempting it would have been for him to turn a rock into bread.

Talk together about what temptations each one in the family faces at home, at school, at work, in the community. Those temptations may lead you to identify what you would like to give up during the season of Lent. You may choose to give up certain foods or treats that tempt you to eat too much; or you may choose to give up an activity on which you spend too much time. You may choose to think of others instead of thinking only of yourself. You might want to give up sweets, or give up texting for one day a week, or give up a cup of coffee, or give up a television program. You might also want to assess a money value for each thing you give up. Save this money; then at Easter give the money saved as an offering for church or for a community project that serves those in need.

Decorate an empty plastic container with symbols, pictures, and words that remind you of the temptations of Jesus and of your own temptations. Place this on your dining table or in another place where everyone in the household can see it. Each day, place into the container money that family members would have spent on the activities they have given up.

Prayer:

Gracious God. Just as you were with Jesus through his temptations, we know you are with us as well. Help us to remember we are not alone. Help us to share this knowledge with others so that they too can know your love and care. Amen.



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Week 2 -- Teach Me Lord

Scripture: Read together John 3:1-21

Symbol: Candle

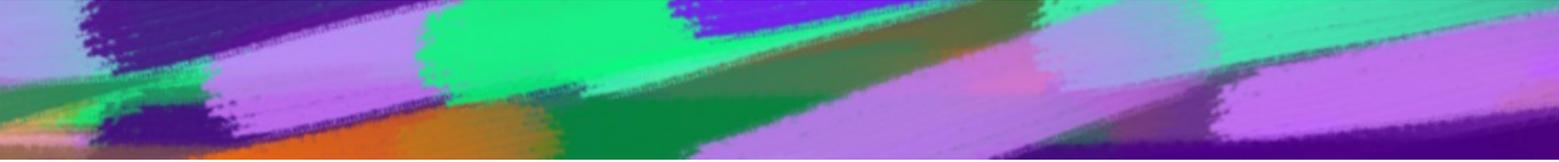
Discussion & Activity: Often when we read the story of Nicodemus, we concentrate on being born again. While that's part of the message of this story, another part is Nicodemus' willingness to come to Jesus in order to learn more from him. Nicodemus comes to Jesus because he wants to know more about God. And Jesus teaches him -- just as he teaches us when we read the Scripture.

Light a candle. Dim the lights and together look at the light from the candle. Think about these words in the Scripture: "Light has come into the world..."

Recall together where you have seen God's light this week through the actions of others, in the news, in things that have happened in the family. Create a poster of light. Cut out paper candles. Each day, write on a candle one way you have experienced God's care. Glue this onto a larger sheet of paper or poster board. Daily give thanks for how you see God's light in the world.

Prayer:

God, our Teacher. We learn about you from those who wrote the Bible. We learn about you when we listen to one another tell of your presence and actions in our lives. We learn about you when we look around us and see your creation. But sometimes we forget to take time to worship and praise you. Help us take time to offer our praises and prayers. Amen.



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Week 3 -- Jesus Gives Us Living Water

Scripture: Read together John 4:5-42

Symbol: Pitcher of Water

Discussion & Activity: Although John 4:5-42 may be a familiar story for you, it may not be as familiar to children and youth. It's a great testimony to the fact that we do not have to be perfect to experience God's love. This Samaritan woman was not perfect. We don't know all of her story. We know only what is written here, and there is just enough information to realize she had lived a life that wasn't perfect. But Jesus offered her God's love. And she believed and told others. She became a disciple -- one who learns from a wise teacher -- that day at the well. And the water reminded her -- and us -- that God gives us what we need for life.

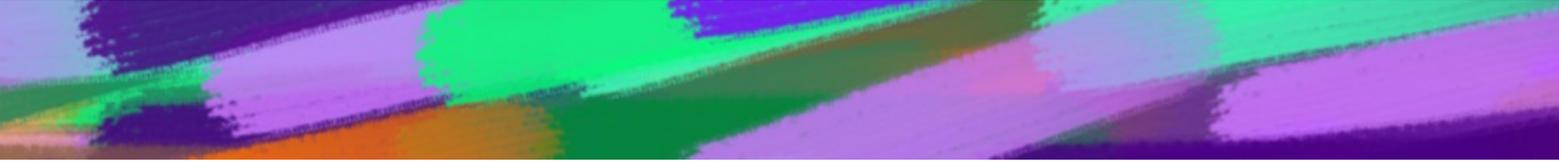
Part of her ability to believe came because Jesus offered love and acceptance to her. Sometimes when we deal with one another within the family, we find ourselves not able to truly love and accept one another. Something another person does makes us angry, or sad, or impatient. God doesn't ask us to forget those actions. God asks us to continue loving and caring for one another, even as we try to change actions that hurt others. Talk together about what it means to show love to one another even though we do things we shouldn't do. Make a list together of ways to show love to others.

Pour water from a pitcher for each person. Drink the water and reflect on how it nourishes us and helps us have life.

This week, make a list for each person in the family. This can include those who live in the household and/or those who live in other places. Use a separate sheet of paper for each person. At the top of the paper, put the name of the person. Under the name, put ways others in the family can show love to that person. During the week, ask each family member to do one thing for all others in the family from their lists.

Prayer:

Dear Lord. We know you forgive us when we sin, but it's hard to admit to those sins. It's hard for us to trust that you will forgive us. And it's hard to trust that those in our family will forgive us as well. Help us focus on ways we can show love and trust to one another. Help us keep our trust in you. Amen.



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Week 4 -- Jesus Helps Us See

Scripture: Read together John 9:1-12

Symbol: Bowl of Dirt

Discussion & Activity: When we read Scripture, we are often confronted with happenings that to our logical minds do not seem possible. Think about what you have just read. Jesus puts mud on the man's eyes, and the man sees! How fantastic is that? It had to be miraculous for Jesus' followers to witness this. And as the story attests, it was hard for those who saw the man to believe what had happened. It is even more difficult for us to understand because we can only read the account. We can't see for ourselves.

The simple message for Lent is that those who follow Jesus are able to see more clearly. Followers of Jesus are able to see more clearly the behaviors we need to exhibit as children of God. Followers of Jesus are able to see more clearly ways to serve God. Followers of Jesus are able to see more clearly the responses demanded of us to situations of injustice.

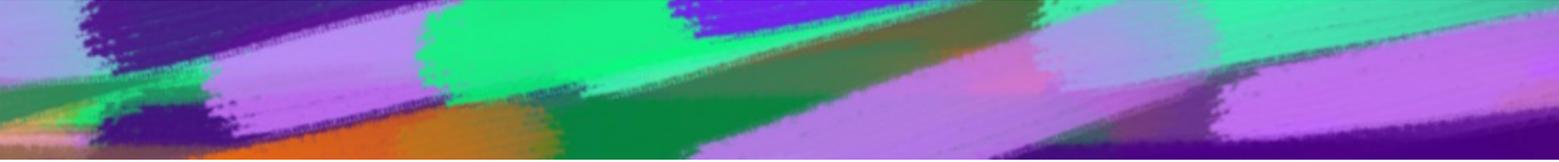
As you talk about the Scripture, have family members place their hands in a bowl of dirt. Mix the dirt with water to make mud. Think about how Jesus placed mud on the eyes of the man who could not see.

This is a difficult message for adults -- as well as for children and youth. In your family, talk about what difficult decisions you need to make this week. Talk about how you see what the right response needs to be. Talk about ways you see one another as God sees each of you.

Create portraits of each family member. On a piece of paper, draw a face -- or just a circle -- for each family member. Talk together and decide what words best describe each family member. Write these words in the face or circle. This week, pray for all the family members, thanking God for all that they are.

Prayer:

Gracious God: We are reminded that through the teachings of Jesus, we are able to see ways God would want us to live our lives. And we are able to see each person as a loved child of God. Help us look at one another as God would look at us. And may we help one another choose the actions and words that help those around us know of God's love as well. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.



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Week 5 -- The Meaning of the Cross

Scripture: Read together John 11:1-57

Symbol: Cross

Discussion & Activity: You may want to divide this passage as follows for study and reflection in your family: John 11:1-16; John 11:17-37; John 11:38-44; John 11:45-57. We often stop our reading after Lazarus is raised from the dead. But the consequences of this action are explained in verses 45-57. And because we know the Easter story has to include Jesus' death on the cross, it is helpful to realize that there were those who had decided that Jesus must die.

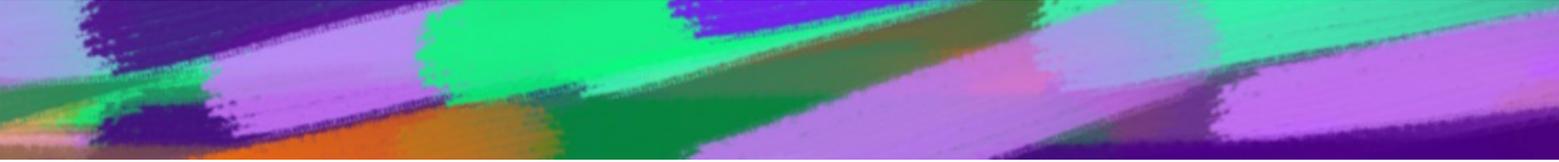
Sometimes it is hard for us to talk about Jesus dying on the cross. Because we know that he rose from the dead, we sometimes try to skip over his death. But this was what he was willing to do for people to know of God's love and care for all.

Pass around a cross. Tell family members to feel each part of the cross. Recall that the cross on which Jesus died was not a smooth, beautiful object like the jewelry we wear today. Think about the pain that was part of Jesus' cross.

Ask each person in the family to say how it makes him or her feel to talk about Jesus dying on the cross. Remind one another that we use the sign of the cross to remember Jesus even today.

Prayer:

O God: It is hard to think of Jesus, whom we love so much, being put to death on the cross. And yet, when we look at the cross, we are reminded that he did this as a gift so that we might be forgiven of our sins. Thank you for the gift of your son Jesus. Amen.



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Week 6 -- The Meaning of the Resurrection

Scripture: Read together Matthew 21:1-11;26:14-27:66

Symbol: Egg

Discussion & Activity: This week -- Holy Week -- we are in the midst of remembering Jesus' death. You may actually want to start the week reading the first passage from Matthew, then reading the second passage, dividing it up for the rest of the week, ending with Matthew 28:1-20 on Easter Sunday.

Invite family member to hold an egg in their hands. Ask them to think about how within the egg, there is life; but from the outside, we don't always see it. Name other things you see that hold life, but don't seem to do so just by appearance. Think about plant bulbs or bare tree limbs.

While we remember Jesus' death, we also prepare to celebrate his new life. After being so sad about Jesus' death, we learn that he is alive; and this fills us with joy! Ask each person in the family to tell of one thing about Easter that makes him or her happy. As each person says what makes him or her happy about Easter, respond by saying "Alleluia!"

Decorate Easter eggs together. We use eggs as symbols of the new life we have because of Jesus' death and resurrection. Make a list of other things that help us remember new life.

Prayer:

God, as we remember Jesus' last week, remind us that through bad times and good times, you are with us. Help us notice the suffering in the world around us. Help us find ways to offer the blessings of Easter to those who are in need in our community. Don't let us skip too quickly over the suffering just to get to the happiness of Easter. Remind us that you are there for us in both bad times and good times. Amen.