

St. Joseph's Family Activities

Lent 2022

Year C

stjoe.fam.activities@gmail.com

<https://www.theannunciation.org.uk/resources/>



A blessed Lent!

Lent comes from the old English word for “spring”. This time of year, when the days get longer and (hopefully) warmer is a very special time. As the world around us wakes us from its winter sleep, so too our lives of faith can wake up. Lent is about preparing us for Easter, when we celebrate that Jesus has risen from the dead. Every year we all renew our baptismal promises, which is to formally reject the devil and his empty promises, and restate our belief in God who is Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

Lent is a time to work out what our priorities are. As the increased light in our houses shows up the dust and dirt that may have been hidden in the dark winter months and we do some spring cleaning, Lent is a kind of spring cleaning of our souls. Just as in spring cleaning, we tackle one room at a time, so with Lent. We can by God's grace, work on correcting bad habits bit by bit. In Ash Wednesday's Gospel, Jesus teaches how we can do good deeds, fast, and praying, but in secret. Basically, He tells us not to boast! Finally, on the last page, please find links to some very good free online resources for primary and teens from Aid to the Church in Need.

There are no saints in this edition – they have been posted in a separate March festivals edition. Finally, there will be a separate Holy Week and Easter edition published towards the end of March.

Recent past copies are available from

<https://www.theannunciation.org.uk/resources/> If you are after copies that go back further, please contact me directly.

There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.

Lent is a journey to the cross. It is a very good idea to have a crucifix in the home and if you don't have one, maybe make it a Lenten resolution to get one this Lent and ask your priest to bless it.

A crucifix is so much more than an empty cross which many Protestants favour. A crucifix keeps Christ at the centre and reminds us that it is only through His Passion, death, Resurrection and Ascension that we are brought back into communion with the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit. An empty cross focuses on the Resurrection, but there is no Resurrection without Christ's Passion and death.



The family is the “domestic Church” and if we are not able to gather in person with the parish, it's a good idea to set aside special times to pray with the family, even if it is just 10 minutes two or three times a week. These are graced moments. Light a candle and have a few moments' silence and remind everyone that they are in the presence of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These times are very precious and even if it is just a few minutes after a meal, it can be a fruitful time. Don't bite off more than you can chew! Start with just a few moments and build up the scope and variety of prayers slowly. Give everyone the opportunity to voice their own prayers as well as reciting traditional prayers.

**Speaking/Learning the faith
(which the Church calls
“professing the faith”)**

**Living it (in Christ) – i.e. the
choices we make in
everyday life**

**Celebrating it in the Liturgy
and the Sacraments**

**Christian
prayer.**

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Discussion on the Gospel for Ash Wednesday

Gospel for Ash Wednesday Year C

Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

So often the first thing that people refer to in Lent is "giving up" something, whether that is cakes, sweets, sugar, the TV.... But let's look carefully at what Jesus is asking us to do:

Q: What does Jesus mean by "good deeds"? (A: Nice, kind things we do for other people.)

Q: What does Jesus mean by "giving alms"? (A: Giving money or things to people that need it.)

Q: What does Jesus mean when He says that our left and right hands must not know what they are doing? (A: We give in private, or in secret, without telling people! [Obviously children need to check with their parents before they start giving things away!])

Q: How can we give of our time to other people in secret? (A: We can do some helping at home or in school without being asked and without boasting about it, we can put a bit of our pocket money in a charity box without boasting....)

Q: What was Jesus' second instruction? (A: To pray in secret)

Q: How can we pray in secret? (A: Open, but suggestions are, to say a prayer in bed as soon as we wake up, or when we go to bed as we go to sleep, to go and spend a few moments away from everyone else to pray the "Hail Mary" or may be to decide to pray a decade of the Rosary each day. We can pray silently when we are in the car or walking to school.)

Q: And finally, what was Jesus' third instruction? (A: To fast without being gloomy.)

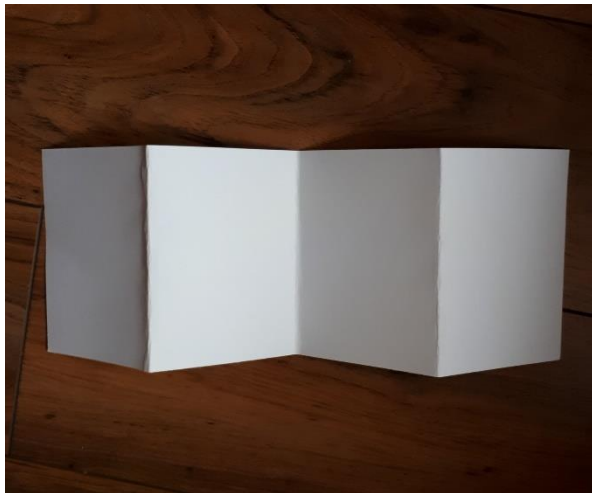
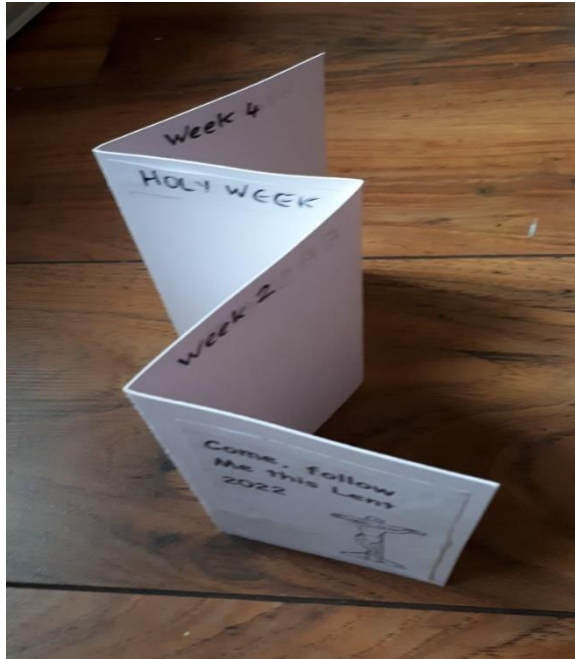
Q: What is "fasting"? (A: It means going without something.)

Q: Apart from the usual "giving up" of sweets etc how can we fast this Lent. What can we do without? (A: Open, suggestions are to have a "devise free evening" etc.)

Q: To sum up, what are the three actions Jesus asks us to do in Lent? (A: Giving alms/doing good deeds; prayer in secret; fasting)

**Let us ask our Heavenly Father to help us to decide how we can discipline ourselves this Lent and for the grace to stick to our Lenten resolutions.
Our Father**

Make a Lenten booklet to help you pray, be generous and fast this Lent.



On the next Page are labels you can cut out, (or draw and write your own).

1. Begin with a piece of A3 Paper or card (or Sellotape two pieces of A4 together.) Fold in half lengthwise and cut along the fold so that you have a long rectangular page.
2. Fold this in half so that the short ends meet and then fold each of the short ends backwards to make a zig-zag.
3. Stand your zigzag upright so that the front is like a book with the opening on the right.
4. Stick the cover page (below) on the front.
5. Open the booklet and write "Week 1" "Week 2" etc on each of the folds as in the picture.
6. Don't write "Week 6" but write "Holy Week" on the 6th page, and on the 7th Page write Easter!
7. Each of the quotes in text boxes on the next page are adapted from the entrance antiphon for Mass each Sunday of Lent. These in turn mostly come from the Psalms (if you have a missal, you can see the references beside the antiphons).
8. Stick the quotes from the next page under the label for each week.

Help and encourage the children* to use the booklet all the way through Lent to record their thoughts and how they have been able to follow Jesus by giving, praying, and fasting.

* Children? ... we are all children of God so this activity can be used by children from aged 6-600!

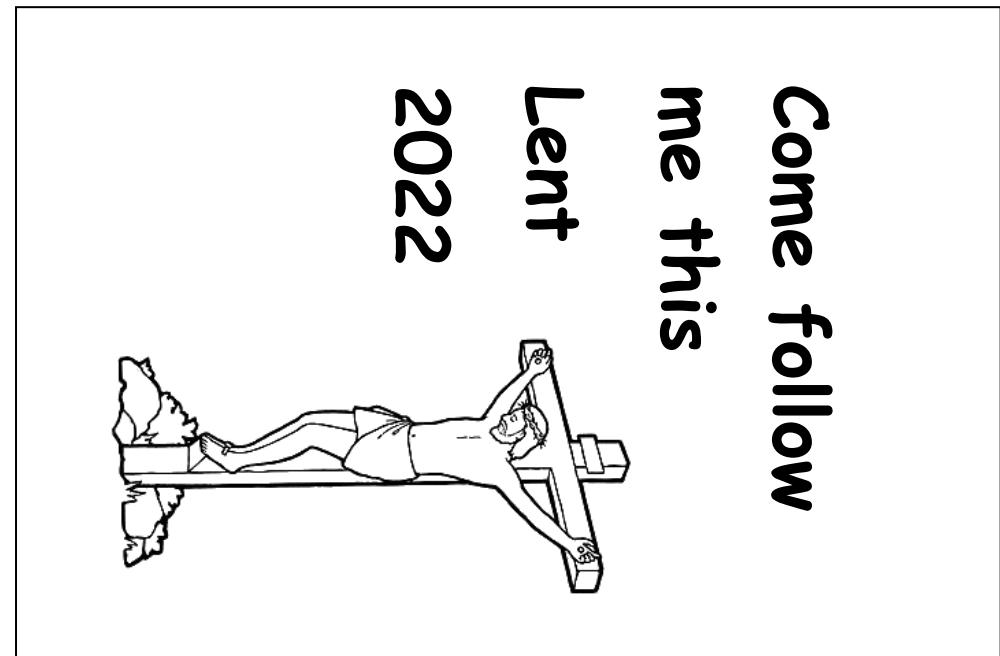
1. Jesus says, "When you call on me, I will answer you. I will deliver you and give you glory, and I will grant you length of days.

2. Of you dear Jesus, my heart has spoken,
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
Do not hide your face from me.

3. My eyes are always on you O Lord,
for you rescue me.
Turn to me and have mercy on me,
for I am alone and poor without you.

4. Rejoice,
Be joyful, all who were sad.

5. Give me justice, O God,
and plead my cause against faithless people.
Rescue me from those who lie and try to
trick me, for you, O God, are my strength.



Holy Week: (Palm Sunday)
The children ran to meet Jesus;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:
Hosanna in the highest!

Easter: The Lord is truly risen, alleluia.
To him be glory and power
for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel for 6th March,
1st Sunday in Lent Year C**

Luke 4:1-13

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.' But Jesus replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone.'

Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, 'I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms, for it has been committed to me and I give it to anyone I choose. Worship me, then, and it shall all be yours.' But Jesus answered him, 'Scripture says: You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then he led him to Jerusalem and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said to him 'throw yourself down from here, for scripture says:

He will put his angels in charge of you
to guard you,

and again:

They will hold you up on their hands
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

But Jesus answered him, 'It has been said:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him, to return at the appointed time.

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Discussion on the Gospel



- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

Q: Where has Jesus gone? (A: To the wilderness/desert.)

Q: Why was Jesus hungry? (A: Because He ate nothing for 40 days.)

Q: What did the three things that the devil tempted Jesus to do? (A: Turn a stone into bread, worship the devil, jump of the temple wall.)

Q: Why did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into bread? (A: Because Jesus was hungry.)

Q: If it's nearly dinner time and we are hungry, what might we be tempted to do? (A: Take a biscuit or eat something that we are not supposed to and ruin our appetite.)

Q: What did the devil mean when he wanted Jesus to worship him? (A: He wanted Jesus to think about earthly power and be a king of a country and not the King of the Universe.)

Q: The first of the Ten Commandments is that we must worship only God. that means that we must put God first in our lives. How can we do this in our everyday lives? (A: Open, e.g. Say a morning prayer, think "What would Jesus do")

Q: Jesus was working out what kind of Messiah the Father wanted Him to be, He knew that He could do miracles, but He also knew that doing fantastic miracles for the sake of a show was not going to save us. We can be tempted to do all sorts of things which our heavenly Father does not want us to do... what sort of things? (A: Various, e.g. lie, take things that are not ours, eat too much, say mean things.....)

Q: How does Jesus answer the devil each time? (A: He quotes the Scriptures.)

Q: When we are tempted to do something that we know is wrong, what can we do to keep us strong? (Open, e.g. say a prayer, make the Sign of the Cross, say the Our Father, the Hail Mary and quote the Bible.)

On the next page there are Bible quotes to colour in and put up at home to use when you are tempted.

God says, "Man does not live by bread alone... but by everything that comes out of the mouth of God." (Deut. 8:6)

God says, "Do not steal."

(Exodus 20:15)

God says, "You must not tell lies." (Ex.20:16)

God says, "You shall only worship Me." (Exodus 20:3-5)

God says, "Blessed are the merciful (those who forgive)." (Mt. 5:7)

Gospel for 13th March

2nd Sunday of Lent Year C

Luke 9:28-36

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed, and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' – He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.' And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

The Transfiguration is always read on the second Sunday of Lent. It serves to remind us that Jesus is God and when He became man and was born as a tiny baby, He left behind the glory that is his due as being the eternal Son of God. In the Transfiguration, Jesus' glory is briefly seen by His Apostles and by us too.

Q: Where did Jesus go with Peter, James and John? (A: Up a mountain to pray.)

Q: How did Jesus change as He prayed? (A: He began to shine brilliantly.)

Q: Who appeared talking to Jesus? (A: Moses and Elijah.)

Q: Who can tell us anything about these two people? (A: Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them the Ten Commandments, and Elijah was a prophet who had had a very special relationship with God [see for e.g., I Kings 19:9-17].)

Q: What happened when Peter was speaking? (A: They were all covered in a cloud.)

Q: What did they hear? (A: A Voice saying, "this is my Son the Chosen One, listen to Him.")

Q: What was the other occasion that a voice from heaven was heard? (A: Jesus' Baptism.)

Q: When Jesus was baptised, the Holy Spirit appeared like a dove but here the Holy Spirit is appearing as something else, what? (A: A Cloud.)

Q: In this scene then, we have God the Father's Voice, God the Son (Jesus) is there and the God the Holy Spirit as a cloud. What phrase do we use to show that God is three Divine Persons? (A: The Holy Trinity/Blessed Trinity.)

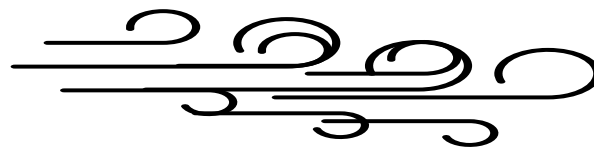
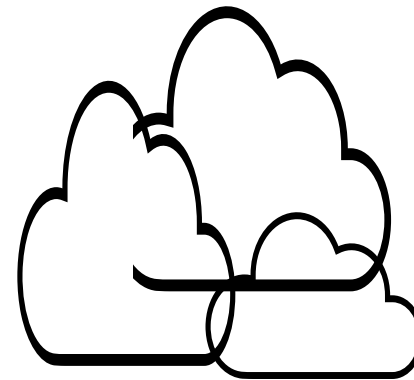
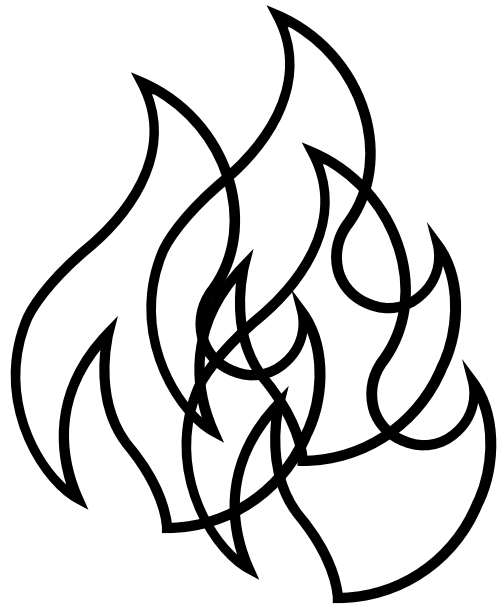
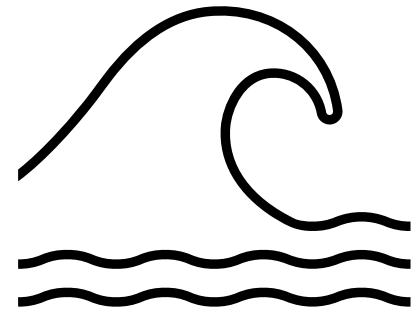
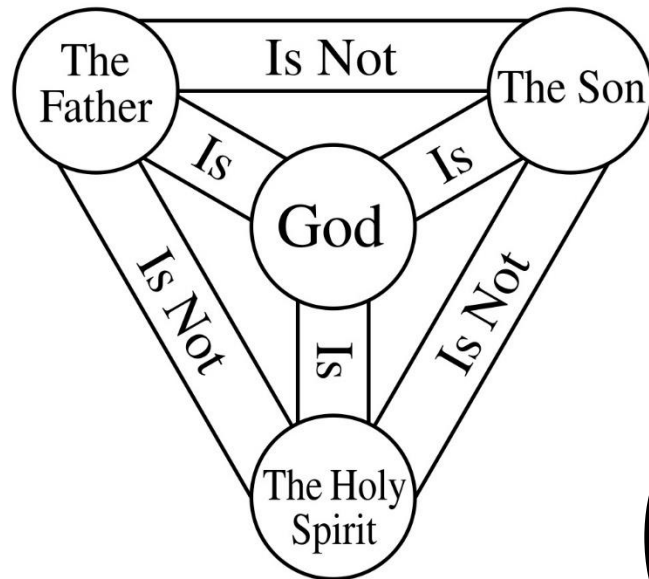
Q: We can't see the Holy Spirit just as we can't see wind. We see the effects of wind [trees moving etc] and in the Bible there are various signs of the Holy Spirit. What are they? (A: Dove, cloud, fire, water, wind ...)

Either colour in the signs of the Holy Spirit on the next page, or make a collage by sticking a picture of a dove, and make tissue paper fire and water and cotton-wool for the cloud on black paper with the Holy Trinity triangle in the middle.

Colour in these signs of the Holy Spirit



THE HOLY TRINITY



**Gospel for Sunday 20th March,
3rd Sunday of Lent Year C
Luke 13:1-9**

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

*Jesus told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard (called the vinedresser), "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the vinedresser replied, "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'"

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

In first century Palestine, people believed that illness or tragedy was the result of personal sin, however Jesus refutes this belief. His warning is that we don't know the hour of our death and so need to be in a state of "readiness". It may be better with younger children to just focus on the parable of the fig tree (starting at the asterisk) which is about repentance and mercy, and God, like the vinedresser, gives plenty of time for us to repent and change our ways, feeding us with His love and through the sacraments.

Q: What had been planted in the vineyard? (A: A fig tree.)

Q: What was the problem with the fig tree? (A: It had not produced any figs (fruit).)

Q: Why do people plant fruit trees? (A: To get fruit from them.)

Q: What did the man who planted the fig tree want to do with it? (A: He wanted to dig it up as it was taking up space.)

Q: What was the vinedresser's answer? (A: To leave it and give it another chance. He would feed it with manure so that hopefully it would bear fruit next year.)

Q: How is the Father like the vinedresser? (A: He gives us lots of chances to "bear fruit".)

Q: How does Jesus feed us? (A: He feeds us with His word in the Bible, and with the sacraments.)

Q: What is this "food" that Jesus gives us called? (A: Grace.)

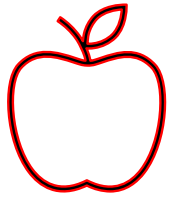
Q: What does grace help us to do? (Think about the fig tree that wasn't doing it.) (A: To bear good fruit)

Q: What does it mean to "bear fruit" in our lives? (A: To live a life that is full of love for Jesus and other people.)

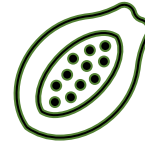
Q: When we are baptised, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and He helps us to bear fruit. St Paul lists all the main fruits of the Holy Spirit living in us, can anyone tell me any of them? (A: The full list of the fruits of the Spirit are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control [Gal. 5:22-23].)

On the next page, think of some actions you can do that show that you are bearing fruit as a Christian.

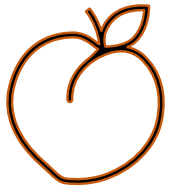
Bearing fruit in our lives as Christians



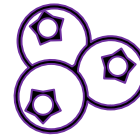
I am loving when _____



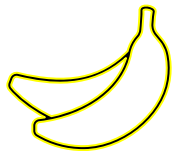
I am kind when _____



I am joyful when _____



I am good when _____



I am peaceful when _____



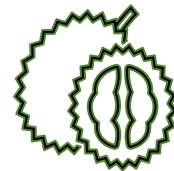
I am faithful when _____



I am patient when _____



I am gentle when _____



I am self-controlled when _____

Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Gospel for Sunday 27th March, 4th Sunday of Lent Year C Luke 15:1-3,11-32

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father.

'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening."

'The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion on the Gospel



- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

The fourth Sunday of Lent is Laetare Sunday, and the colour of the vestments is rose (not pink). Rose is a paler version of purple and gives us hope that our time of penitence is nearing its end. The Church knows our human nature and this Sunday, together with Gaudate Sunday in Advent, we have a brief respite from fasting and the restrictions we have put ourselves under for the penitential season. Whereas in Advent, in the liturgy we hear “Gaudete” which means “rejoice” today we hear “Laetare Jerusalem” which means “Be joyful Jerusalem.” The Church is the new Jerusalem, and so even in the midst of our Lenten fast, we can take a break and rejoice that the time is almost upon us to celebrate the source of our salvation in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Additionally in the UK the fourth Sunday of Lent is always celebrated as Mothering Sunday (see the notes below). The message of today’s Gospel is that our loving heavenly Father forgives each and every one when we come back to Him in repentance and sorrow. We can also remind the children that like our heavenly Father, our parents forgive us when we say sorry to them for our sins against them. Parents’ love for their children comes from the Father’s love for us. The father in the parable looks out for his wayward son and parents do the same, they look out for their children and are desperate to welcome them home. It is important not to say “God does this because parents do...” but to emphasise that it’s the other way around. Parents do this because God has looked out for us first!

Q: What did the younger son ask his father for? (A: His share of what he would get when his father died.)

Q: This is so shocking. It is basically saying to his Dad, “I don’t want you, I want you dead! What did the father do?” (A: Gave his son his share.)

Q: What did the younger son do with his father’s money? (A: He wasted it all until there was none left.)

Q: When the son decided to go back home to his father what was he planning to say? (A: I am sorry, I realise that I do not deserve to be your son any more, but may I be one of your servants?)

Q: What was the father doing when the son was away? (A: He was looking out for him all the time. He desperately wanted him back home.)

Q: When the son came back home, what did the father do? (A: Embraced (hug) him, put clothes, sandals and a ring on him and arranged a party to celebrate.)

Q: This is how our heavenly Father celebrates when we say sorry for the bad things that we have done. He gives us new clothes (spiritual clothes, called grace) and rejoices in heaven with all the saints. At Mass, when do we say sorry to God for our sins? (A: When we say the “I confess” or when we say, “Lord have mercy/Christ have mercy/Lord have mercy”.)

Q: Our heavenly Father helps our parents to forgive us when we are disobedient. Let us think about something that we said or did at home that made Mummy or Daddy sad. Or may be something they asked us to do that we didn’t do. In your heart, say sorry to God for hurting your parents. Now imagine that God is giving you a big hug!

Notes on Mothering Sunday (Mother's Day)

Mothering Sunday, or more commonly said, Mother's Day, has its origins in the medieval times when the readings used by the Church then reflected the Church as mother. It became the habit for people to return to their "mother Church" (i.e. the Church where they were baptised) on this, the 4th Sunday in Lent, and also to honour Mary, the mother of the Church. Despite the Reformation and the dropping of the references to Our Lady, the tradition continued, with girls in service being sent home to their mothers on the 4th Sunday of Lent.

During the English Civil wars (1642-1651) it was noted that, *"Every Midlent Sunday is a great day at Worcester, when all the children and godchildren meet at the head and cheife of the family and have a feast. They call it the Mothering-day"* *Diary of the marches of the Royal Army during the great Civil War* p.27.

In the 1913 a "Mother's day" was created in the USA to be celebrated on the 2nd Sunday in May. This was a purely secular celebration, and this date is the one that is celebrated many other countries, although in Malawi it is in October, and in Nigeria it is on the same date as ours. In the Middle East it is on 21st March this year.

The important thing is not the date, but that we honour our mothers, thus obeying the 4th Commandment. We can also use the day to honour our Blessed Mother, Mary, the mother of the Church.

Let us ask Mary, our mother to pray for all mothers, whether they are with us or not. This is a good prayer as we appeal to Mary as mother:

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

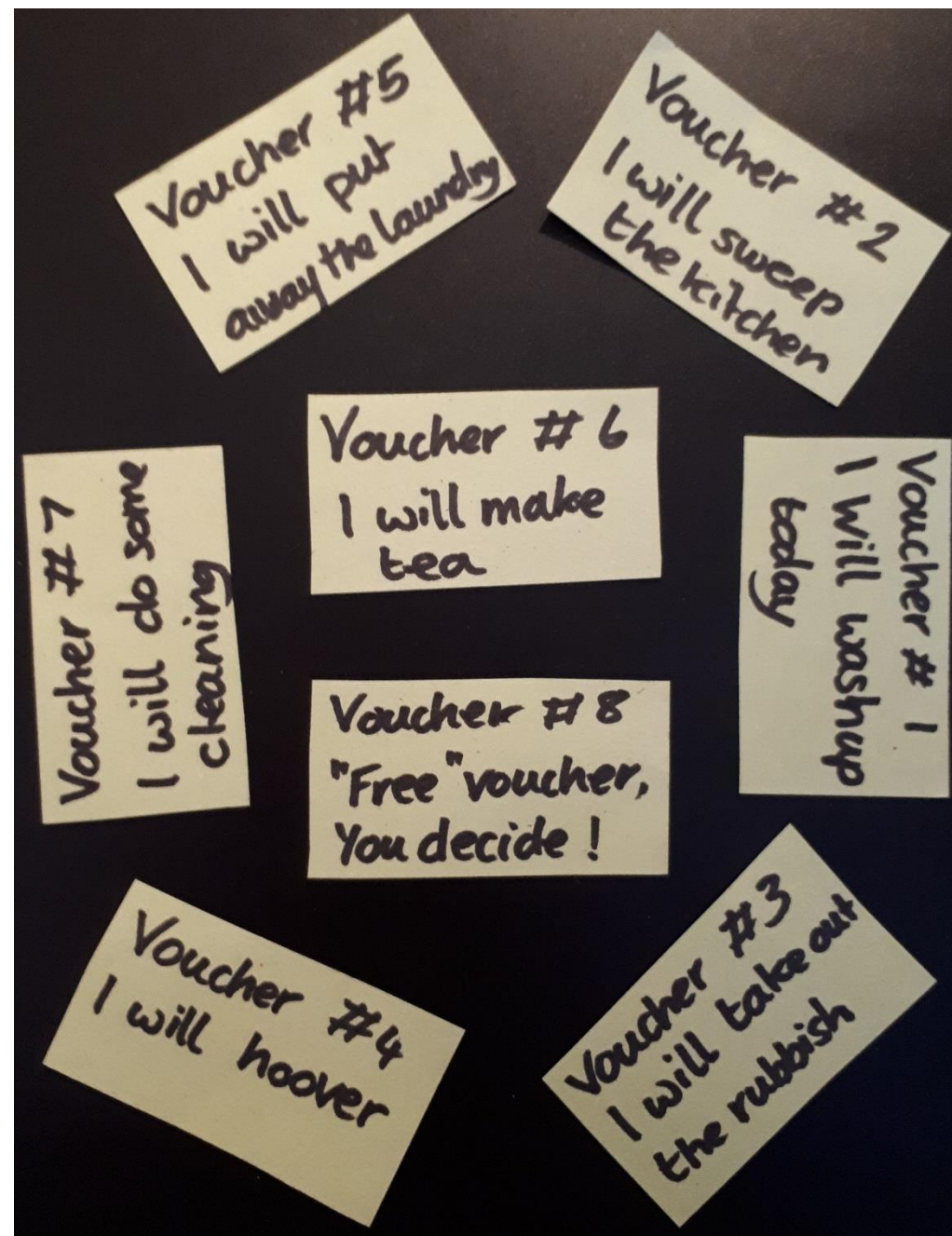
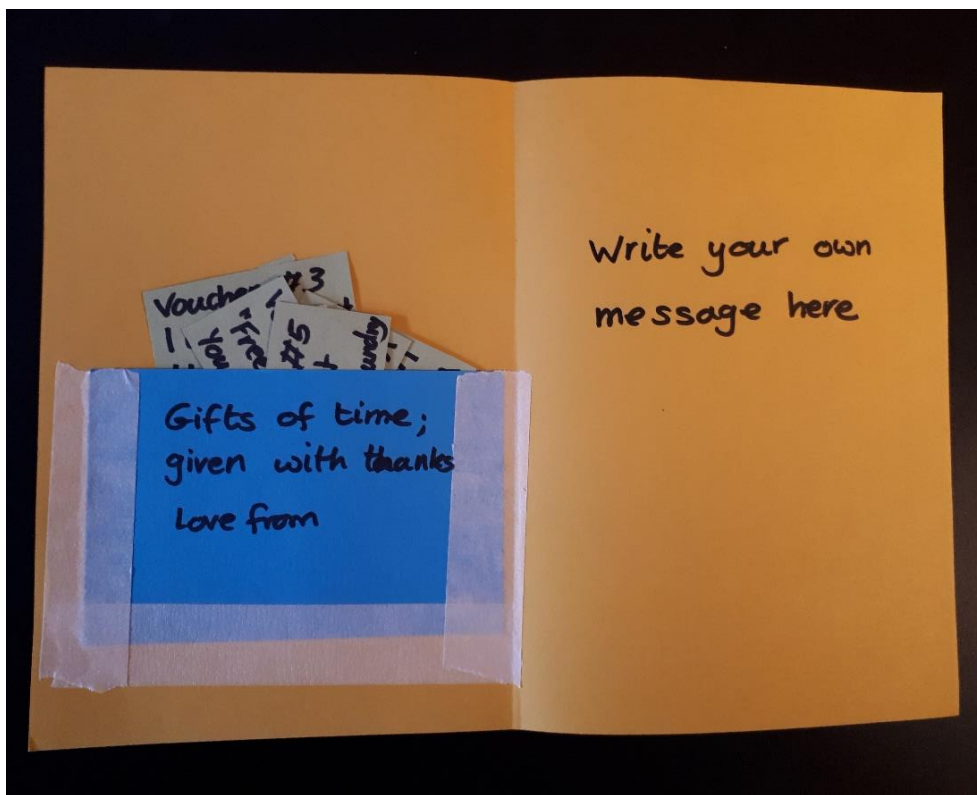


Jesus Crowning His
mother, Mary, Queen
of Heaven.

Mosaic from St. Mary
Major in Rome.

Make a gift of your time for your mother:

Traditionally we give our mothers flowers or other gifts, but why not give her some time. Make a card and decorate the front in any way you like and then in the inside, make a pocket and fill the pocket with "vouchers" offering to help Mum around the home. Mum can use them when she needs extra help. Here are some ideas.



**Gospel for Sunday 3rd April, 5th
Sunday of Lent Year C**

John 8:1-11

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, 'Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?' They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, 'If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go away, and do not sin any more.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Discussion on the Gospel

- ✠ Light a candle
- ✠ Make the Sign of the Cross
- ✠ Someone read the Gospel slowly

The message in this story is that Jesus does not condemn our sins as He is ready to forgive them as soon as we repent (say sorry). However, the last line is crucial – Jesus does not condemn, but commands us not to sin again! Grace is the “stuff” of the sacraments which helps us to be strong and resist temptation, but each time we do sin, we “leak” grace. The activity below is to help the children realise this.

Q: The woman had been naughty, what did the Pharisees want to do to her? (A: Stone her).

Q: What does it mean to “stone” someone? (A: To throw stones at someone until they die [not very nice!].)

Q: What did Jesus say to the Pharisees? (A: The person who has not sinned to throw the first stone.)

Q: What does “sin” mean? (A: Doing something bad, or not doing something that we should do.)

Q: Why did the Pharisees all go away? (A: Because they realised that they had sinned.)

Q: What did Jesus say to the woman? (A: Has anyone condemned you?)

Q: What does “condemn” mean? (A: To punish someone for doing something bad.)

Q: Jesus then said that He does not condemn the woman either, why? (A: Because He does not want to punish her.)

Q: What does Jesus say at the end, which is very important? (A: Don't sin again.)

Q: Jesus does not like us to sin, but when we do, if we say sorry, He forgives us. It's a bit like inside us we have golden grace but every time we sin, we lose a bit of golden grace. When Jesus forgives us after we say sorry, we are filled up with golden grace again. What does grace help us to do? (A: To live a life that is full of love for Jesus and other people.)

Let us just spend a few moments thinking about the bad things we have done and say sorry to Jesus in our hearts. See Him smile at you and give you a big spiritual hug!

This is a kind of image of what happens to us when we sin. The first pair of children have just been to Confession and have said sorry to God. They are full of grace. Each time we sin (do something bad) we lose a bit of that grace. Can you write underneath each pair of children what they did to lose that grace? Some ideas are in the box below, or you may like to put your own ideas. Then a child goes to Confession and receives absolution (is forgiven) and look - they are full of golden grace again!

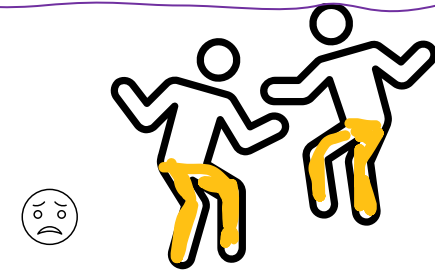
I do not say my prayers / I don't pay attention at Mass / I get angry and shout / I take something that is not mine to take / I am rude / I do not help when asked / I do not do as I am told / I do not do my best work / I tell a lie / I hit someone / I argue at home...



After Baptism and Confession, we are full of grace.



I lose grace when I:



I lose grace when I:



I lose grace when I:



I lose grace when I:



I say sorry to Jesus in Confession



I am full of grace again after being forgiven for my sins (the bad things I have done). Colour me in yellow or gold!

Some Lent Activities

Fasting = Giving up something for Lent

Why do we fast? Why do we do without something that we like? We do it because it helps us to be self-disciplined and to say to Jesus, "I love you more than this biscuit/ cake/ chocolate/ video game..."

If 6 weeks is too long to "give up" something, may be choose something different each week? E.g. one week, give up snacks between meals and the next limit playing video games to just one hour a day, and the next week you can choose something else. The point is that whatever you do, you do it for Jesus because He gave up everything for you and me. Jesus gave up His life so that we can go to heaven and be with his Father for all eternity. What can we give up for just one day (at a time)?

Learn the Apostles Creed by heart.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Apostles Creed rose out of the baptismal promises made by new Christians in Rome in the very early Church. They had to publicly claim faith in God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Q: How is God the Father described? (A: Creator....)

Q: Who is Jesus described as? (A: Son of the Father, our Lord [Lord is a title for God])

Q: What was Jesus' suffering? (A: His crucifixion is mentioned but you could discuss the fact that He was mocked, beaten, whipped, wore a crown of thorns, etc)

Q: Which lines recount what we commemorate in Holy Week and Easter? (A: Suffered...rose from the dead)

Q: From where will Jesus come to judge us? (A: the right hand of the Father in Heaven.)

Q: In the Bible there are lots of symbols of the Holy Spirit, e.g. cloud, water, fire, dove. Which symbol of the Holy Spirit was used in the Gospel account of the Transfiguration? (A: The Cloud that covered Jesus before the voice of the Father was heard.)

Q: Who forgives our sins? (A: The Father does through Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. In confession, when the priest says "I absolve you" He is speaking for Jesus, so the work of forgiving is Jesus' work, not the priest's)

Pray the Apostles Creed slowly together and may be work on learning a few lines together each day.

Here are some Lent questions. The answers are all in the word bank here

1. Where did Jesus go to pray after His Baptism?
2. Who tempted Jesus when He was in this place?
3. Who looked after Jesus when He was in this place?
4. What was Jesus tempted to turn a stone into?
5. What actions of ours offend God?
6. On what day of the week did Jesus die?
7. As well as giving up something and helping people, what else are we asked to do more of in Lent?
8. How many Days are there in Lent?
9. On what day do we celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead?
10. What is the Sunday before Easter called?
11. What is the word for giving up something that we like?
12. What is the Prayer that Jesus taught us?

Word Bank

Our Father, Desert, Satan, Bread, Angels, Praying, Forty, Friday, Sins, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Fasting,

Stations of the Cross:

Reflecting on the stations of the Cross can help us to enter more deeply into what Lent is all about. It does not have to be morbid or gloomy, and children can express their real sense of injustice in their simple words and drawings. There are various things you can do to help children to reflect on Jesus' last hours. E.g., take them to see the stations of the Cross in a church there and talk about them. Invite them to say ad-hoc prayers. May be later to draw pictures of some of the stations. Over Lent, you can build up a collection of pictures and reflections which you can draw on and develop over the years. These are the titles of the stations in order:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Jesus is condemned to death, | (9) Jesus falls the third time |
| (2) Jesus carries his cross | (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments |
| (3) Jesus falls the first time | (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross |
| (4) Jesus meets his mother | (12) Jesus dies on the cross |
| (5) Simon of Cyrene helps to carry Jesus' cross | (13) Jesus is taken down from the cross |
| (6) Veronica wipes Jesus' face | (14) Jesus is placed in the tomb |
| (7) Jesus falls the second time | (15) Jesus rises on Easter Sunday morning |
| (8) The women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus, | |



A Lent activity for Teens

The Ten Commandments are a blueprint for a just and fair society and help us to live at peace with God and one another. You might have heard people say that the Ten Commandments are irrelevant for modern society but try this exercise with teens and then see what they say.

- ✠ Read the 10 as set out here slowly all the way through.
- ✠ Then read them as reverse commandments, e.g.:

So instead of “*I am the Lord your God; you shall have no strange gods before me*” say, “I am not God, you can worship anything you like”. Then instead of “*You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain*” say, “Take God’s name in vain – swear by the name of Jesus, or Christ.” Instead of “*Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day*” say, “Don’t worry about Sunday – it’s a day like any other!” And it goes on –

- ✠ Disregard your parents – you are your own person
- ✠ You can kill (especially the old and the unborn)
- ✠ Commit adultery
- ✠ Steal – take whatever you want, it’s your “right”
- ✠ Lie about other people; destroy their character
- ✠ Covet, that is, desire your neighbour’s spouse
- ✠ Covet, that is, desire what other people have.

How then to we move on from here? It’s worth reflecting on these reverse commandments for ourselves. It’s a good way to examine our conscience during Lent; have I taken what is not rightfully mine? Do I desire what other people have? Do I pay proper respect to my parents? (And that includes God the Father and Our Lady). Use this as a time of prayerful reflection with teens.

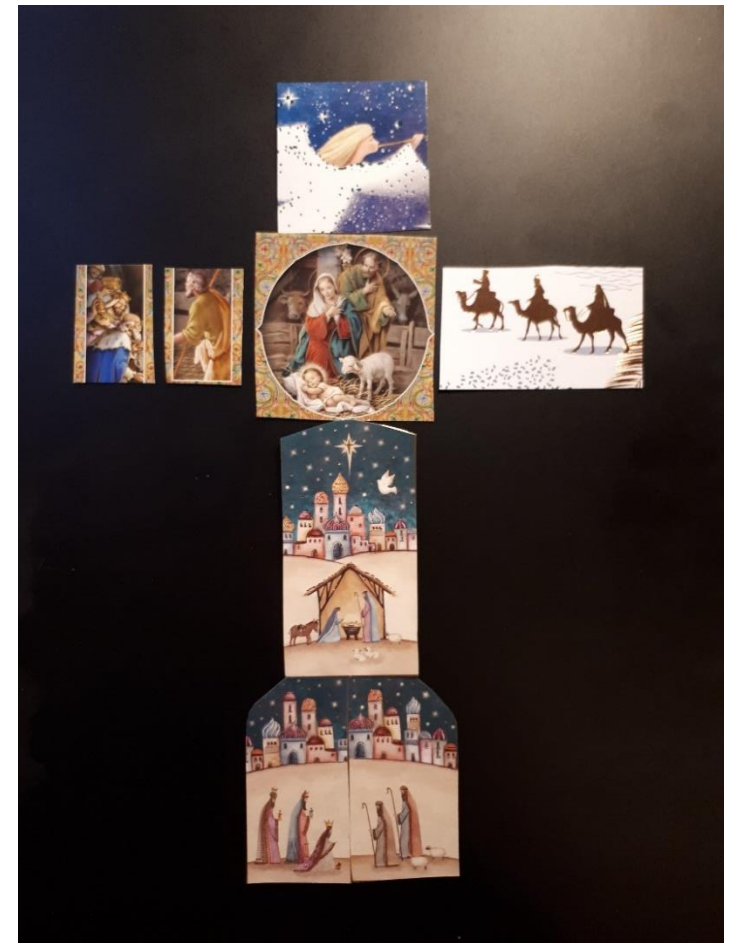
The Ten Commandments

1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me. (*Don't think that other things in life are more important than God*).
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain. (*Don't swear using any of God's names*).
3. Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day. (*Put time aside for Mass each week*).
4. Honour your father and your mother. (*Do what they say and respect them!*)
5. You shall not kill. (*This means anyone, regardless of how old or how young they are*)
6. You shall not commit adultery. (*Love your husband or wife.*)
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. (*Don't tell lies*).
9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife. (*Don't be jealous of other people's friendships*)
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods. (*Don't be jealous of what other people have and be happy with what you have.*)

Almsgiving = Giving to charities or helping other people during Lent

Almsgiving is the third of Lent's focus on growing spiritually: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. If we save money because of the fasting, this can be given to a good cause that is dear to our hearts. However, we can also support people in need physically. Maybe an elderly neighbour needs some help walking the dog, or with the shopping. During this covid pandemic we can't meet people so easily, but there are opportunities to make sure that everyone around us has everything they need. Maybe children can make a nice card for an older person, or take them some flowers. Just to show that they have not been forgotten.

Perhaps as a family you could do some fundraising for a charity. Possibly begin with selling unwanted or outgrown toys on eBay! Last year the feedback was that someone made biscuits for an elderly neighbour and I heard that a youth group offered to clean cars at church whilst people were in Mass for charity.



Keeping to Lenten resolutions

Helping family members to keep to their resolutions is a good idea. Help them to be balanced - i.e. too demanding and they are sure to fail, not demanding enough, then they won't grow closer to Jesus in this special season.

This article has some helpful ideas, just click on the link: <https://aleteia.org/cp1/2021/03/02/how-to-encourage-kids-to-keep-their-lenten-resolutions/>

One suggestion is colouring in squares on a calendar. More pro-actively here a jigsaw of a cross can be made. On the next page are jigsaw pieces of this jigsaw made from Christmas cards. Each day that a Lenten resolution is kept, a piece of the jigsaw can be put in place. Either print the page onto card and cut out the pieces, or make your own. There are 40 pieces here one for each day in Lent. I suggest that the pieces are glued in place as you go along!



Praying, drawing closer to Jesus during Lent

There are as many ways to pray as there are people. However, Lent is a wonderful opportunity to refresh what we do. It's a bit like thinking of a friend with whom you have not been in touch with for a while and you decide to get in touch, arrange to meet up or have a phone conversation, (rather than chat on social media). Getting in touch with Jesus is like this - our prayers at Mass can sometimes fall into the routine and we "lose touch". When we lose touch then our children are less likely to be able to enter more deeply into a life of prayer. Already we have looked here at the Creed and reflections on the stations of the Cross. May be during Lent you can:

- Write a family prayer diary - each day someone contributes to it.
- Say the Rosary
- Say grace before / after meals
- Reflect on the Stations of the cross
- Decide to learn a new prayer by heart
- Go to adoration
- Have a time of quiet meditation on a Gospel passage
- Read and reflect on the lives of some saints
- Draw or paint a picture of a scene from the Gospels
- Create a list of people that you want to pray for, and pray for them each day; may be have a new list each week.

In light of this theme, let's look at one of our most popular prayers, the "Hail Mary".

The Hail Mary is made up of three parts:

"Hail (Mary) full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women", is what the Angel Gabriel says to Mary at the Annunciation (Lk. 1:28).

The angel does not address Mary by her name, but as "Full of Grace" which is the English translation of the Greek which means "mightily favoured". In other words, Mary is the one chosen by God - the favoured one and who is "full of grace." We receive grace in the sacraments and grace is the "stuff" which enables us to live our Christian lives. Mary, conceived without original sin is therefore FULL of grace, whereas we have grace but because of our habit of sinning, are rarely, if ever FULL of grace.

"and blessed is the fruit of thy womb (Jesus)", comes from the greeting of St. Elizabeth (Lk. 1:42)

When Mary arrives at her older, pregnant cousin's home, Elizabeth recognises that Mary, also pregnant, brings with her, her Lord, in her (Mary's) womb. In the "Hail Mary" prayer, we too acknowledge that Mary is the new "tabernacle" of Jesus. The Blessed Sacrament, Jesus, is reserved, (kept) hidden, in the tabernacle of our churches, and before He was born, He was hidden in Mary's womb, so her womb was a kind of tabernacle. (In the icon above, the building behind Mary can also be thought of as a tabernacle, reminding us that Jesus is present hidden in Mary's womb as He is present in the tabernacle of our churches).

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

This petition began to be added in about the fifteenth century. (The first two parts are really a greeting, and people had been individually adding their own private prayers to the greeting). The first recorded version of the prayer as it is now, comes from 1514, and in 1568 the Church officially recognised the form of the "Hail Mary" prayer as we know it now.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

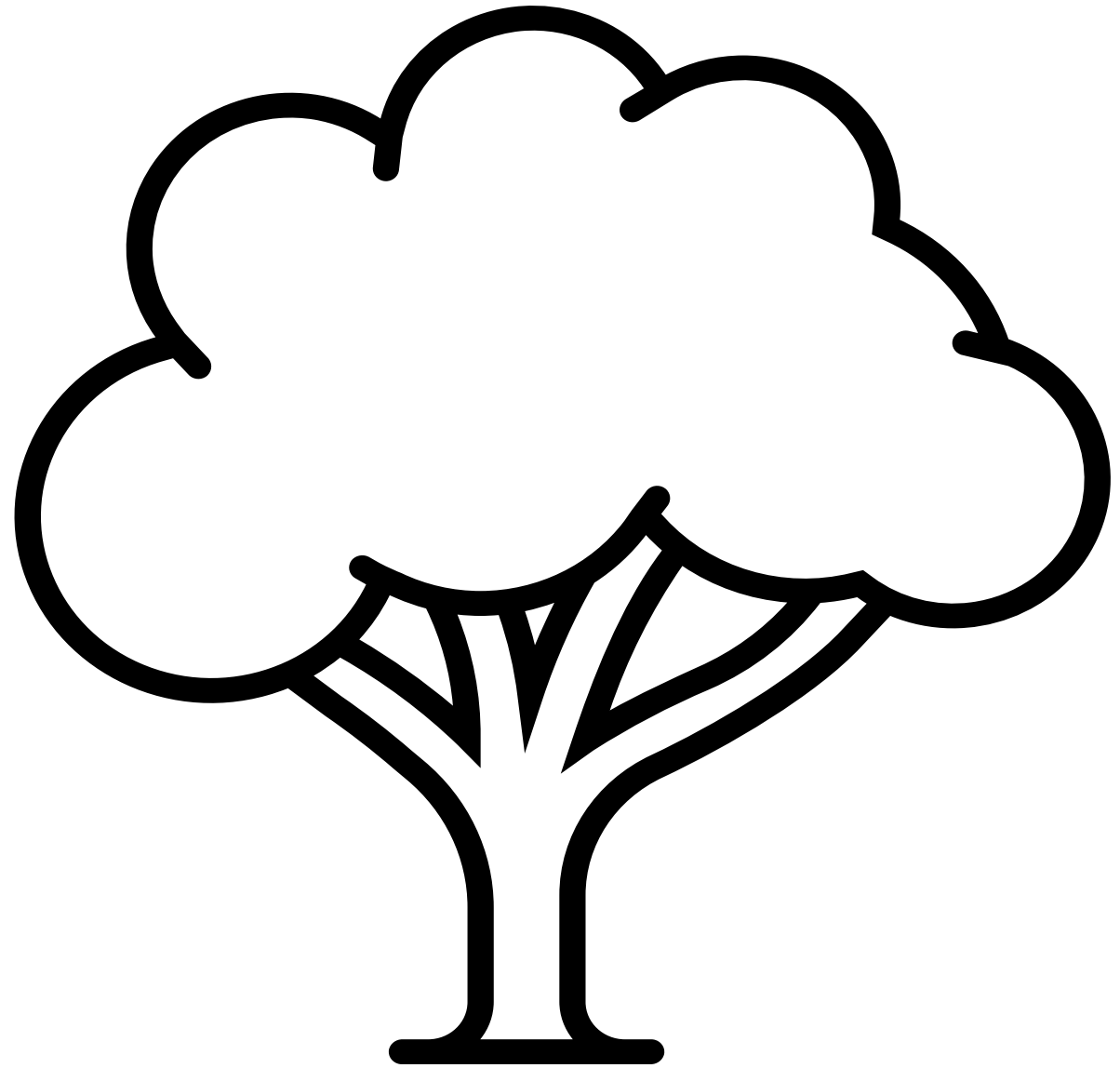
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Why not pray some "Hail Mary's" for people who need our prayers? People who are sick, who are dying, or who have died. People who are struggling with life in general, or who are having to work too hard. People without work... the list goes on. Make a list of people you would like to pray for and then say a "Hail Mary" for each of them. E.g....

For John who is ill... Hail Mary, full of grace....

For Bert who died last week..., Hail Mary, full of grace...

You could choose one or two people a day to pray for.



A prayer tree:

Draw a large tree, like this one, or cut this one out.

Inside the tree, write down all the intentions you and your family are praying for this Lent. You can also add notes of prayers answered - such as praying for a safe journey and the journey was safe, etc.

Online resources:

There is a whole world of material online, but we always have to discern as to its suitability. When I find good links, I will share them with you, so that you know that the material is sound and safe.

Aid to the Church in Need is an excellent charity that supports the persecuted Church, as well as the Church in material poverty, such as supporting seminaries in less well of parts of the world. They have a range of free resources for schools, parishes and families, and below are two resources that could help raise awareness in families, parishes and schools. If you want to know more, contact Teresa Kehoe on Teresa.Kehoe@acnuk.org

The Primary Resource is a prayerful way to explore the stations of the Cross. See here for more details:

<https://acnuk.org/resource/lent-2022-primary/>

The Secondary Resource is Challenges teens to spend 24 hours without their mobile phones! See here for more details:

<https://acnuk.org/resource/lent-2022-secondary/>



Aid to the
Church in Need

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