



# St. Joseph's Family Activities

## Lent week 3: 7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> March

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A warm welcome once more to this edition of the Family Activities sheets. If you have missed any they are all available on the parish website; <https://www.stjosephsmalvern.org/j/> and then click on the dropdown box for past editions.

St. Joseph is the head of the Holy Family and patron of the universal Church, the “family” of the Church. Although many of these activities are aimed at young families, the term “family” here is very loosely applied.

This edition includes an activity on the Ten Commandments (Sunday’s first reading) that is aimed at the older children and adults in the family. Even if there are no teens in the family, it’s worth the adults reflecting on the activity as it’s a good examination of conscience for this season of the Church’s year.

There is a jigsaw puzzle for keeping to Lenten resolutions and another invitation to submit reflections or art on the Stations of the Cross. Finally, there is a child-friendly way to pray a novena to St. Joseph.

*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 mins 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”)**

**Celebrating it in the liturgy  
and the sacraments**

***There are Four  
Dimensions of the  
Faith making sure  
that Jesus Christ is  
the centre of  
everything we do***

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

**Christian prayer.**



## Gospel for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March

John 2:13-25

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money-changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

The Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

## *Family discussion on the Gospel (on the next page is a picture to colour)*

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

**Q: What did Jesus do in the Temple?** (A: Knocked over all the tables of people selling the animals.) [Note: The animals were being sold for the Temple sacrifices, as in Mary and Joseph's offering of two turtle doves when Jesus was presented in the Temple when He was a baby. The money changers changed the Roman coins into special temple coins.]

**Q: What did Jesus say?** (A: He told people to stop turning His Father's house into a market/destroy this house and He will build it in three days)

**Q: When Jesus said that He would build the Temple in three days, what did the authorities say?** (A: They were surprised as it had taken 46 years to build the Temple)

**Q: When Jesus said that He would build the Temple in three days, what was He referring to then?** (A: Himself/His Resurrection)

**Q: After Jesus died on the Cross, what happened on the third day after He died?** (A: He rose from the dead)

**Q: What is the day that Jesus rose from the dead called?** (A: Easter Sunday)  
*This is why Sunday is so important – every Sunday is like an Easter Sunday. That is why the 40 days of Lent does not include Sundays, but the Season of Lent does!*

**Q: How can we make Sunday more special in the family?** (A: Various possible answers... may be for Lent you could include a special time of prayer, or during the rest of the year celebrate with a treat?).

Finish by praying the Our Father together.

Jesus was upset to  
see people abusing  
the Temple, but He  
used it as an  
opportunity to refer  
to His  
Resurrection



## The Ten Commandments

1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day.
4. Honour your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

The first reading on Sunday is the giving of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are a blueprint for a just and fair society and enable 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 do 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.

### **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!

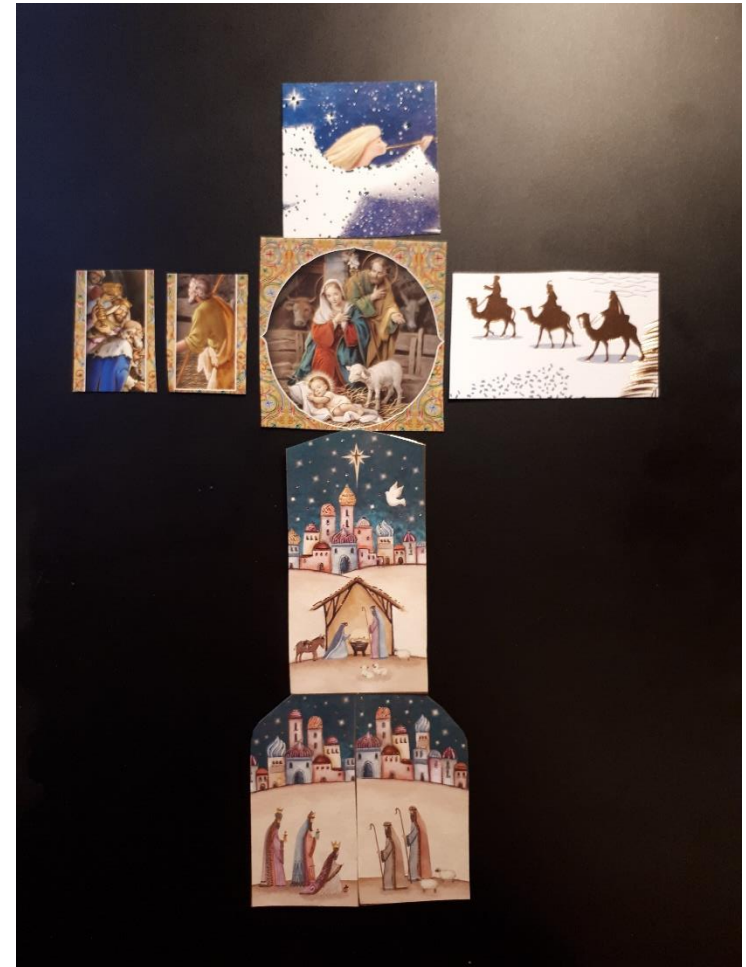
Do feed back your ideas. One person got back to me and said that in half term they made biscuits for the older people who lived near them.

### **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 colouring in squares on a calendar, or making a jigsaw out of a cross. On the next page are jigsaw pieces of this jigsaw I have made out of Christmas cards. Each day that the 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 so you can make a start already. I suggest that the pieces are glued in place as you go along!





## 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.

St. Joseph's parish is inviting anyone from anywhere (in the world) to write a reflection or prayer and/or to submit an artwork or small model on one or more of the stations of the Cross. The submissions will be used for a "stations of the cross" which will be live-streamed at 6.30pm on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March. Please send your reflections/prayers or scans of drawings to

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- (1) Jesus is condemned to death,
- (2) Jesus carries his cross
- (3) Jesus falls the first time
- (4) Jesus meets his mother
- (5) Simon of Cyrene helps to carry Jesus' cross
- (6) Veronica wipes Jesus' face
- (7) Jesus falls the second time
- (8) The women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus,

- (9) Jesus falls the third time
- (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments
- (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross
- (12) Jesus dies on the cross
- (13) Jesus is taken down from the cross
- (14) Jesus is placed in the tomb
- (15) Jesus rises on Easter Sunday morning



Jesus falls for the first time. The wire sculpture shows Jesus' frailty against the overbearing weight of the cross, which represents our sin and disobedience. Perhaps you can write a reflection to go with this or any of the other stations.

## Year of St. Joseph

19<sup>th</sup> March is the feast of St. Joseph, the patron of our and many other parishes around the world. Traditionally at St. Joseph's in Malvern we pray a novena to St. Joseph, beginning on 10<sup>th</sup> March to finish the day before his feast day. A novena is nine days' prayer before a feast day or a solemnity. The original novena was the Apostles' prayer for the coming of the Holy Spirit between Jesus' Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

There are official prayers to St. Joseph, but to make things simple in the family, why not just add one of these simple evocations each day at the end of prayers, or at a meal-times:

10<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, pray for us

11<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, husband of Mary, pray for us

12<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, chosen by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, pray for us

13<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, faithful servant of God, pray for us

14<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, patron (protector) of the Church, pray for us

15<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, patron (protector) of families, pray for us

16<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, patron (protector) of workers, pray for us

17<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, friend in suffering, pray for us

18<sup>th</sup> March: St. Joseph, patron of a happy death, pray for us

Holy Family window in St. Joseph's Malvern

