

LENT



LENT

INTRODUCTION

We observe Lent to prepare our hearts for the ultimate celebration, Easter. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and lasting through Holy Saturday (the day before Easter), Christians have traditionally observed Lent by fasting, repenting, and almsgiving (a term describing generosity toward those who have less than we do).

Lent is a rich, dark season, ultimately leading us to the cross and Jesus' death and burial. Unlike during Advent when we light an additional candle each week, during Lent we begin with all candles lit and blow out an additional candle each week until we are left in total darkness the week prior to Easter. Then on Easter, we are able to relight all of the candles and rejoice that the light has defeated darkness and death!

We invite you to join us as we observe Lent, preparing our hearts and lives for Easter. Take some time each day to gather as a family and go through these devotions and make some memories participating in the family activities each week. As you do these devotions with your family, give your children space and silence to think. Don't feel obligated to press your kids for answers, and don't worry if sometimes they get silly with their answers!

While at times this season can feel dark and bleak, we know that the resurrection is coming and the celebration of Easter is just around the corner. As you and your children embark on this road from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday, we pray that you gain a deeper understanding of Easter and that you know the loving presence of Christ during your journey through Lent.

A WORD ON FASTING

During Lent, many people choose to fast (or refrain) from certain foods or activities. This is a great spiritual discipline to help us to think more about Christ. As we crave those things that we are fasting from, we can use those moments to pray for strength and to pray for whatever is on our hearts. Your family may choose a specific thing to pray about during the 40 days of Lent.

If you look at a calendar, you'll notice that from Ash Wednesday until Easter is more than 40 days. As you are fasting, the fast is held from Monday through Saturday. Sunday is considered a day of celebration where we celebrate what God has done and therefore break the fast for that one day.

CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY FOR LENT

Candle Lighter: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

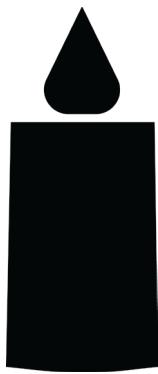
Everyone Else: And renew a right spirit within me.

A litany is simply a prayer that has a more ceremonial or liturgical aspect. Many times a litany will have certain phrases that are repeated. It is a way of praying and centering your heart on God.

Unlike Advent when we light a new candle each week and it gets progressively brighter, during Lent the lights get progressively darker as we blow out a candle each week. This reminds us of the path to the cross and Jesus' death on Good Friday, when the Light of the World was overcome by darkness... until Easter when the light of the world came and death was conquered forever! We light all of the candles to remember and celebrate Easter.

During this Lent season, you may choose to recite this litany together as a family each night or you may not. Either way is fine. Please remember the goal of a litany is simply to focus our attention on Christ.

PREP WEEK



PREPARATION

ASH WEDNESDAY

Since Lent begins on a Wednesday, the first week of Lent begins on the following Sunday. For this half-week following Ash Wednesday, the questions explain the traditional Lenten practices of fasting, repenting, and almsgiving and then ask for your family to decide how you want to interact with those practices. If you start the devotion after Ash Wednesday and you'd like to embrace some or all of those practices, just start with the devotions for this half-week and then jump to whatever day of whatever week it really is.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITIES

PRAYER JAR

Write down 10-20 names on strips of paper and put them in a jar. Each remaining evening of Lent, take turns drawing a name and praying for that person before bed. Return the name each night, knowing you'll pray for some people more than once.

SCREEN FREE DAY

Make today a screen-free day. During the time your family would typically use technology, challenge one another to memorize this Scripture: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30 NIV).

DAY 1

WEDNESDAY

READ

Joel 2:15-16

DISCUSS

Today is the first day of Lent, the season when we prepare for Easter. Many Christians fast during Lent. Fasting is when we choose not to eat a certain food or participate in a certain activity, so that we can focus on Jesus instead.

What might our family fast from during Lent?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, as we enter into Lent, may we be mindful of You, remembering your great gift of life for us. Amen.

DAY 2

THURSDAY

READ

Joel 2:12-13

DISCUSS

Today is the second day of Lent, the season when we prepare for Easter. One of the things that many Christians do during Lent is repent. “Repent” means to turn around from doing wrong things and to go in a different direction—toward what is right.

Let’s think of one thing that each of us can repent of during Lent.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are a God of steadfast love. May we turn to you whenever we do something wrong and seek your forgiveness. Amen.

DAY 3

FRIDAY

READ

Matthew 6:2-4

DISCUSS

Today is the third day of Lent, the season when we prepare for Easter. One of the things that many Christians do during Lent is give to people who have less than they do.

Who can we give to?

What can we give?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are a generous God. Help us to be generous with others. Amen.

DAY 4

SATURDAY

READ

Matthew 6:19-21

DISCUSS

Today is the fourth day of Lent, the season when we prepare for Easter. During Lent, Christians fast, repent, and give to people who have less than they do.

Let's remind each other: What is our Lenten fast?

What are each of us repenting of?

Who are we giving to? What are we giving?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, help us this Lent to learn to love You more, so that we might lay up treasure in Heaven. Amen.

WEEK 1



**INTO THE
WILDERNESS**

1ST WEEK OF LENT - INTO THE WILDERNESS

Week one of Lent highlights stories of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness and the calling of His first disciples. But what do these stories have in common? They center around the faithfulness of God in so many ways. As you reflect on these questions each day, take the time to encourage your family in their chosen lent disciplines (fasting, repenting, and giving).

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

NO COMPLAINING DAY

Declare a day this week “No Complaining Day.” Decide what each of you has to do each time you complain. (For example: 10 jumping jacks, pay \$1.00 to the family vacation fund, or add a chore to their to-do list.)

PUT OTHERS FIRST

Make a list of 3 things you can do to put others first (at home, in your neighborhood, at work, at school, in your family) and share it at the dinner table.

DAY 5

SUNDAY

READ

Matthew 3:13, 16-17

DISCUSS

Baptism is an outward expression of an inward heart change. Why do you think Jesus decided to be baptized by John?

Have you been baptized? Why or why not?

How do you think Jesus felt when he heard the voice of heaven? What do you think the voice sounded like?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are the beloved Son of the Father. Please help us to know that we are God's beloved children, too. Amen.

DAY 6

MONDAY

READ

Matthew 4:1-2

DISCUSS

Notice who led Jesus into the wilderness.

Why did the Spirit lead Jesus to be tempted?

Why do you think Jesus fasted for 40 days?

Why do you think we fast for 40 days to get ready for Easter?

What would be the first thing you would want to eat after 40 days of no food?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You know what it feels like to fast. When our Lenten fast becomes difficult, help us to be strong as you were. Amen.

DAY 7

TUESDAY

READ

Matthew 4:3-4 (This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.)

DISCUSS

Point out that Satan seems to be challenging who Jesus is. Do you think Satan didn't believe Jesus is the Son of God?

How did Jesus "fight back" against Satan? (point out that Jesus used scripture)

What super power would you want to fight against Satan?

As a family, consider picking a verse you can work on memorizing so that you can be ready to fight off Satan when he tries to tempt you.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, even though you were hungry, you did not give in to the devil's temptation. When we are tempted to do something we know we shouldn't, help us to resist the temptation as you did. Amen.

DAY 8

WEDNESDAY

READ

Matthew 4:5-7 (This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.)

DISCUSS

Why do you think Jesus doesn't just do what Satan wants?

Have you ever tried to "test" God? What happened?

What do you think the devil looked like?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, when we wonder whether the Father loves us, remind us that He does love us, and that You love us—always and forever. Amen.

DAY 9

THURSDAY

READ

Matthew 4:8-11 (This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.)

DISCUSS

Satan wanted Jesus to worship him. Satan also wants us to worship him. Why is that a bad idea?

What about other things—why is it bad to worship them?

How do you think Jesus felt after He told the devil to get lost?

What is your favorite worship song? How else can we worship God today?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You refused to worship anyone but God alone. Help us to worship only God, too. Amen.

DAY 10

FRIDAY

READ

Matthew 4:18-20

DISCUSS

Why do you think Peter and Andrew just left their nets and followed Jesus?

Do you think that was a good idea? Why or why not?

Jesus told them to follow him and he will send them out to “fish for people”- what do you think that means?

What would be the coolest thing to catch while fishing?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You call us to follow You, just as You called Peter and Andrew. Help us to listen to You and do what You ask us to do. Amen.

DAY 11

SATURDAY

READ

Matthew 4:21-22

DISCUSS

How do you think James and John felt when Jesus called them?

How do you think Zebedee, their father, felt when his kids left him sitting in the boat?

Why should we be willing to go where Jesus has called? Do you feel like Jesus has called you anywhere?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You called Peter and Andrew and James and John, and You call us, too. Help us to be willing to follow You wherever You lead us. Amen.

WEEK 2



UPSIDE DOWN

2ND WEEK OF LENT - UPSIDE DOWN

The second week of Lent draws us to reflect on passages that reveal how God's kingdom is very different than the world we currently live in. Ideas such as "the first shall be last and the last shall be first" and humility being a character quality of a King show us about the true nature of God. In order to see God in this way, we look to these scriptures. This week, we will begin with the story of Jesus' Transfiguration.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

RIDING & PRAYING

Pick a day as a family where any time you're in a car or on the bus that day you will spend that time in prayer, thanking Jesus for His sacrifice for us.

FRIDGE VERSE

Write down the following Bible verse on a notecard and put it on the fridge.

Each time you walk by it, say the verse out loud: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV).

DAY 12

SUNDAY

READ

Luke 9:28-29

DISCUSS

Why do you think Jesus went to the mountain to pray? Why did his clothes turn such a bright white?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, help us to be people who pray and keep our focus on You, just as You were a person who prayed and kept Your eyes on Your Father. Amen.

DAY 13

MONDAY

READ

Luke 9:30-32 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading. Also, Moses and Elijah are mentioned in this story. If you need to refresh your memory, Moses's story is found in Exodus 2-20; Elijah's, in 1 Kings 17-19.*

DISCUSS

Why do you think the disciples were falling asleep while they prayed?

What do you think it would look like to see Jesus' glory?

What would it be like to see Moses & Elijah?

PRAY

Jesus, sometimes we are like the disciples. We forget You are with us. We forget to pray. We fall asleep. Wake us up when we forget You and remind us who You really are, that You are God. Amen.

DAY 14

TUESDAY

READ

Luke 9:33-35 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.*

DISCUSS

Why do you think Peter wanted to build houses for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah?

Why did God say to listen to Jesus and not Moses & Elijah?

How do you think the disciples felt when they heard God's voice speaking from the cloud?

Do you think God speaks to you?

PRAY

Jesus, You are God's beloved Son. Help us to listen to You and do as You ask us. Amen.

DAY 15

WEDNESDAY

READ

Matthew 20:16 preface *this* verse with “Jesus said...”

DISCUSS

What do you think Jesus means when he says the first shall be last?

Why is this a good thing for us?

Can you think of a time when the first became last? What about when the last became first?

PRAY

Jesus, You are from the beginning, the Firstborn of all creation, and You became last for our sakes. Help us to be like you, seeking the good of others, putting them ahead of ourselves. Amen.

DAY 16

THURSDAY

READ

Matthew 21:42

DISCUSS

Why would builders reject a stone? Why do you think people rejected Jesus?

When do we reject Jesus, by choosing to do things that would not be pleasing to Him?

A cornerstone is a rock that the entire building depends on. What does it mean that Jesus is our cornerstone?

PRAY

Jesus, You are the stone the builders rejected. Help us to not be like those builders. Help us to listen to You and build our lives on You. Amen.

DAY 17

FRIDAY

READ

Matthew 11:29-30 *preface this verse with “Jesus said...”*

DISCUSS

What does it look like to be gentle? How is Jesus gentle with us?

How have you been gentle today (or, this week)?

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for being gentle with us. We find our rest in you. Help us learn from You how to be gentle. Amen.

DAY 18

SATURDAY

READ

Mark 10:13-16

DISCUSS

Why do you think the disciples told the people to stop bringing the children to Jesus?

Why do you think Jesus wanted to be with the children?

What does this mean for you when you want to go to Jesus with something?

PRAY

Jesus, help us to know how much You love us and how much You enjoy being with us. We want to be with You, too, even though we sometimes forget. Amen.

WEEK 3



FORGIVENESS

3RD WEEK OF LENT - FORGIVENESS

One of the hardest things for us humans to grasp is the idea of grace, and forgiveness, particularly when we have been deeply hurt by someone. This week as you read through the passages, discuss with your family how we, as followers of Jesus, receive grace. Think about how we can show that grace to those around us.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

PAPER OF FORGIVENESS

Is there anyone you're angry with? Someone you need to forgive? Write their name down on paper.

Then, as a sign of your forgiveness to them, rip up the paper and throw it away.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Is there something you feel guilty about or something you did that you wish you could go back and do differently?

Choose one person to confess to. Ask them to pray with you as you ask God for forgiveness.

DAY 19

SUNDAY

READ

Matthew 18:21-22

DISCUSS

Has anyone ever done something over and over to hurt your feelings? How many times did they do it?

Does it get easier or harder to forgive them the more times they do that thing?

How much is 70×7 ? Do you think it would be easy to forgive someone that many times? Why or why not?

PRAY

Jesus, thank you that you give us a perfect example of forgiveness. Help us learn to forgive one another even when it gets difficult. May we remember that all of us are in need of forgiveness. Amen.

DAY 20

MONDAY

READ

Matthew 18:23-27 preface *this* verse with
“Jesus said...”

DISCUSS

What is the biggest debt you have ever owed? How did it feel trying to pay off that debt?

How do you think the man who owed his master a lot of money felt when he was asked to pay back his debt?

How do you think he felt when the master forgave that debt?

PRAY

Jesus, help us remember how much you have forgiven us. Amen.

DAY 21

TUESDAY

READ

Matthew 18:28-30 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.*

DISCUSS

Has anyone ever owed you something?
What did they owe you?

Why do you think the man refused to forgive the other man's debt?

Have you ever had trouble forgiving someone else who has wronged you?

PRAY

Jesus, help us to forgive other people, even when we don't want to. Guard our hearts from wanting to hold a grudge toward those who have wronged us. Amen.

DAY 22

WEDNESDAY

READ

Matthew 18:31-34 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.*

DISCUSS

Why was the master angry with the servant?

How do you think the servant felt when the master put him in prison?

After seeing the master's reaction, do you think the servant had any regrets about what he had done?

PRAY

Jesus, may we forgive others in the same way you have forgiven us. May we not act like the unforgiving servant. May we be known as a family who forgives one another. Amen.

DAY 23

THURSDAY

READ

Luke 6:27-28 preface this verse with “Jesus said...”

DISCUSS

Who are some of the enemies in shows you like to watch? What makes them the enemies?

Has anyone ever been unkind to you? Did they feel like an enemy?

How do you feel when Jesus says to love that person? Is there something you could do (or stop doing) to show love to that person?

PRAY

Jesus, sometimes it is very, very hard to forgive other people, and we need You to help us love them. Please help us to want to forgive and to love. Amen.

DAY 24

FRIDAY

READ

Luke 6:32-36 preface this verse with “Jesus said...”

DISCUSS

Who do you like to give gifts to? Why?

Who does this passage say we are supposed to do good to? Do you think that is easy or hard?

When have you given something without expecting anything in return? How can we do that now, during Lent?

PRAY

Jesus, some people are very hard to love, but You love them anyway. Help us to be like You and to love even the people we don’t like very much. Show us ways we can do good to them. Amen.

DAY 25

SATURDAY

READ

Luke 15:8-10 *preface this verse with “Jesus said...”*

DISCUSS

When have you lost something important to you? If you found it, how did that make you feel?

How do you think God feels when people repent and turn to Jesus? (Repentance is when someone turns away from doing wrong things and turns toward God.)

How is someone who begins following Jesus like the lost coin in the story?

PRAY

Jesus, remind us that we have all been lost before. Help us remember that we all need you in our lives. Show us someone we can tell about you this next week. Amen.

WEEK 4



REFRESHMENT

4TH WEEK OF LENT - REFRESHMENT

How are God and water similar? The scriptures this week paint a picture of how God is our living well, our refreshment, and our provider. Remember this week, that even in the darkness of sin, God is our light and our care giver.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

THANKFUL CARDS

Put a stack of index cards (or cut up paper) and colorful pencils or markers on the kitchen table. All week long, write down things you are thankful for and leave the card where everyone can see it.

ROCK OF REMBERANCE

Go outside and find a rock or stone. Using markers or paint, decorate and draw a cross or a heart on it.

Place it somewhere you will see it regularly. Every time you do, thank Jesus for His sacrifice for us.

DAY 26

SUNDAY

READ

John 4:7-15

DISCUSS

What are some things that you know about water?

What is the living water that Jesus is talking about? How is it like water? How is it different?

How is Jesus like water?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are the living water. Help us to come to You whenever we feel tired and in need of rest and refreshment. Amen.

DAY 27

MONDAY

READ

Jeremiah 17:7-8

DISCUSS

Search the web for pictures of “trees by streams”. What do you notice about the trees?

What do trees need to grow strong? What do these verses say we need to grow strong?
Why is the tree not fearful or anxious when heat and drought come? Why do we not have to fear when scary things happen?

According to these verses, what makes us like those trees? How can we trust in the Lord as a family?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, help us to trust You more and more so we can grow strong and fruitful like the tree planted by water. Amen.

DAY 28

TUESDAY

READ

Ezekiel 47:7-9, 12

DISCUSS

What is special about the river in these verses? Have you ever tried to drink salt water?

How do you think it would feel to live near a river like the one described in these verses?

Re-read the passage and raise you hand every time you hear a word that reminds you of “life”.

How can our family be this full of life?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are the water of life. Help us plant our lives deep in Your love. Amen.

DAY 29

WEDNESDAY

READ

Psalm 36:5-9

DISCUSS

How does a bird take care of her babies?

How does God take care of us like that?

Re-read the verses and make a list of what characteristics of God you hear. What word pictures are we given to help us understand His characteristics?

For fun, see if you can find a nest (but don't touch!) with some eggs or baby birds in it.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, we can take refuge in you. You are faithful and righteous. You give us life. We are thankful for who you are and how you take care of us. May we run to you this week. Amen.

DAY 30

THURSDAY

READ

Isaiah 55:1-3

DISCUSS

What are the good things offered in this verse? Do you have to pay for them? Why not?

What do you think God is actually offering us? Do you think those who are “thirsty” are thirsty for simply water?

How does God satisfy all of our needs in His Son?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are the water. Help us to come to you and receive all the good things You offer us. Amen.

DAY 31

FRIDAY

READ

Isaiah 66:12-13

DISCUSS

What kinds of things do mothers do for their babies?

When was the last time you needed someone to comfort you?

How do you think God will comfort us “like a mother comforts her child”?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are like our mother; we drink deeply of Your goodness and grace, and are satisfied. Amen.

DAY 32

SATURDAY

READ

Psalm 131

DISCUSS

When do (or did) you sit in your parent's lap?
How do you think they feel when you sit with them?

How do you feel when you are wrapped in your parent's arms?

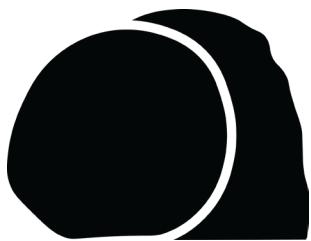
Could You sit in God's lap? What would that be like?

How does he comfort us like that?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, help us to be like the child resting against its mother: calm and content simply because we are with You. Amen.

WEEK 5



TOUCH THAT
HEALS

5TH WEEK OF LENT - TOUCH THAT HEALS

This week, we will read through some of Christ's miracles such as healings and Lazarus' resurrection. That Jesus healed some people and not others may be confusing to kids, especially kids who have experienced loss. This fact may be difficult for you to understand. If your kids ask questions about why God chooses to heal some people and not others, be honest with your kids about your own struggles, and what we know and can't know. Assure them that Jesus loves them, and He loves their friends and family who are ill or have died.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

TOUGH RELATIONSHIPS

Have everyone think of someone they have a hard time getting along with and write down three things they like about them.

SYMBOL OF SACRIFICE

Find a cross, a picture of a cross, or draw a cross. Spend a few minutes thinking about how Jesus suffered for our sins. Thank Him for His sacrifice.

DAY 33

SUNDAY

READ

Matthew 8:14-16

DISCUSS

Have you ever had a fever? How did you feel? How long did it take for you to get better?

How do you think Peter's mother-in-law felt when Jesus touched her hand? How do you think Jesus heals people today?

PRAY

Jesus you are the Great Physician. You can heal any disease in our bodies or our souls. Thank you for the story of Peter's mother. Thank you that you are a God who heals. Amen.

DAY 34

MONDAY

READ

Mark 5:22-23, 35-42

DISCUSS

Have you ever lost something that was really important to you (eg. favorite toy)? How did you feel when that happened?

How did Jairus feel when his servants said his daughter was dead? How did he feel when Jesus healed her?

How can you help someone you know who is sick?

PRAY

Jesus, we believe that you have the power to raise the dead. You are the author of life, and you can call to our dead hearts and bring us to life. Thank you for being a God that heals. Amen.

DAY 35

TUESDAY

READ

Mark 5:25-29

DISCUSS

Did you ever cut yourself and bled? Were you scared?

Have you ever had to go to the doctor? What if the doctor couldn't help you? How would you feel?

How do you think the woman felt when she simply touched Jesus and was healed?

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for the example of this woman. She had the courage and faith to reach out to you for healing. Thank you for responding to our faith. Thank you that you are a God who heals. Amen.

DAY 36

WEDNESDAY

READ

Mark 8:22-25

DISCUSS

How does it feel to wake up in the dark and not be able to see?

How do you think it would feel to see for the first time ever?

How do you think the blind man feels about Jesus?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, you are able to give sight to the blind. Would you open our eyes to what you are doing around us today. Give our family eyes to see the world as you do. Thank you for being a God who heals. Amen.

DAY 37

THURSDAY

READ

John 11:17-23

DISCUSS

How does Martha feel in this story? How would you feel if your brother died? (If your child has lost someone they love, you could ask how they felt about that, instead of this hypothetical question.)

What did Jesus promise Martha? What does Jesus promise us?

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for coming to comfort Mary and Martha when their brother died. We know that you are with us when we experience grief and loss. Thank you for comforting us too. Thank you for being a God who heals. Amen.

DAY 38

FRIDAY

READ

John 11:32-36 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.*

DISCUSS

How does Mary feel in this story?

How does Jesus feel? How do you know?

When we lose people we love, do you think Jesus understands how we feel? Why?

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for showing us how to grieve. You know what it is like to lose someone you love. You cry with us when we cry and rejoice with us when we rejoice. Thank you for being a God who heals. Amen.

DAY 39

SATURDAY

READ

John 11:38-44 *This is a continuation of yesterday's story, so you'll want to review that before reading.*

DISCUSS

What would you do if you saw a dead person come to life? How do you think Mary and Martha feel at the end of this story?

What will happen to us at the end of our stories?

How do you think we'll feel at the end of our stories?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You raised Lazarus from the dead and restored him to his sisters. Thank You that You promise all of us who believe in You will be together with You in Heaven someday. Amen.

WEEK 6

HOLY WEEK



DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

6TH WEEK OF LENT - HOLY WEEK - DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

This week is called Holy Week. It is the week before Easter and is the sixth week of Lent. Starting with the joy of palm Sunday and ending with the three darkest days of the Christian year—Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday—when we recall the passion of Christ: what He did for us on the cross and the events leading to it. These three days are known as the Triduum (TRID-ee-um). It is traditional not to light a candle during these three days, as a way of remembering that the Light has gone out of the world.

WEEKLY FAMILY ACTIVITY

PALM SUNDAY

Find palm fronds for your family. Practice waving them, or set them down and have someone walk over them. At dinner on palm sunday discuss why people laid down palm fronds in front of Jesus. What is something important to you that you can lay down at Jesus' feet as an act of worship?

QUIET GOOD FRIDAY

At home, have a dimly lit Good Friday dinner and leave the lights low all evening in recognition of Jesus' death. You could set aside a special time to pray as a family- to remember that Jesus loved us so much He was willing to die for us.

DAY 40

SUNDAY

READ

John 12:12-15

DISCUSS

Why are the people in this story so excited?

What do you do when you're excited?

What would you do if you knew Jesus was coming to our town/city?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You are the King. You are good and humble and powerful and gentle. We praise You, our King. Amen.

DAY 41

MONDAY

READ

Isaiah 42:1-4

DISCUSS

What is a smoldering wick (use the words from verse 3 of your translation)? Why do you think the servant won't put out a smoldering wick?

What kind of person do you think the servant is? Who do you think the servant is?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, are God's Son, the servant who tenderly cares for those who are lonely, sad, lost, and broken. Thank You for Your faithful love for us. Amen.

DAY 42

TUESDAY

READ

Psalm 31:13-16

DISCUSS

How does it feel to be afraid? Who can we turn to when we're afraid? What can we do?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You trusted Your Father, even when Your life was scary and You were afraid. Help us to trust You when we are afraid. Amen.

DAY 43

WEDNESDAY

READ

Mark 14:1

DISCUSS

What do the priests want to do to Jesus?
How do you think Jesus felt, knowing this?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, when You went to Jerusalem You knew You were going to be killed, but You went because You trusted Your Father and because You love Your people. We are so grateful that You love us that much. Amen.

DAY 44

MAUNDY THURSDAY

READ

Mark 14:43-46

DISCUSS

Why do you think Judas, who was Jesus' friend, betrayed Him?

How do you think Jesus felt when Judas betrayed Him?

How did He feel when the crowd seized Him? Where do you think they will take Him?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, this is a dark day. It is the day You were betrayed and arrested. Help us to remember You today and remember what You suffered because You love us. Amen.

DAY 45

GOOD FRIDAY

READ

Luke 23:18-23, 32-33

DISCUSS

Why did Jesus die? (There are lots of answers here. Encourage older children especially to think beyond the rote “for our sins.”)

PRAY

Lord Jesus, This is a dark day. It is the day You were crucified and died. Help us to remember You today and to remember what You suffered because You love us. Amen.

DAY 46

HOLY SATURDAY

READ

Mark 15:42-46

DISCUSS

Why did Joseph ask for Jesus' body? What did he do with it?

How do you think he felt about Jesus' death?
How do you feel about Jesus' death?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, This is a dark day. It is the day
You lay in the earth, dead and buried. Help
us to remember You today and to remember
what You suffered because You love us.
Amen.

DAY 47

EASTER SUNDAY

This is the day we celebrate the resurrection of our risen King. Oh Happy Day!

When your kids wake this morning, wake them up by saying “Christ is risen!” Encourage them to respond with “He is risen indeed!” Take time to celebrate this joyous occasion with your family today.

READ

Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10

Pick one or all of the accounts of the resurrection of Christ and read those verses together. Light all of the candles that have been dark this past week as a symbol of the light coming to life again!

PRAY

Take turns having each person in your family thank Jesus for what he has done for them. You can use the phrase, “Jesus, you are _____, and I thank you for _____.”



