

Introduction

The greatest feast of the Jewish year is Passover. On this day they remember: God led them from a life of slavery to a new life of freedom. They remember: God led our people through danger to safety. They remember: God promised them they would always be his beloved people.

Jewish families get ready to celebrate this great feast. They clean their homes of "leaven," a symbol of the old life their people left behind. They listen to the stories of what God has done for them. They remember the promises God has made them. As they begin their feast, a child asks a ritual question: "Why is this night different from all other nights of the year?"

As Christians, our greatest feast is Easter. On this great day we remember: God led Jesus from death to life. God has brought us, the brothers and sisters of Jesus, from the danger of sin to a life at peace with God. God promises us: we will always be his beloved people.

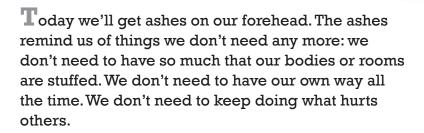
We take 40 days in Lent to get ready for Easter. And so we begin with our own question: "Why are these 40 days different from all other days of the year?" Each day we'll give you a new answer to that question. May you and your family find joy together as you get ready for the greatest day of the Christian year!



Ash Wednesday

Behold, now is the day of salvation.

-2 Corinthians 6:2



When we let those old things go, a new and better life takes their place. One way Christians draw this is by drawing a make-believe bird called a phoenix. Stories say a new phoenix comes alive from a pile of ashes!

On the wings of this phoenix draw one old thing you can let go of, and one new thing you want to do or be this Lent.



Thursday, after Ash Wednesday

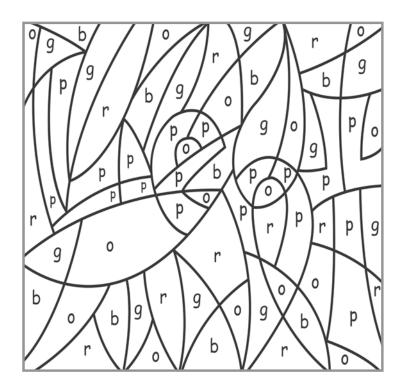
The Lord your God will bless you.

-Deuteronomy 30:16

Why does the Church give us Lent? The answer might surprise you: as one more way to know that God blesses us. Lent shows us that God wants for us more life and joy than we already have. When we learn to share more, listen to God more, help more—we find that our new life is happier. These days are different to make our whole life different.

In the picture below, color each space according to this code and see what season appears.

r-red b-blue o-orange g-green p-purple



Friday, after Ash Wednesday

This, rather, is the fasting that I wish...sharing your bread with the hungry. —Isaiah 58: 6a, 7a

When we think of fasting, we first think of eating less. That's a good start! But the Church doesn't want us to stop there. Why are these days different? We take less for ourselves, so we can give more to others.

Ask a family member to help you make a simple soup. Then give the money you save to people who feed the hungry.

Lentil soup Recipe (Serves 4)

- Put I cup lentils in a pot.
- Chop up I small onion and I small carrot and put it in the pot.
- Put I can of chopped tomatoes into the pot.
- · Add 4 cups water and cover the pot.
- Cook on medium heat until it starts to bubble, about 10 minutes.
- Turn the heat to low and keep cooking until the lentils are soft.
- · Stir in salt and pepper to taste.
- · Serve with any kind of grated cheese.

Saturday, after Ash Wednesday

The Lord will guide you always. -Isaiah 58:11a

The days of Lent are different because we use them to change our lives. We spend a little more time in prayer. We read the Bible a bit more often. We take a little less. We share a little more. We do these small things, and we find that God was in each small place, giving us bigger lives.

Isaiah describes this bigger life this way:



The First Sunday of Lent

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert.

-Matthew 4:1

Long ago God's people had crossed the waters and gone into the desert to listen to God.

Now Jesus, like his people, came out of the waters of his baptism and went into the desert to listen to God. Why are these days different? These are the days we make a little time each day to go apart and listen to God's word.

Find a Bible in your house.

Can you find the Table of Contents?

Write its page number here:					
Now look at the Table of Contents.					
Can you find the book of Matthew?					
Write its page number here:					
Now go find the book of Matthew.					
Can you find Matthew 4:1?					
That's chapter 4 and verse 1.					
Write its page number here:					

This is how you can find every verse we use this Lent!

Monday, the first week of Lent

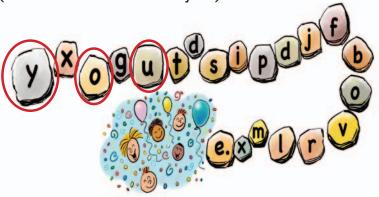
Come, blessed of my Father! -Matthew 25:34

Imagine the best party in town. What do you do to get in? Pay big bucks? Bring big gifts? Pound on the door?

Here's a big feast that Jesus wants us to come to: a party in heaven, laughing with one another and loving God and each other forever. And he wants us to start enjoying that good life right now, too! What's the way in? Welcome him. Feed him. Give him drink. Clothe him. Take care of him when he's sick. Visit him when he needs us.

Wait. How do we do all that when we can't see Jesus? That's the best part!

Find out the way to Jesus' party by reading these words "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers (or sisters) of mine" and then circle every other letter on the path below to the party. (We circled the first 3 for you!)



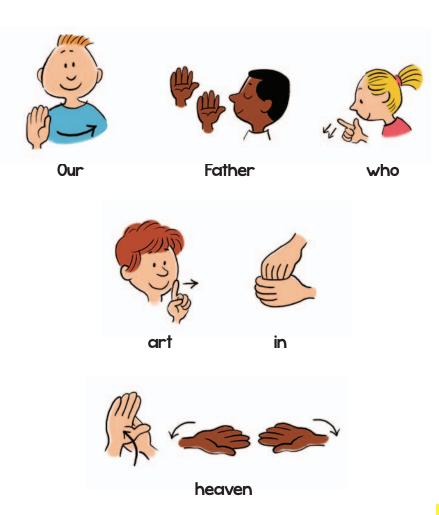
You

Tuesday, the first week of Lent

This is how you are to pray. -Matthew 6:9

Jesus says we don't need a lot of words to pray. He taught us a prayer of his own: the Our Father.

Follow the signs below to begin the Our Father in sign language!



Wednesday, the first week of Lent

Still more people gathered in the crowd.

-Luke 11:29

Why are these days different? Because we spend more time thinking about and talking to Jesus. Wherever Jesus went, people gathered around to hear his stories and ask his questions.



Think of three questions you'd like to ask Jesus and list them below.

Thursday, the first week of Lent

Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. -Matthew 7:12

 \mathbf{W} hat do you know about the real St. Patrick?

When St. Patrick was just a teenager, pirates kidnapped him. They took him to Ireland and made him a slave. Patrick spent six years working as a shepherd, but he found a new way to be free he had never known before. He woke before dawn to pray to God. His heart was on fire with love and freedom.

One day he saw his chance. He hid on a boat bound for Britain and escaped his life as a slave. But what he did next might surprise you. He became a priest and bishop, then sailed back to Ireland, to forgive his captors to bring them the good news of the love and freedom of Christ.

Write down or draw a picture of one new way to be free.



Friday, the first week of Lent

He shall surely live. -Ezekiel 18:28

In Lent we remember that Jesus died. We remember that Jesus lives, and will never die again. The cross reminds us of both of these truths. We call the cross a symbol of Lent, because of what it reminds us of.

Easter has its symbols, too. What are some symbols you can think of? These days are different because they get us ready for Easter!

Match the symbols below to the correct season.



Saturday, the first week of Lent

Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid.

-Matthew 1:20

Angels in scripture don't look like the ones on Christmas cards. The first thing they always say to God's chosen people is, "Don't be afraid of us!" They want people to listen instead to the good news they bring.

To find the good news that the angel brought to Joseph unscramble the words below. You can find these words in Matthew 1:21.



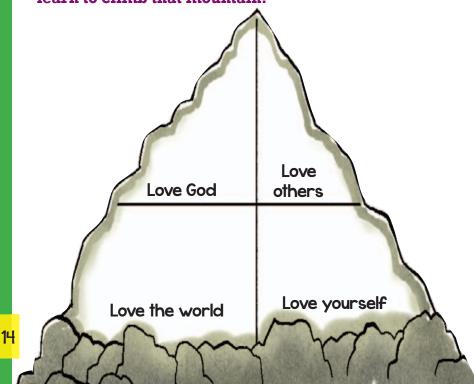
The Second Sunday of Lent

His face shone like the sun. -Matthew 17:2

Jesus climbed a mountain with his friends. On the mountain Jesus shone as bright as the sun. A voice said, "This is my beloved child." There his friends saw that looking at Jesus was looking at what God wanted for all of us.

These friends of Jesus climbed another mountain, too. They learned to live as Jesus lived. They learned to love the whole world around them. They learned to love others. They learned to love themselves! And they learned to love God most of all.

On this mountain, draw or write one way to love the world, other people, ourselves and—most of all—God. These days are different when we learn to climb that mountain!



Monday, the second week of Lent

Give and gifts will be given to you. -Luke 6:38

Imagine God asked you, "What gift would you like to have from me most of all?" Draw that gift in one box.

Imagine you asked God the same question! "What gift would you like to have from me most of all?"

How do you think God would answer you? Draw that gift in the other box.



Tuesday, the second week of Lent

The greatest among you must be your servant.

-Matthew 23:11

Imagine people saying, "He's the greatest!" "She's the best!" What comes to mind? Someone who can run faster than anyone? Someone who has the most money or toys? Someone who has the most friends?

Jesus turns the word "great" upside down! He says, "The greatest is the one who serves others." When we serve others, we help them. We take care of them.

Who helps you? Who takes care of you? Write the names of these great people in this movie poster.



Wednesday, the second week of Lent

He will be raised on the third day. -Matthew 20:19

Why are the days of Lent different from all other days? Because they all point to a day after Lent is over: Easter! The days of Lent get us ready for the great feast of Easter, a feast that began when Jesus rose to new life. A feast that will never end.

See what else you know about Lent!

Write the answers in the blanks. Find the answers in the word search puzzle to the right. Words might be forwards, backwards, upside down or diagonal.



1.	What do we call this season? LENT				
2.	What color do we use for Lent?				
3.	How many days are there in Lent?				
4.	What book do we read more often in Lent?				
	The				
5.	We spend more talking to God.				
	We call this				
6.	Lent gets us ready for the feast of				

Thursday, the second week of Lent

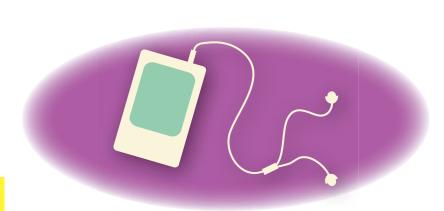
The law of the Lord is their joy. -Psalm 1:2

These words are from a song whose tune we don't know any more:

The law of the Lord is their joy; God's law they study day and night. They are like a tree planted near streams of water.

God's People sang songs like this long ago. We still have the words: we find them in the book of Psalms. For hundreds of years since, people have made new music to go with the words.

Find the book of Psalms in your Bible. Then write the first words of three different psalms in the music player to make your own "playlist" of God's greatest hits!



Friday, the second week of Lent

Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord." -Luke 1:38

God sends an angel to Mary to tell her, "Good news! The Holy Spirit will come over you. You will have a child and name him Jesus. He will save all God's people."

And Mary said, "Yes!"

Here in these different days of Lent we remember Christmas! We remember that Mary's yes gave joy to the whole world.

Make a Lenten "Christmas list." Write three things you like to do during Christmas. (Except don't put down, "Getting presents!") Now choose one of those things to do with your family today.



Saturday, the second week of Lent

He was lost, and has been found. -Luke 15:24

You can find a lost-and-found story in Luke 15:11-24. A boy asks his father for lots of money. He runs away from home. He spends all his money on parties. Then he wants something to eat so he goes back home. What does his father say? What does his father do?

Find the answer in Luke 15:20. Can you put words to the story below?



The Third Sunday of Lent

Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst. –John 4:14

A Samaritan woman came to the village well to draw water. Jesus was from Galilee. People from Samaria and Galilee didn't usually get along!

Jesus got hungry and thirsty, just like you. He asked the woman, "Give me a drink of water?"

The woman was surprised he would even talk to her. "You're asking me for water? Our people are enemies." Jesus teased her. "If you knew who was asking, you'd be asking me for something—the kind of water that never runs out!" And as he and the woman talked, she came to believe in him.

She ran to her town. "He is the Messiah!" she proclaimed. God chose her to tell good news, too.

Find letters around the woman's water bucket to finish this verse:

A woman of _____ came to draw _____



Monday, the third week of Lent

I may come to... God, my joy, my delight.

-Psalm 43:4

We've heard the stories of three saints whose joy was in God: Saint Patrick. Saint Joseph. The Blessed Virgin Mary. Sometimes a shamrock is used to remind us of St. Patrick. Sometimes carpenters' tools are used to remind us of St. Joseph.

What about you? God loves you, too. God calls you to be a saint, too. What could people look at that would remind them of you? A soccer ball you love to kick? A bike you love to ride? A color you love to see?

Draw your idea and write your name.



Tuesday, the third week of Lent

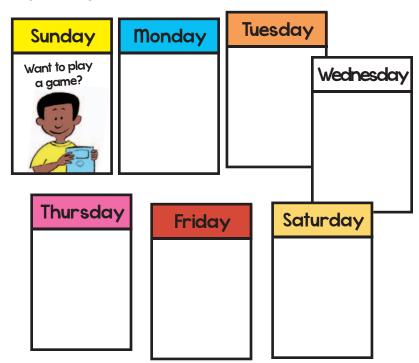
How often must I forgive him?

-Matthew 18:21

Peter got mad sometimes. "How many times do I have to forgive this guy? Seven times?" he asked Jesus. He probably thought Jesus would say, "Seven times is way too many!"

But Jesus said something different. He said, "As many as 70 times 7!"

Imagine someone is having a bad week! In the calendar below, draw seven ways you could forgive someone else. You could give them a hug. You could tell them, "I'm not mad any more"—but only if you really aren't mad any more. You could say, "Let's play a game together." Do you have more ideas?



23

Wednesday, the third week of Lent

The Lord sends a command to earth.

-Psalm 147:15

If you could make up a law that everyone in the world would obey, what would it be? How would the world be different? Write out your new law in the space below.

Sometimes we read the word law in the Bible, but it's not the same as the word we use in our own towns. A law in the Bible is a word from God that shows us a way to live. How do you think the world would be different if everyone followed God's law?



Thursday, the third week of Lent

The kingdom of God has come upon you.

-Luke 11:20

How are these days different? These are the days we pray and work so that God's kingdom will grow among us. The "kingdom of God" is life as God dreams it, in heaven and on earth. Jesus began God's kingdom on earth, and it has been growing ever since!

If God's kingdom was over the whole earth, how would life be different? Write a newspaper headline about this new world.



Friday, the third week of Lent

The Lord our God is Lord alone! -Mark 12:29

A scribe—that's like a lawyer—asked Jesus a question. "What's the greatest law of God?"

Jesus answered, "First of all, love God, with all your heart and strength and everything else!"

Then Jesus added a second commandment. He said... whoops! April Fool! We've put numbers instead of letters in the answer. To find out what it is, you'll have to break the code below.

Hint #1: Use our key to figure out which numbers stand for which letters. (We've left some words for clues.)

Hint #2: You'll find the answer in Mark 12:31!

$$A = 1$$
, $B = 2$, $C = 3$, $D = 4$...and so on to... $Z = 26$

neighbor
$$\frac{}{(1 \ 19)}$$
 yourself.

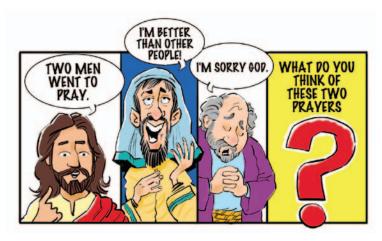


Saturday, the third week of Lent

Two people went up to the temple area to pray. –Luke 18:10

Once Jesus told a story about two men who went to pray. You can read the story below.

Can you add words to each of these two prayers?

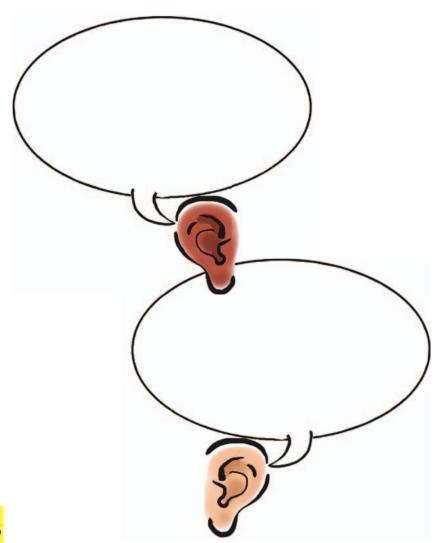


The Fourth Sunday of Lent

Those who hear will live. -John 5:25

Why are these days different? In Lent, we spend more time listening to the words of Jesus in the Bible.

Around the ears below, write two things you have heard Jesus say in the stories of the Bible.



Monday, the fourth week of Lent

I am about to create new heavens and a new earth.

-Isaiah 65:17

God begins a whole new world when Jesus rises to new life. This is something brand new in the world!

Imagine a brand new world. Can you think of one thing you would like to see in it? Draw your idea in the world below.

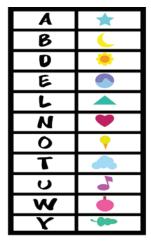


Tuesday, the fourth week of Lent

Rise, take up your mat, and walk. -John 5:8

The words of Jesus were full of mystery. When he spoke—things happened. Sometimes someone sick got better. Sometimes someone blind could see. Sometimes someone deaf could hear.

Can you solve this mystery? Break the code and find out what words Jesus spoke to a man who couldn't walk.







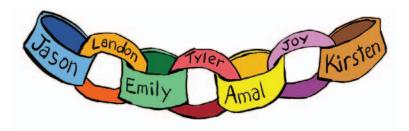
Wednesday, the fourth week of Lent

I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. -Exodus 32:13

Descendants are sons and daughters. In Jesus, we are God's own children—God's own sons and daughters.

Make a paper chain of all the sons and daughters of God you know.

Cut construction paper into strips one inch wide. On each strip write the name of a friend or family member. How many can you make? Join them together in a chain for your room.



Thank God for all the children of God who love you.

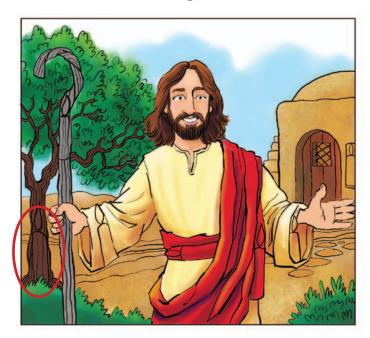


Thursday, the fourth week of Lent

I am the light of the world. -John 9:5

Go on a candle hunt! There are seven lit candles in the picture below. Can you find them all? As you find them, write each word of this prayer below the picture to form a caption:

Jesus is the light of the world.



Jesus

Now ask your family if you can have dinner by candle light tonight! Hunt up as many candles as you can from around the house. Ask a grownup to light the candles. As each candle is lit, family members can pray, "Jesus is the light of the world."

Friday, the fourth week of Lent

He is the Messiah. -John 7:26

One of the names for Jesus is Christ or Messiah. It means "chosen one," and also one on whom oil has been poured. (Pouring oil on someone made them a king or priest in Jesus' day.)

We have many names for Jesus: Son of God. Bread of Life. Emmanuel. (Emmanuel means "God is with us.")



Can you make up your own names for Jesus? Write them in the frame above.

Saturday, the fourth week of Lent

A shield before me is God. -Psalm 7:11

One psalm calls God a "shield" because the writer knows that God goes ahead of him in any dangerous time.

God went ahead of God's People when they ran away from slavery. God went ahead of them when they walked into their new land. And God was with Jesus every step of the way as he met the danger of his last days on earth.



Decorate the shield with symbols that remind you of God's protection.

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

-John 11:5

In today's Gospel story, Jesus goes to the home of his beloved friends, and gives new life to Lazarus. The sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, rejoice, just as we rejoice at Easter in Jesus' new life.

These days of Lent are different because we find new ways to celebrate Jesus' new life. Plant Easter grass today as a reminder of this new life. You'll need:

- · flowerpot or an empty yogurt carton
- · garden soil to fill the pot or carton
- · seed: grass, wheat or beans

Ask your family to help you fill the pot or carton and plant the seeds. Water the pot. Cover it with plastic wrap. Watch for new life to poke up from the soil. Then take off the wrap and put it on a window sill. Keep watering and wait for Easter green!



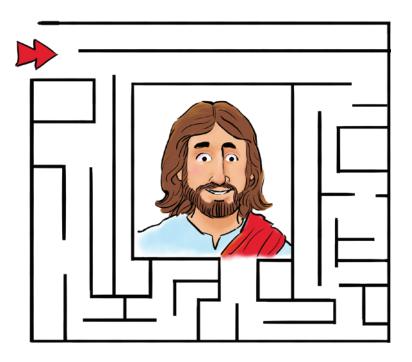
Monday, the fifth week of Lent

All the people started coming to Jesus, and he sat down and taught them. –John 8:2

Why are these days different? We listen more closely to our teacher Jesus.

In Jesus' day, people came from far away just to hear him teach!

Can you find your way to our teacher Jesus in the maze below?



Tuesday, the fifth week of Lent

The one who sent me is with me. -John 8:29

Jesus always knew that God was with him, even in his hardest days. In Lent we draw closer to the God who is always with us. Why are these days different?

Make a flag that shows us what's different about Lent! Maybe you'll use the color purple. Maybe you'll use the number 40. Ashes for Ash Wednesday, Palms for Palm Sunday, a cross for Good Friday—any of these could be part of your flag.



Wednesday, the fifth week of Lent

You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. -John 8:32

Jesus wants us to remember the most important truth of all: God loves each and every one of us. God sent Jesus to us just so that we would know this and live forever with God! That's the good news of Easter!

Yesterday you drew a flag for Lent. **Now draw a flag for Easter.** What can you draw to show that Jesus is risen? What can you draw to show that God loves us always?





Thursday, the fifth week of Lent

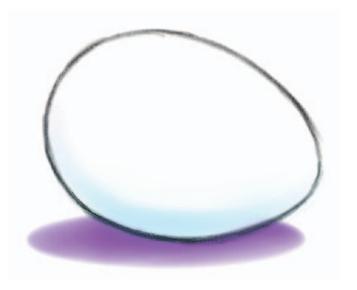
Whoever keeps my word will never see death. –John 8:51

The good news of Easter is the good news of life with God. People still die. We are still sad when they leave us. But we know now that God wants us to live forever with him.

Did you know that the first Easter eggs were symbols of this new life? Some people drew ribbons or bands that went all the way

around the egg, without stopping. This was a symbol of life that went on forever! Some people drew sheaves of wheat or rising suns. These were symbols of new life.

In the egg shape below make up your own pictures that show new life with God. Add the words of today's verse, too.



Friday, the fifth week of Lent

The Father is in me, and I am in the Father. –John 10:38

Remember: the good news of Easter is the good news of life with God. Jesus tells us that he and God are close together, all the time. God wants that with Jesus. God wants that for each and every one of us. This news is such good news that the friends of Jesus spread it all over the world!

Think of the person you like to be with most of all and write their name below. That's how much God wants to be with you: today and forever.



Saturday, the fifth week of Lent

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

-Ezekiel 37:27

Can you read the rest of today's verse in this puzzle?











Palm Sunday

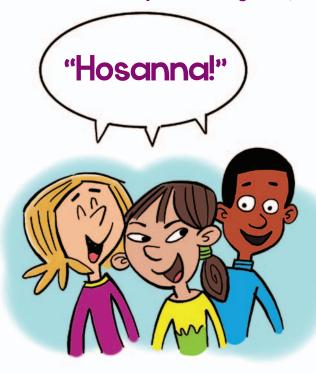
Hosanna in the highest! -Matthew 21:9



Long ago, Jesus rode on a donkey into the city of Jerusalem. People ran to him. They put cloaks in front of his donkey. They waved palm branches. They shouted, "Hosanna!" which means, "Save us now!"

Jesus rode into Jerusalem to save all God's People. Welcome Jesus this Holy Week. Use paper, chalk or markers to make a picture of palms to decorate the dinner table.

Ask the family to shout together,



Monday, Holy Week

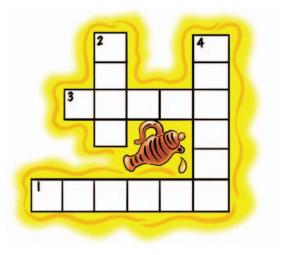
Jesus came to Bethany. -John 12:1

Jesus had a friend named Mary of Bethany. She broke open a jar of oil. She washed the feet of Jesus. Jesus loved her for her kindness.

Some days later, Jesus may have remembered her kindness as he washed the feet of his own friends. Ask your family, "What kind thing can we do today in honor of Mary the friend of Jesus?"

Fill in the words of this story, then put them in the crossword puzzle.

Jesus had a			_ named Mary. She washed
•	(1 across)		-
the(2 do	own)	of _	Later Jesus (3 across)
(4 down)			the feet of his friends.



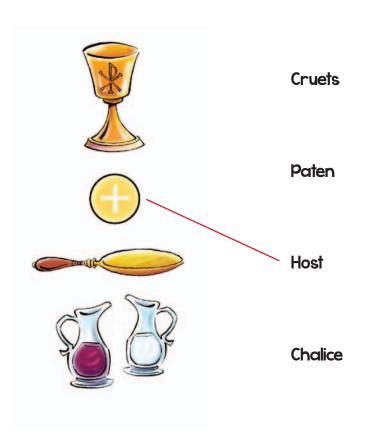
Tuesday, Holy Week

My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. -John 13:33

When Jesus came to his last night on earth, he shared a meal with his friends. They sat at table together. Jesus told them about the kingdom of God. Jesus promised to be with them always.

In the Mass, we still come to the table with Jesus. We still hear Jesus promise us, "You will be with me always."

Draw lines to match the pictures of what we use in the Mass with their right names.



Wednesday, Holy Week

I shall celebrate the Passover. -Matthew 26:18

Remember: the most important feast of the Jewish year is Passover. Now Jesus is ready to celebrate this great feast with his friends. They remember: God led our people to safety.

Jesus remembers and trusts in God. God will lead him to safety, too.





Holy Thursday

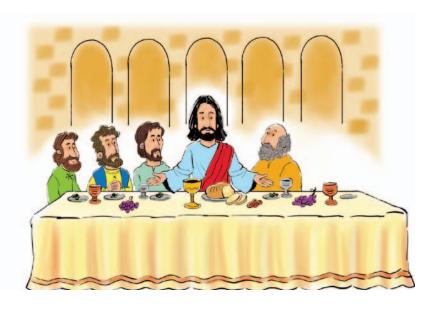
He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. -John 13:1

Why are these days different? Today we begin the last days of Lent, the great Triduum. The Triduum means three days. Tonight we remember: Jesus washed the feet of his friends. Jesus shared bread and wine with his friends. Jesus then left his friends to pray.

Tomorrow we remember: Jesus died on the cross. The friends of Jesus grieved.

Saturday we remember: Jesus lay buried in God's good earth. But his new story was just beginning. Easter is coming: wait for it.

Draw yourself at table with Jesus and his friends.



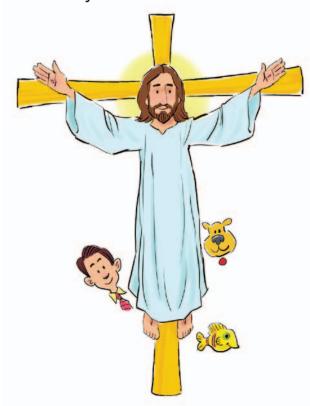
Good Friday

My kingdom does not belong to this world. –John 18:36

Today we remember the cross of Jesus, but we know that Jesus is risen. Jesus lives for God. Jesus lives for us. He will never die again.

The first Christians never told the story of Jesus' death without the story of Jesus' new life. On this cross, we show Jesus risen to new life.

Can you fill the cross with pictures of God's gifts to the world? What colors do you love? What foods? What animals? What people? Put what you love most around the risen Jesus.



Saturday, Easter Vigil

My love shall never leave you.

-Isaiah 54:10

Why are these days different? They end with a story of Jesus dying on the cross, but they begin at once to tell another story. When we go to church this night, we hear story after story of God's saving work. God makes the world. God leads us across the water to safety. God promises: my love shall never leave you.

And we shout out together:

He is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

And then it is no longer the days of Lent. Alleluia: welcome, Easter!



Easter Sunday

As the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see. –Matthew 28:1

Alleluia! Jesus is risen. What Mary and Mary saw was an empty tomb.

Can you turn the tomb below into an Easter Garden with Jesus, the two women and other signs of new life?



Happy Easter!