



# St. Joseph's Children's Liturgy of the Word

## Year C Lent

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There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions based on the life of the very first Christians:

*“They (those baptised on the day of Pentecost) held steadfastly to the Apostles’ teaching, and fellowship, to the breaking of prayers and to the Eucharist.”*

Professing the faith  
(speaking about it and  
learning the faith)

Celebrating our faith in  
the liturgy and the  
sacraments

Living the faith in Christ  
(making choices by the  
grace of Jesus Christ)

A prayer-filled life where  
the Our Father takes  
centre stage



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 for it to be blessed.

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.

Lent comes from the old English word for “spring,” meaning “to lengthen”. 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, (as I am typing this a thrush is cheerfully calling outside my window), so too our lives of faith can wake up. During Lent, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we prepare for Easter, the wonderful celebration that Jesus has risen from the dead. Every at Easter, 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!

This resource includes a photocopiable booklet the children can make to help them record their journey through Lent. Maybe adults can use it too! It is easy to begin Lent with many resolutions for them to fade very quickly.

## Children's liturgy of the word for this week



### Gospel for Ash Wednesday Year C

#### Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples:

‘Beware of practising your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

‘Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.’

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

### Discussion on the Gospel for Ash Wednesday

✠ Introduce the Gospel Liturgically

*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.)

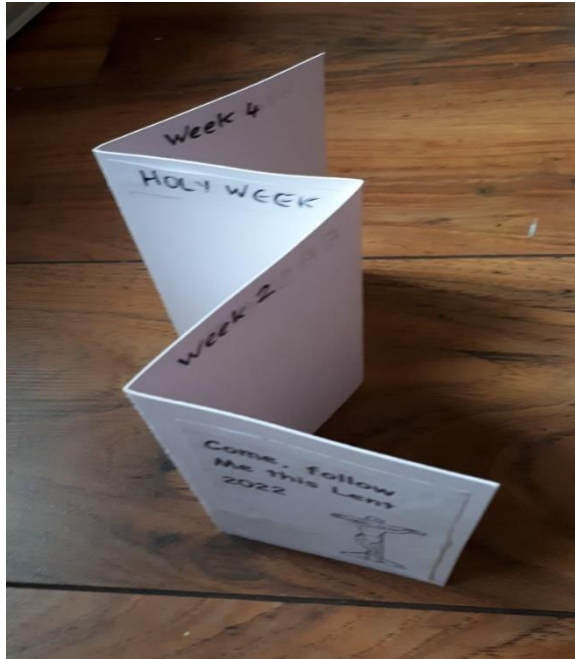
**Q: What is “fasting”?** (A. It means going without something.)

**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 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 6<sup>th</sup> page, and on the 7<sup>th</sup> 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!

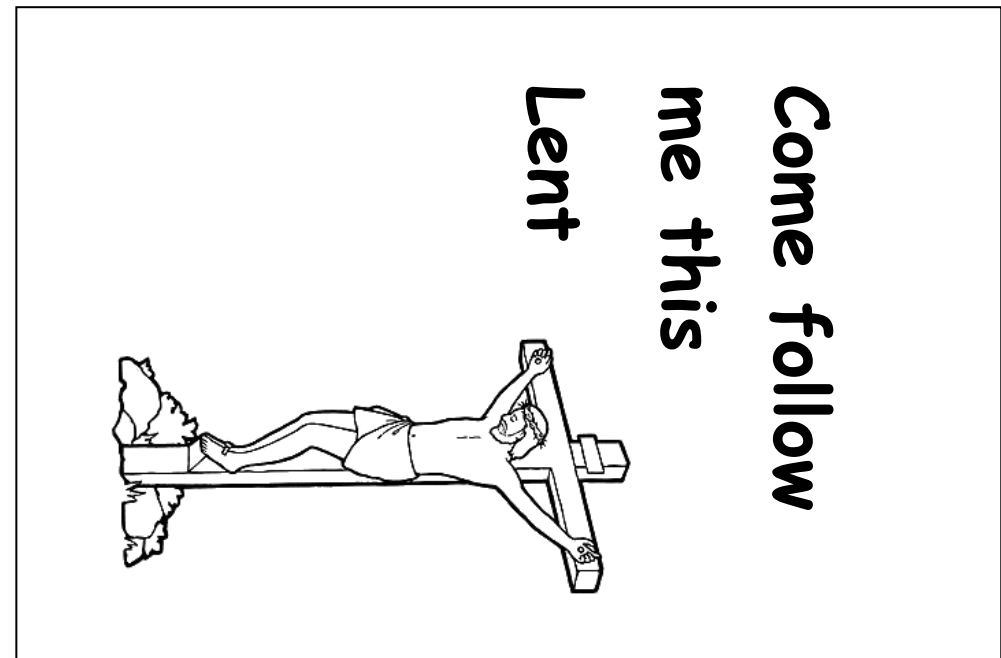
1. Jesus says, "When you call on me, I will answer you. I will deliver you and give you glory, and I will grant you length of days.

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.



## Children's liturgy of the word for this week

### Discussion on the Gospel

† Introduce the Gospel Liturgically

**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.**

### Gospel for 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent Year C

#### Luke 4:1-13

At that time: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were over, he was hungry.

The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.'

And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone." '

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, 'To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve." '

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." '

And Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." '

And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The Gospel of the Lord

*R/: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

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 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent Year C

### Luke 9:28-36

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.

And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good that we are here.

Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah' not knowing what he said.

As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!'

And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of 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

✠ Introduce the Gospel Liturgically

*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 ...)

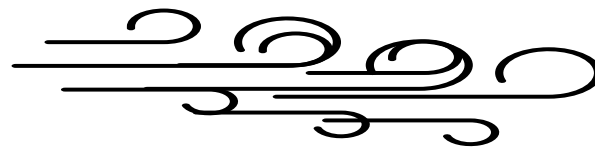
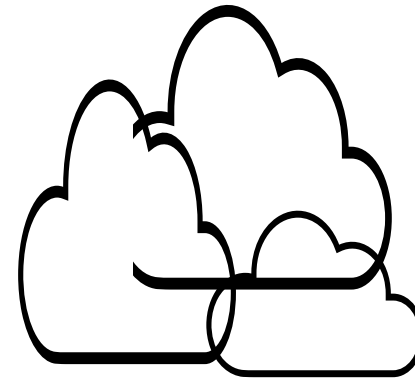
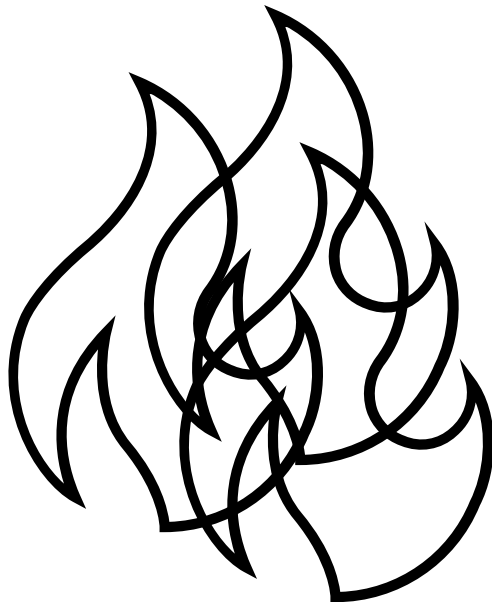
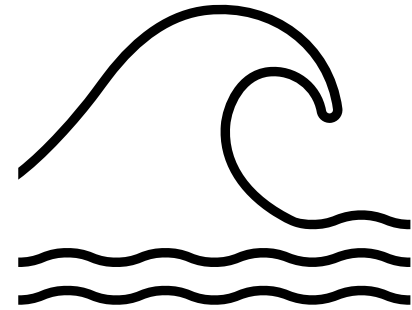
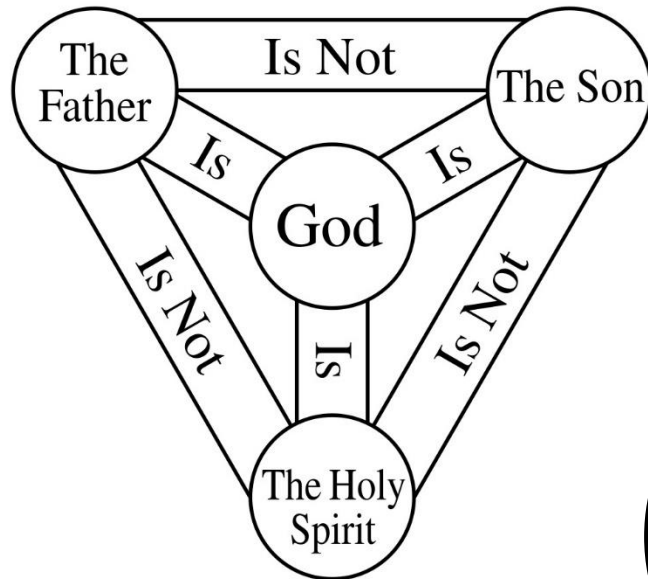
**Q: When do we especially remember that God is Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)?** (A: When we make the Sign of the Cross.)

**Let's prayerfully make the Sign of the Cross right now and remember that the Holy Spirit is always with us to help, guide and protect us.**

# Colour in these signs of the Holy Spirit



## THE HOLY TRINITY





## Gospel 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent Year C

### Luke 13:1-9

There were some present at that very time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way?

No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?

No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.' And he told this parable:

\*'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

And he said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?"

And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure.

Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, 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

✠ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

*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 merc. God, like the vinedresser, gives plenty of time for us 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 is 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.)

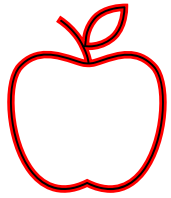
**Q: What does grace help us to do? (Think about the fig tree that wasn't doing it.)**  
(A: To bear good fruit)

**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.**

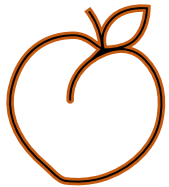
# Bearing fruit in our lives as Christians



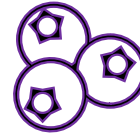
I am loving when \_\_\_\_\_



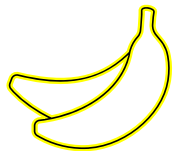
I am kind when \_\_\_\_\_



I am joyful when \_\_\_\_\_



I am good when \_\_\_\_\_



I am peaceful when \_\_\_\_\_



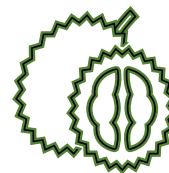
I am faithful when \_\_\_\_\_



I am patient when \_\_\_\_\_



I am gentle when \_\_\_\_\_



I am self-controlled when \_\_\_\_\_

## Children's liturgy of the word for this week

### Gospel for, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent Year C

#### **Luke 15:1-3, 11-32**

At that time: The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'

So Jesus told them this parable: 'There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me." And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.

And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need.

So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs.

And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

'But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger!

I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.' "

'And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

And they began to celebrate. 'Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

And the servant said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound."

But the older brother was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, "Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!"

And the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." '

The Gospel of the Lord: R/: *Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ*

## Discussion on the Gospel



✠ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

*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! Afterwards, you can either focus on a mothering Sunday card or colour in the act of contrition.*

**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 maybe something they asked us to do that we didn’t do. In your heart, say sorry to God our heavenly Father for hurting your parents. Now imagine that Jesus is giving you a big hug!**

O my God, because you  
are so good, I am very  
sorry that I have sinned  
against you, and by the  
help of your grace, I will  
not sin again. Amen

# 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> March this year.

The important thing is not the date, but that we honour our mothers, thus obeying the 4<sup>th</sup> 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.**

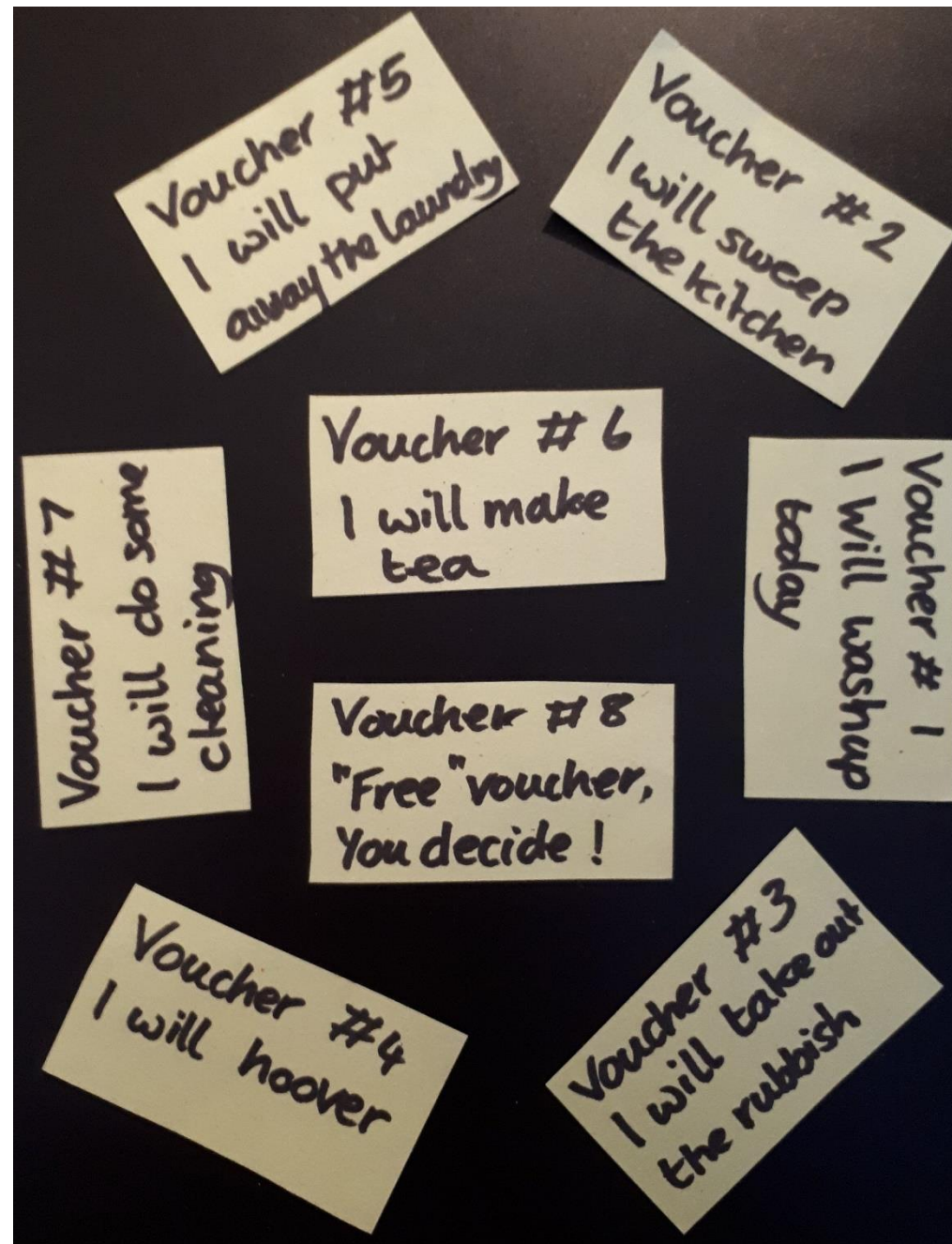
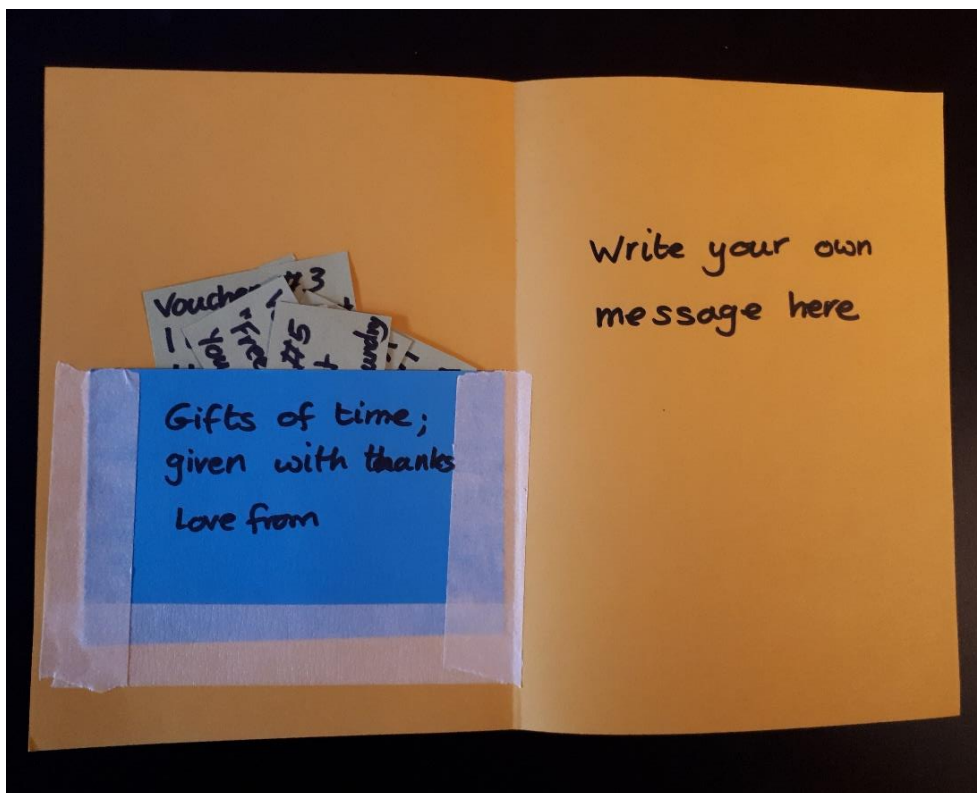


Jesus Crowning His  
mother, Mary, Queen  
of Heaven.

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 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent Year C  
John 8:1-11**

At that time: Jesus came to the temple.

All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him,

‘Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?’

This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.

And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, ‘Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.’

And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground.

But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.

Jesus stood up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’

She said, ‘No one, Lord.’

And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no 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

✠ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

*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 what 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:



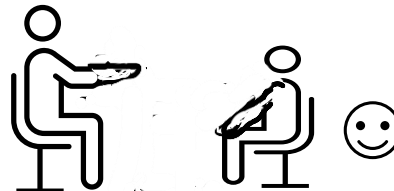
I lose grace when I:



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,     |   |



**How about making figures of Jesus carrying His cross with air drying clay? Or models of the different stations of the cross as a whole class?**

## 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.

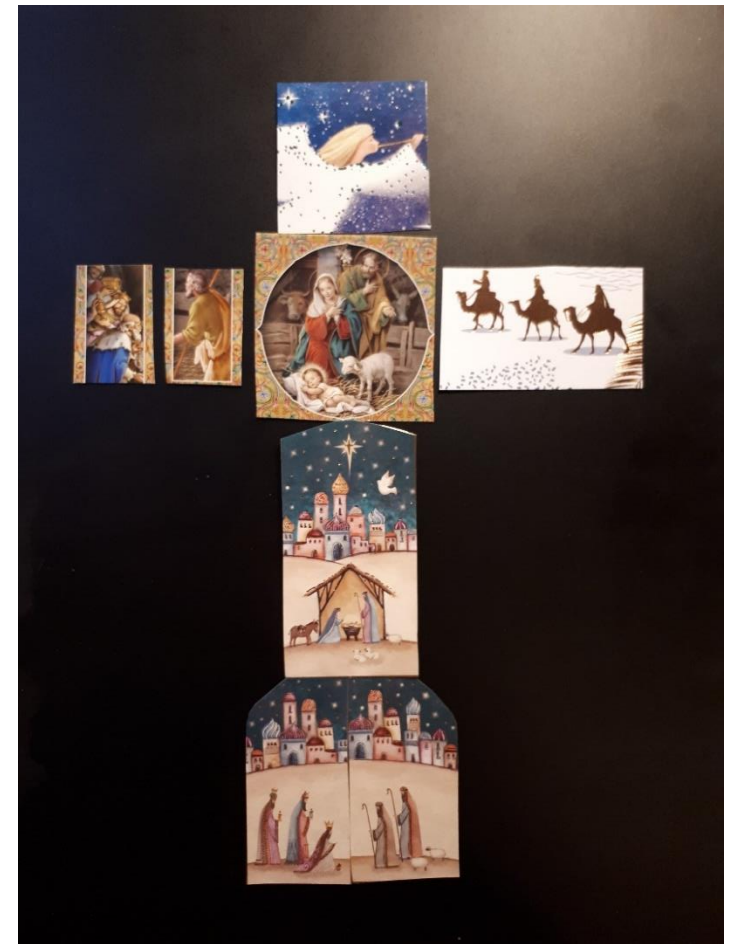
## The Ten Commandments

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 or class 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;

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.

Information from: Thurston, H. (1910). Hail Mary. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved March 16, 2021 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07110b.htm>

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

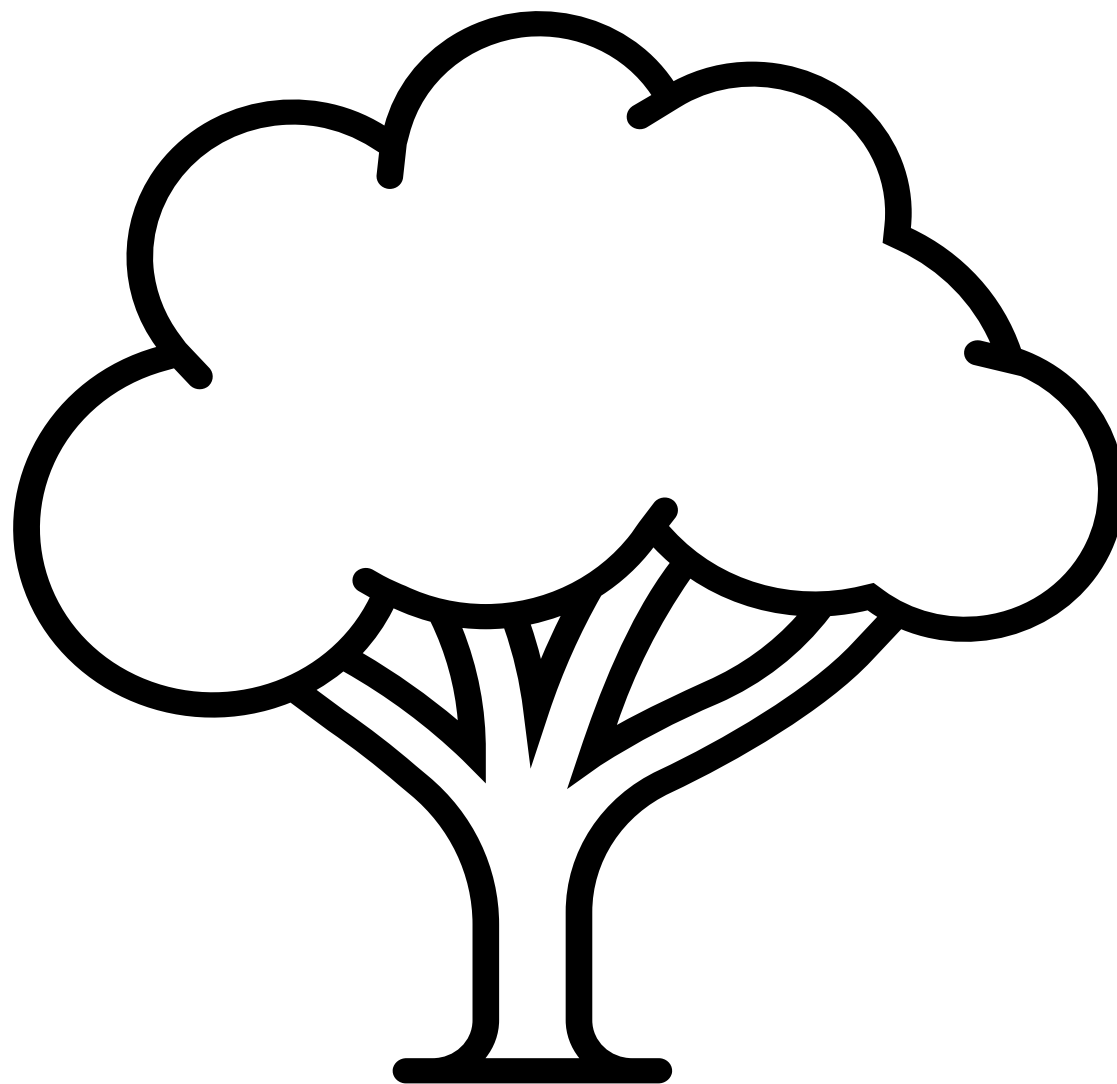
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray  
for us sinners, now and at the  
hour of our death, Amen.

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.