

Suggested Activities – Lenten journey

As we prepare for Easter during this Lenten season we are reminded of the three disciplines commonly practised during this time: fasting, praying and giving. Below are some activities you may wish to do at home or at school which reinforce these three practises.

- Make an alms / collection box at home. Decorate it with symbols expressing the value and joy of sharing. Collect money from saving through not having other things.
- As a family think of someone within your community who you could help during this Lenten time.
- Make a cross out of cardboard and divide it into six sections – for the five weeks of Lent and Holy Week. Decide on a sign of love / peace to perform each week (helping another person, giving something up, making someone smile). Colour after each week until you have a cross of coloured mosaic.
- Create a Prayer area within your home (on the kitchen table, the fridge, window sill) where you can display a small cross, some pictures and flowers. Try to use it as a family each day and night.
- Research the ‘Stations of the Cross’ (one of which you will find on the front cover). Print a set from the internet (devotionsandprayers.com.uk) and add descriptions. Some may be able to design and make their own using paint, pencils, pastels, clay and other materials.
- Choose a Lenten hymn (lyrics available online) and try to draw / paint one or more of the verses.
- Take time to research and explore the websites of both *Cafod* and *Missio*. These provide some good material for children to access
- Make a cross of paper and attach to the wall. Trace the outline of the hand of each family member. Then each member writes something special they plan to do on their paper hand and attaches it to the cross as a reminder. Paper flowers could be added on Holy Saturday to express the blossoming of these actions.

Further Help and Guidance

Please find below further explanation of some of the terms, colours and symbols used during Lent and Holy Week. I hope that both you and your child / children find these useful.

Lent: Preparation - through prayer, fasting and alms giving - for Holy Week and the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. Begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday in the evening – approximately 6 weeks.

Liturgical colours: Different colours are used throughout the Church’s year. During Lent purple is used to represent penance. Whilst during Holy Thursday and throughout the Easter season white and gold are used to symbolise triumph and joy.

Passion Sunday: Sometimes called Palm Sunday because we bless palms and hear the reading of the passion of Jesus. Christians celebrate Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem to face his suffering and death.

The Paschal or Easter Triduum: Begins on Holy Thursday in the evening and ends on Easter Sunday in the evening.

Paschal Triduum means the *Three Days of Passover*. For the Jewish people, Passover celebrates the great event when God delivered the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom.

On the night between Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday, we keep the Easter Vigil. We prepare for this Vigil in the washing of feet on Holy Thursday and in the veneration of the cross on Good Friday. We also prepare by fasting.

The Stations of the Cross: They are a devotion which commemorates the Passion and death of Jesus. There are 14 in total and they each represent an event which occurred at Calvary on Good Friday.

The Last Supper: Through the Last Supper Jesus established the Eucharist or Mass as a way in which he could remain always with his followers.

