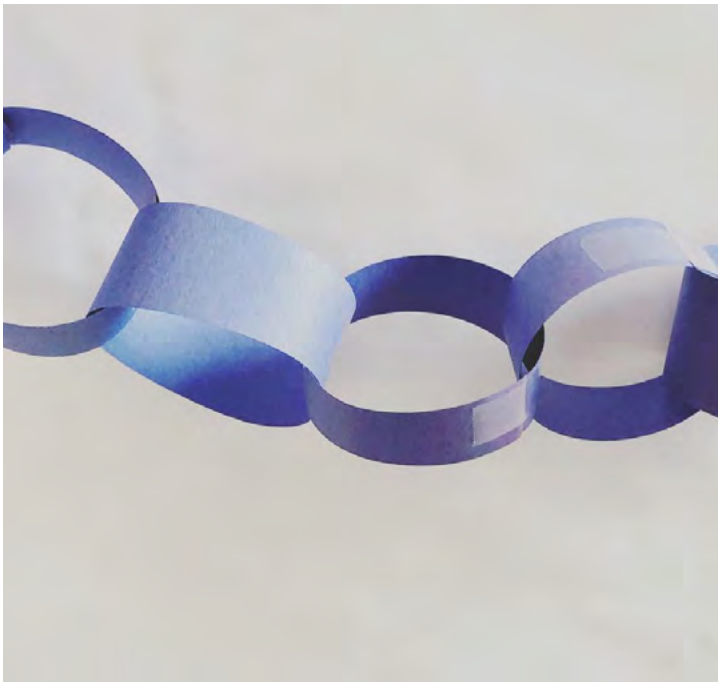
LENT
SEEK & WONDER
FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

the SEASON of LENT

"...From dust we are made and to dust we shall return…" On Ash Wednesday we stand before our priest, marked with a cross made from the ashes of last year's palms, and hear these words: from dust we are made, and to dust we shall return.

Lent is a season in our church calendar to think about our dustiness and to meditate on three practices: fasting, prayer, and giving. Generally, it is a time to be simple, a time to reflect, and a time to refrain from indulgence and special treats. We are preparing for Easter. When Easter comes there will be so much to celebrate. We fast, but soon we will feast. (The season of Easter is 50 days long. 10 days longer than Lent!)

Lent, while somber, can be a season to help your family grow more in their knowledge and love of Jesus. As adults, we possess a knowledge of the world and sin and life and death that our children haven't yet fully learned. They need our shepherding to engage in a season that lasts for 40 days—a span of time that is too long for any young one to fully grasp by merely attending church each Sunday. Teaching our children through Lent is like preparing a garden in spring. We need to tend to our children at home to help them connect the dustiness of Ash Wednesday to the Joy of Easter.



MARKING the 40 DAYS of LENT

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The 40 days count the days in between those 2 markers, not including Sundays; Sunday remains a feast day.

Why 40 days? This is a great thing to discuss with your children. Which stories in the Bible make you think of 40? (A few examples: The rain lasted for 40 days and 40 nights [Genesis 7:12], the Israelites in the desert for 40 years [Joshua 5:6], and Jesus in the desert for 40 days [Matthew 4:2]). In the Bible the number 40 is associated with times of trial and testing. The 40 days of Lent fits into this narrative we find in the Bible. For our young ones, 40 days may feel like an eternity, so it is important to find a way to mark the time. Our family does this by writing out the numbers 1-40 on butcher paper that is cut to fit our buffet, and each day the kids place a small stone over the next number. I leave a space for Sundays and put a tealight candle on each Sunday space. Sometimes I set other things around the numbers like a vase filled with sticks and dead branches. Then, on Easter morning we put flowers in the vase.

Your family may decide to mark the time in a different way. Here are some other ideas:

- Make a 40-loop paper chain and take one loop off each day
- Make a vine with no leaves on a piece of paper and add a leaf each day with a butterfly at the end to signify Easter
- Put a calendar on the wall and mark off each day

Whatever you do, try to have this ready on Ash Wednesday so you are prepared to usher your children through the season.

HOW to USE this GUIDE

As a discipline during Lent, consider setting aside a specific time each day to read Scripture, wonder and pray together. It will be a discipline, and like any discipline, it may not be easy.

Each week begins with an "I am" statement from Jesus ("I am the way…"; "I am the bread of life…"), which is the theme for the week, followed by the daily liturgy. The liturgy each week is nearly the same and includes a hymn and scripture. The scripture and Seek & Wonder activities will help you to engage more deeply with that week's theme. Sundays are celebrated as a feast day with a recipe.

Start with the daily liturgy each day, this can be found at the back of the book. Feel free to cut this out and make a copy for everyone in your family. We use it as a bookmark to keep our place from week to week. After reading the daily liturgy there is a bible passage for each day along with questions for both children and parents.

> Questions for Children: Lead your kids through an exercise of imagining the scene, making the Scripture come alive through 'I wonder' questions. As written in Following Jesus by Sonya M. Stewart: "Wondering together is a way of remaining open to the Holy Spirit, a way of meditating so the story becomes a part of the group's life. Wondering shapes and deepens our knowledge of God and what God desires of us. This knowing grows out of the children's experience of God, not from their being told what to believe about God."
>
> Questions for Parents: Try to imagine the scene also. Ask yourself 'wonder' questions. When we use our imagination and try to digest the words on the page, the passage clarifies in our mind and sinks down into our heart. If you have time, read a bit more of the passage to yourself. For each day, there are some prompting questions to help you do this. This is similar to Ignatian Meditation (If interested, read more here: https://www.soulshepherding.org/ignatian-meditation-guides/)

SEEK & WONDER

Aside from the Daily Liturgy and Readings, there are the weekly suggestions: Each week the Seek & Wonder section will provide activity ideas, art, poetry, music, or an outing for your family. The purpose of these suggestions is to help connect the idea of who Jesus says he is with real spaces and places. Fasting and feasting suggestions are also included each week. At the beginning of the week try to make a plan for which day your family will get out or create.

Fasting/Giving: *"Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water."* Exodus 34:28. Remember, 40 days is a long time, so fasting week-by-week is a little easier for children. Each week there are suggestions for fasting and giving. If this idea doesn't connect with your family, think of something else for your family give up.

Seeking Art: *"In the beginning God created…"* Genesis 1:1. Each week there are suggestions for either looking at art, listening to music, or reading (or even possibly memorizing and reciting) a poem. The art chosen is loosely connected to the theme for each week. The hope is that engaging with art adds a layer to the Scripture of the week, so not only are you and your children reading Scripture together, but you are looking for the same themes within the art. You can listen to music and talk about what you hear that makes you think of Jesus. You can read poetry and the words may give you more clues to what Jesus says in the Bible. This multi-sensory approach has the potential to deepen our understanding and appreciation for the Scripture.

Feasting: *"Taste and see that the Lord is good…"* Psalm 34:8. Sunday is a feast day, even during Lent. As a way to mark Sunday as separate from other days, prepare and enjoy the recipes included for each week. Cooking and baking with children can be both fun and difficult, so use this as a special time to be with your family in a thoughtful way around food. (As a side note for the bread recipe, you may want to prepare the dough on Saturday night so that it can rise overnight and be ready for little hands on Sunday.)

Please note that if you find yourself unable to read the passage or get through the questions every day, that is fine. Monday and Tuesday will carry the strongest connection to the theme, so if you happen to miss Tuesday – Thursday, for example, just go back to Tuesday and read that passage. While I do think the rigor is good for the season of Lent, there is also a reality to family devotionals: sometimes they don't happen when or how we want. Receive grace when you need a break. Even if you do not get to the liturgy and Scripture every day, work on being mindful of the theme during the week. And where possible, invite your children to consider the theme in light of the suggested arts. For when children see art, hear poetry, and listen to music, their senses are engaged, and the themes are enlivened.

It is my hope that these materials will guide your family as you seek and wonder through Lent.

WEEK 1: I AM THE WAY

Jesus says I am the way, the truth, and the life. Just as the disciples we are called to follow Jesus. This week, explore with your children what it means to follow Jesus. Wonder together how Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

A S H W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: John 14:1-7

Questions for Children: I wonder what kind of place Jesus is going to prepare? I wonder if His disciples know where He is going? I wonder, how do we come close to God the Father? I wonder who are we following?

Parents: As you follow Jesus through Lent, remind yourself of who He is by meditating on His words; who does Jesus say He is? How do His claims comfort you? How do they challenge you? What do you want to say to God about this?

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Exodus 3:13-15

Questions for Children: I wonder why Moses wanted to know God's name? I wonder why God says His name is " I am who I am?" I wonder how you would describe God? I wonder how Moses felt when he knew the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was the God who was speaking to him?

Parents: Naming has importance in the Bible; in naming, one's character is revealed. Who does God say He is and what does that reveal about His character? Who is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? What is it like for Moses to be in the presence of God?

F R I D A Y

Reading: Matthew 4:18-20

Questions for Children: I wonder why Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee? I wonder what it was like to be a fisherman? I wonder why Simon and Andrew followed Jesus? I wonder if Simon and Andrew had to give up anything to follow Jesus? I wonder what following Jesus is like? I wonder how you can follow Jesus?

Parents: Imagine yourself in the boat and Jesus approaches you, what will your response be? What can I let go of or leave in my life to more closely follow Jesus? How do I feel about what I may need to give up to follow Jesus? Can I talk to God about this?

S A T U R D A Y

Reading: Matthew 16:13-20

Questions for Children: I wonder why some people were confused about who Jesus was? I wonder how Simon Peter knew Jesus was the Christ? I wonder why Jesus called Peter a rock? I wonder if Peter was a rock?

Parents: Who do you say Jesus is? How does Jesus' claim to be Christ comfort you? Does it leave you unsettled? Bring your thoughts to God in prayer today.

WEEK 1: I AM THE WAY

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Attend Ash Wednesday service with your kids. Rez will be holding an Ash Wednesday service for children at noon at the Rez house. One of the priests normally makes ashes during the service and there is a brief liturgy for children, this is a great way to experience Ash Wednesday with children.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

This week, give up driving 1 or 2 days of the week. As you walk use that time to notice the world around you, what do your children stop to look at? What do you focus on as you walk? What is new or changed in your neighborhood?

SEEKING ART

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

This poem is another way to hear and experience Matthew 4. Read and reread the poem, use different voices, emphasize different parts each time.

Does it sound like the same poem every time you read it? What things do you wonder about?

Ask your children what they hear, what they imagine, or what pictures come to their mind. After you have read it a few times wonder together with your children:

I wonder who is talking in this poem?
I wonder what it means to loose the fish?
I wonder who is fed with the fish?

The Calling Of The Disciples
by: Lucille Clifton

some Jesus
has come on me

i throw down my nets
into the water he walks

i loose the fish
he feeds to cities

and everyone calls me
an old name

as i follow out
laughing like God's fool
behind this Jesus

SEEKING ART contd.

Music

Our Father, Sarah Wilcox

Before listening to Our Father, remind your children that Jesus says He is the Way, Truth, and Life. What is Jesus leading us to? Our Father in heaven. Encourage your children to rest on the floor, or move their bodies if they like. As you listen with your children pray for them that the words of this song and images that come to mind as they listen will be planted in their heart.

Other songs to enjoy this week:
Kingdom Comes, Sara Groves
In the Garden (old hymn)

WEEK 1: SUNDAY FEAST DAY

FEASTING– ROCKY ROAD BROWNIES

Recipe: Rocky Road Brownies by "Joy the Baker" adapted from Toll House makes 12 to 16 brownies

Ingredients

1 2/3 cup granulated sugar
3/4 cup cocoa powder
3/4 cup butter
2 Tablespoons strong coffee or water
2 large eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup chopped walnuts
2 cups miniature marshmallows
1/4 cup milk chocolate chips (optional)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 9 or 10-inch square baking pan. Set aside.

Combine butter and cocoa powder in a small bowl, and place over a pot of simmering water. Make sure that the simmering water down not touch the bottom of the bowl. Add the coffee or water and stir to melt the ingredients.

In a medium sized bowl whisk together the eggs and the sugar. Add the vanilla extract. When the butter and chocolate have melted and come together, slowly stir the chocolate mixture into the sugar mixture.

Add the flour, baking powder and salt. Stir to combine. Fold in the nuts.
Pour the batter in the pan, sprinkle with chocolate chips or chocolate chunks. Bake for 18-25 minutes. Remove from the oven and set the oven to broiler. Sprinkle the top of the hot brownies with miniature marshmallows. Once the broiler is heated, place the brownies on an upper shelf close to the broiler heat. Stand there. Don't move. The marshmallows will brown within 1 to 2 minutes. I mean quick. Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature before cutting.

Use hot running water to clean the knife blade after each slice into the cooled brownie. This should help the marshmallow not stick to the knife blade.

WEEK 2: I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

Jesus says I am the bread of life. Jesus meets our most basic needs; He fills us and we are satisfied. Wonder with your children about God's provision during the second week of Lent.

***Reminder**: Start your bread dough on Saturday night, see recipe on Sunday feast day*

M O N D A Y

Reading: Exodus 16: 4,13-18

Questions for Children: I wonder what the ground looked like every morning? I wonder how the people of God felt every morning as they gathered their daily bread? I wonder what the bread tasted like?

Parents: If you have time read all of Exodus 16. Imagine the scene. Imagine the chore of breakfast prep- just walking out of your tent and picking up bread from the ground. Today, look for ways that God provides you daily sustenance in the mundane moments of life.

T U E S D A Y

Reading: John 6: 26-36

Questions for Children: I wonder if you've ever felt hungry before? What does hunger feel like? When the people of God were wandering in the wilderness, God provided them bread (or manna) to sustain them. But Jesus says this is not the true bread from heaven. I wonder what the true bread of heaven is? I wonder what it means for Jesus to be the bread of life?

Parents: Imagine this scene, let your mind wonder-what is Jesus' posture while speaking to his disciples? How are the disciples hearing this? What does it look like for you to be in this scene?

W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: Matthew 14:13-21

Questions for Children: I wonder how the disciples felt when Jesus asked them to give the crowd something to eat, and they only had five loaves and two fish? I wonder how they felt when Jesus multiplied the bread and fish? I wonder what the fish and bread tasted like?

Parents: Imagine being in this story with your children and all their needs and having this man Jesus, meet all your needs. What concerns do you need to bring to God today, for yourself or for you family? Talk to Jesus about them.

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Matthew 7: 7-12

Questions for Children: I wonder how you feel when you get something you ask for? I wonder what the knocking on this door sounds like? Is there anything you'd like to ask God the Father for today?

Parents: How does this passage connect with you as a parent? What do you seek? What are you asking God for today? Is there a part of your heart that doubts God's willingness to give you good gifts as His child? Can you talk to God about that today?

F R I D A Y

Reading: Matthew 13:33

Questions for Children: I wonder if this person has a name? I wonder what leaven does to bread? I wonder how the kingdom of God is like leaven?

Parents: When you bake bread this week, think about the yeast growing the dough. Where do you see the kingdom of God expanding in your life?

S A T U R D A Y

Reading: Luke 22:14-20

Questions for Children: I wonder what this reminds you of? I wonder what that bread tasted like? I wonder why Jesus says that the bread is His body?

Parents: Read all of chapter 22 if you have time, imagine yourself reclining at the table. How do you react to what Jesus is saying?

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Memorize the Lord's Prayer with your children.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

This week, give up baked goods. At the end of the week you will make bread together and break the fast.

SEEKING ART

Painting & Sculpture

Enjoy some time at the Smithsonian American Art Museum to see The Gift by Ruth Ellen Weisberg (On the second floor, opposite the Moran Landscapes), and a sculpture on the first floor, Untitled (Woman and Child) by Selma Burke. Encourage your children to stop and see these pieces of art – to slow down and take them in. After they let their eyes explore the painting, ask:

- What do you see in this frame?
- What does this painting/sculpture make you feel?
- What do you think is happening?
- What would you call this painting/sculpture?

After some questions about the painting, remind your child when Jesus says He is the bread of life, He is meeting our most basic needs. These pieces of art are representations of meeting needs. Again ask:

- What strikes you about the art?

SEEKING ART contd.

- What do you think is being given in these pieces?
- What are your needs as children?
- How do you see Jesus in these pieces?

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

The Acolyte, while also being a poem about bread, is a description of the process and place of making bread. The idea of baking into bread more than it is, transforming bread beyond itself is like what Jesus was doing when he said I am the bread of life. Jesus takes an everyday food item and makes it more than that- he bakes meaning into the bread. After reading this poem with your children wonder with them about transformation.

The Acolyte
by: Denise Levertov

The large kitchen is almost dark.
Across the plain of even, diffused light,
copper pans on the wall and the win-
dow geranium
tend separate campfires.
Herbs dangle their Spanish moss from
rafters.

At the table, floury hands
kneading dough, feet planted
steady on flagstones,
a woman ponders the loaves-to-be.
Yeast and flour, water and salt,
have met in the huge bowl.

It's not
the baked and cooled and cut
bread she's thinking of,
but the way
the dough rises and has a life of its own,
not the oven she's thinking of
but the way
the sour smell changes
to fragrance.

She wants to put
a silver rose or a bell of diamonds
into each loaf;
she wants

to bake a curse into one loaf;
into another, the words that break
evil spells and release
transformed heroes into their selves;
she wants to make
bread that is more than bread.

SEEKING ART contd.

Music

Glory Bound, Wailin' Jenny's

Before you listen to Glory Bound, remind your children that Jesus says he is the bread of life. Just as bread fills us up, music can fill us too. As you listen to Glory Bound pay attention to how the music builds into a fuller sound, more instruments, and more voices, more fullness. Listen to this music and rest in the fullness. As you listen, maybe you and your children will remember some of the scripture you read this week, maybe they will want to dance, maybe they will just enjoy the music and sit with you. While you listen to the music ask God to stir up your imagination and your children's imaginations. After you listen to Glory Bound, wonder together with your children:
- I wonder what words you heard in this song?
- I wonder what pictures you thought of when you heard this song?
- I wonder if you feel the fullness in this music?
- I wonder what it is like to feel full of music like when we are full of bread?

As a meditation tool this week, sit or lay in silence and listen to Daily Bread by Sarah Wilcox. This type of meditation is called soaking prayer.
Daily Bread, Sarah Wilcox

Other music for this week:
Do Not Worry, Rain for Roots
I Shall Not Want, Audrey Assad

NO-KNEAD BREAD

Recipe: Jim Lahey's No-Knead Bread
Yields one 1 1/2 pound loaf

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour, more for dusting
¼ teaspoon instant yeast
1¼ teaspoons salt
Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed.

Instructions

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt. Add 1 5/8 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.

2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

WEEK 3: I AM THE GATE

Jesus says I am the gate. In Genesis, God closes the gate to the Garden of Eden and in Revelation the gates never close. We live in between those times, and in that space our gate is Jesus.

M O N D A Y

Reading: John 10:1-10

Questions for Children: I wonder what the gate is for in the sheepfold? I wonder what the door looks like? I wonder if the sheep feel safe walking through the gate?

Parents: Imagine being in the sheepfold of the Lord this week. What does His voice sound like to you? Where is He calling you?

T U E S D A Y

Reading: Genesis 3:21-24

Questions for Children: I wonder how Adam and Eve felt when God closed the gate to the Garden of Eden? I wonder what that gate looked like? I wonder if it slammed shut?

Parents: Imagine that scene, God ushering Adam and Eve out of the Garden. What do you think the emotions were like in that moment? God closed the gate on Eden, but that was not the end of the story. What is your story with God?

W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: Revelation 21: 10-14, 25

Questions for Children: I wonder what this passage is describing? I wonder why there is no night? I wonder what the gates look like? I wonder why the gates never shut?

Parents: If you have time, read 10-25, imagine the New Jerusalem, imagine the gates wide open, and imagine the beauty here on earth. What do you feel?

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Nehemiah 13:19-22

Questions for Children: The wall around Jerusalem was recently rebuilt, the gates could now be opened and closed. I wonder what it was like to build the wall and gates of Jerusalem? I wonder how they learned to build something so large? I wonder why the gates needed to be closed on the sabbath? I wonder what other times the gates would be closed?

Parents: Nehemiah was restoring the law, by closing the gates he was helping the Isrealites keep the Sabbath. What gates need to be closed in your life, what gates need to be opened in your life to restore your place of rest with Jesus?

F R I D A Y

Reading: Matthew 7:13-21

Questions for Children: I wonder what these gates look like? I wonder where the gates lead? I wonder why the gate is narrow?

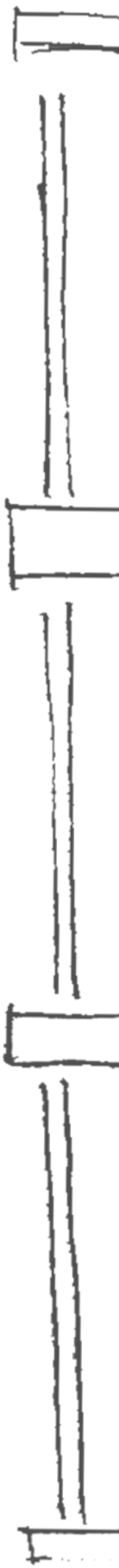
Parents: How are Jesus' words challenging you? In what ways in your life do you see the wide gate and in what ways do you see the narrow gate? What is leading you to life? Can you bring these reflections to God and ask Him to help you pursue His kingdom?

S A T U R D A Y

Reading: Psalm 118:19-21

Questions for Children: This is describing a royal procession. I wonder who is walking through these gates? I wonder if this is a parade? I wonder where the gates lead?

Parents: Imagine the procession through these gates. Imagine all of God's people walking through the gates of righteousness. Spend some time today thanking Jesus that He is our gate to righteousness and our salvation. Rest in this assurance.



WEEK 3: I AM THE GATE

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Visit one of the large worship spaces in your community like the National Cathedral or the Basilica, both are beautiful open spaces to wander with children. As you walk through the space, talk about which doors and gates are open and which aren't. Wonder together about why. Experience the thresholds; entering a space is sometimes more than just taking a step from one stone to the next.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Fast from television and electronic games. Use the extra time to read The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Break the television fast by watching The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe on Sunday afternoon.

SEEKING ART

Music

Wood and Nails, The Porter's Gate

Before you listen to the music, remind your children that Jesus says he is the gate, maybe they will remember some of the scripture you read this week, maybe they dance, maybe they will just enjoy the quiet moment to sit with you and listen to music. While you listen to the music ask God to stir up your imagination and your children's imaginations. After you listen to Wood and Nails, wonder together with your children:

SEEKING ART contd.

-I wonder what words you heard in this song?
-I wonder what pictures you thought of when you heard this song?
-I wonder what things Jesus built when he was a carpenter?
-I wonder if gates and doors are made out of wood? Did Jesus ever build a gate?

Other music for the week:
Abiding City, Sandra McCracken

Literature

Read aloud this passage from The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, by C.S. Lewis. **(If you have young children there is also a picture book abridged edition by the same name with illustrations by Tudor Humphries)**

This is the first time Lucy finds the entrance to Narnia. The doorway takes Lucy from one world to another world. The author of this book, C.S. Lewis, knew that Jesus says he is the gate, and he was intentional in using that metaphor in this book as a literal passage. Wonder with your children how deep this door is, where does the door start and stop? If you read the whole book, wonder with your children why Lucy could find the door one time but not everyone found it the first time they looked. Maybe spend some time drawing the door, imagining what it looks like and how many steps Lucy has to take from the door of the wardrobe till she entered Narnia.

"Lucy stayed behind because she thought it would be worth while trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked. To her surprise it opened quite easily, and two moth-balls dropped out.

"Looking into the inside, she saw several coats hanging up – mostly long fur coats. There was nothing Lucy liked so much as the smell and fell of fur. She immediately stepped into the wardrobe and got in among the coats and rubbed her face against them, leaving the door open, of course, because she knew that it is very foolish to shut oneself into any wardrobe. Soon she went further in and found that there was a second row of coats hanging up behind the first one. It was almost quite dark in there and she kept her arms stretched out in front of her so as not to bump her face into the back of the wardrobe. She took a step further in – then two or three steps – always expecting to feel woodwork against the tops of her fingers. But she could not feel it.

"'This must be a simply enormous wardrobe!" thought Lucy, going still further in and pushing the soft folds of the coats aside to make room for her. Then she noticed that there was something crunching under her feet. 'I wonder is that more moth-balls?' she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hands. But instead of feeling the hard, smooth wood of the floor of the wardrobe, she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold. 'This is very queer,' she said, and went on a step or two further.

"Next moment she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly. 'Why, it is just like branches of trees!' Exclaimed Lucy. And then she saw that there was a light ahead of her; not a few inches away where the back of the wardrobe ought to have been, but a long way off. Something cold and soft was falling on her. A moment later she found that she was standing in the middle of a wood at night-time with snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air.

"Lucy felt a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well. She looked back over her shoulder and there, between the dark tree-trunks, she could still see the open door-way of the wardrobe and even catch a glimpse of the empty room from which she had set out. (She had, of course, left the door open, for she knew that it is a very silly thing to shut oneself into a wardrobe.)"

SPICY CARAMEL POPCORN

Recipe: Spicy Caramel Popcorn by Smitten Kitchen
Adapted from The Craft of Baking
Makes 4 quarts

This is a salty, spicy grown-up caramel popcorn — the taste will surprise you if you are expecting traditional caramel popcorn, and may delight you if you were never into the original.

That said, you might want to dial back both the spice and the salt a little, which is why I include the amounts in a range below. For example, DeMasco suggests using 1 1/2 tablespoons of Kosher salt, I used coarse sea salt instead, which is actually a little less salty, and still found the end result to be quite salty. It is harder to advise you on cayenne levels, as the amount you want to use will hinge on two factors: how much heat your jar of cayenne packs and how much heat you like in your food.

The last time you used the suggested amount in a recipe, did it blow the roof of your mouth off, despite the fact that you actually like food with a kick? Mine has, many times, so I measured conservatively.

Want to make a traditional caramel popcorn with no spice or nuts? Just skip the cayenne and peanuts and use only a pinch of salt.

Ingredients
Nonstick cooking spray or vegetable oil
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/2 cup popcorn kernels
2 cups salted peanuts (optional)
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/4 to 3/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (see Note)
3 cups sugar
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher or coarse sea salt (see Note)

Instructions
Lightly coat two large, heatproof rubber spatulas, a very large mixing bowl and two large baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray or a thin slick of oil.

In a large saucepan or pot with a lid, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the popcorn kernels, cover and keep the saucepan moving until all of the kernels have popped, about 5 minutes. Transfer to the prepared bowl, removing any unpopped kernels. Toss with salted peanuts, if using.

In a small bowl, whisk together the baking soda and cayenne pepper.
Have the two large baking sheets ready. In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, butter, salt and 1/2 cup water. Cook over high heat, without stirring, until the mixture becomes a light golden-yellow caramel, 10 to 14 minutes. Remove from the heat and carefully whisk in the baking-soda mixture (the mixture will bubble up).

Immediately pour the caramel mixture over the popcorn and don't fuss if it doesn't all come out of the pot — you'll have plenty. Working quickly and carefully, use the prepared spatulas to toss the caramel and popcorn together, as if you were tossing a salad, until the popcorn is well coated.

Spread the popcorn onto the baking sheets and quickly separate them into small pieces while still warm. Cool to room temperature, about 15 minutes. Once cool, store in an airtight container for up to two weeks or two minutes, if you've got a family like mine.

WEEK 4: I AM THE LIGHT

Jesus says I am the Light of the World. Wonder this week with your children about the light and the dark. Be sensitive to your child's wondering, what lights illuminate their world?

M O N D A Y

Reading: John 8:12-14

Questions for Children: I wonder what the light of life is? I wonder who the Light of the world is? I wonder how we can follow Jesus and walk in His light?

Parents: Think about darkness and light. Where is the darkness around you now? Where is the light? Jesus beckons you to follow Him and walk in the light, how might you walk in His light this week?

T U E S D A Y

Reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Questions for Children: I wonder what was before light and darkness? I wonder what God's voice sounded like?

Parents: How is Jesus the Light of the world, even in creation? God spoke light into the creation, what light is He speaking into your life?

W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: John 9:1-7

Questions for Children: I wonder if the blind man's eyes hurt once he could see? I wonder when night will come? I wonder why Jesus says he is the Light of the world? I wonder who will be the Light of the world when Jesus goes back to the Father?

Parents: The blind man went from total darkness to light. How do you think he felt? Imagine that change as you meditate on Jesus' words—I am the Light.

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Revelation 22:1-5

Questions for Children: I wonder where this place is? I wonder if we will sleep? I wonder what the light will look like?

Parents: Just imagine the beauty, read the words slowly and try to inhabit this space. How does the light hit you? What feelings and longings does this image awaken in you?

F R I D A Y

Reading: John 1:1-10

Questions for Children: I wonder if you remember when we read about the beginning of the world? I wonder if this is the same light we read about in Genesis? I wonder why some people do not recognize this light?

Parents: Meditate on this scripture. Think about the mystery of creation, and how it connects to the mystery of Jesus. Ask Jesus to give you a heart that receives Him this week.

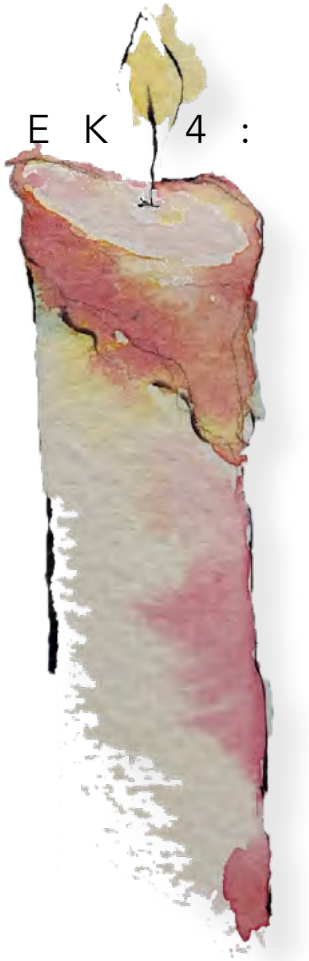
S A T U R D A Y

Reading: John 12:35-36

Questions for Children: I wonder have you ever had to walk in the dark? What is it like? How did you feel? I wonder how much light we need to see?

Parents: Where are you walking? Are you walking with the light?

WEEK 4: I AM THE LIGHT



ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Dine by candlelight for one meal this week, talk about the light. What happens in the room when the lights are out? How does it make you feel? What things do you see differently?

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Fast from the light; experience darkness this week. Keep lights off in your home till 5:30pm and turn lights off by 7:30 pm. (window of lights on 5:30-7:30, for dinner and dinner clean up) Use the time after 7:30 for quiet conversations with children, spouse, and God.

SEEKING ART

Painting

Enjoy some time at the National Gallery of Art to see and reflect on the painting, The Repentant Magdalene by Georges De La Tour (in Gallery 37). The 'light' in this piece of art is obvious and spectacular. Engage your children on this piece of art. After they let their eyes explore the painting ask some questions:

SEEKING ART contd.

- What do you see in this frame?
- How does this painting make you feel?
- What do you think is happening?
- What would you call this painting?

Remind your children that Jesus says He is the light of the world, in what way does this painting teach us about Jesus?
Be sensitive to your child's attention span, if you are ready for more art, compare this painting with the others in the room. The next gallery (36) has a painting (Landscape with Merchants by Claude Lorrain,) where the light is painted differently. Talk about the differences.
While you are at the NGA be sure to experience Multiverse, the lighted walkway between the East and West Buildings, created by American artist Leo Villareal.

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

This poem about the light and how it drops, shifts, and changes through these words is a great way for you and your children to think about light and how it affects the things around it. Read and reread the poem slowly and quickly, putting emphasis on different parts, or with different voices. Then wonder together with your children:
Where is the light coming from?
What colors are the light?
Where does the light go?
What pictures come to mind when we read this poem?
Could this light be Jesus?

Ode to Enchanted Light
by: Pablo Neruda

Under the trees light
has dropped from the top of the sky,
light
like a green
latticework of branches,
shining
on every leaf,
drifting down like clean
white sand.

A cicada sends
its sawing song
high into the empty air.
The world is
a glass overflowing
with water.

SEEKING ART contd.

Music

The Lark Ascending, Ralph Vaughan Williams

With your children listen to The Lark Ascending, remind your children that Jesus says he is the light and encourage them to listen for the light. At the end of the song, wonder with your children about where they heard the light.
I wonder what instruments make you think of the light?
I wonder what parts of the song feel the lightest to you?
I wonder what stories from the bible you think of when you listen to this song?
I wonder what pictures come to mind when you hear this music?

Other music that might illuminate your week:
Appalachian Spring (Ballet for Martha): Coda
Liz On Top Of The World, Jean-Yves Thibaudet
To The Dawn, Sara Groves
Lead Kindly Light, Audrey Assad
Thou Art My Life, Indelible Grace

WEEK 4: SUNDAY FEAST DAY

ROASTED CHICKEN

with JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE & LEMON

Recipe: Roasted chicken with Jerusalem artichoke & lemon
Jerusalem a Cookbook, pg. 180
Serves 4

Ingredients
1 lb Jerusalem artichokes, peeled and cut lengthwise into 6 wedges
3 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
8 skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs
12 banana shallots (or other large shallot) halved lengthwise and then very thinly sliced
1 medium lemon, halved lengthwise and then very thinly sliced
1 tsp. saffron threads
3 ½ tbsp olive oil
2/3 cup cold water
1 ½ tbsp pink peppercorns, lightly crushed
¼ cup fresh thyme leaves
1 cup tarragon leaves, chopped
2 tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Instructions:
Put the Jerusalem artichokes in a medium saucepan, cover with plenty of water, and add half the lemon juice. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer for 10 to 20 minutes, until tender but not soft. Drain and leave to cool.

Place the Jerusalem artichokes and all the remaining ingredients, excluding the remaining lemon juice and half of the tarragon, in a large mixing bowl and use your hands to mix everything together well. Cover and leave to marinate in the fridge overnight, or for at least 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 475°F. Arrange the chicken pieces, skin side up, in the center of a roasting pan and spread the remaining ingredients around the chicken. Roast for 30 minutes. Cover the pan with aluminum foil and cook for a further 15 minutes. At this point, the chicken should be completely cooked. Remove from the oven and add the reserved tarragon and lemon juice. Stir well, taste and add more salt if needed. Serve at once.

WEEK 5: I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus says I am the Good Shepherd. Spend the week wondering together about what it means to be the sheep in the pastures of our Good Shepherd.

M O N D A Y

Reading: John 10:11-18

Questions for Children: I wonder if the Good Shepherd's sheep have names? I wonder how the shepherd feels about His sheep? I wonder how the sheep feel about the Good Shepherd? I wonder what the Good Shepherd's voice sounds like?

Parents: Imagine hearing these words from Jesus. Imagine His posture. When do you hear the Shepherd's voice? Take a few moments today to sit in silence and listen to His voice.

T U E S D A Y

Reading: Psalm 23

Questions for Children: I wonder where this place is? I wonder if you have ever had cool clear waters touch you? I wonder if you have ever been in a place that feels like a dark valley. The Good Shepherd promises to be with us all the time, in peaceful times and in sad or scary times. When have you felt the Good Shepherd's presence near?

Parents: Do you let Him lead you to resting places?

W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: Luke 15:1-7

Questions for Children: I wonder if you have ever been lost? How did you feel? I wonder how it felt when you were found? I wonder what it feels like to find something that's been lost?

Parents: Imagine this scene, put yourself there, where do you find yourself? With the pharisees and the scribes or the tax collectors? What things do you need to repent of? When does Jesus rejoice with you?

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-16

Questions for Children: I wonder where this mountain is? I wonder how many sheep will be there? I wonder where all these sheep came from?

Parents: Read verse 14 over and over, imagine that place. Where is that resting place for you? Meet Jesus there this morning.

F R I D A Y

Reading: Psalm 78:70-72

Questions for Children: I wonder how a shepherd is like a king? I wonder what you remember from what we have read this week? I wonder what this makes you think of Jesus?

Parents: Who is your king? Who is your shepherd? Are they the same person? As you think of Jesus as both king and shepherd, what thoughts or emotions arise? Can you bring those to Him in prayer?

S A T U R D A Y

Reading: 1 Samuel 17:34-37

Questions for Children: I wonder what it felt like to be a good shepherd? I wonder what it feels like to be a sheep with a good shepherd?

Parents: Imagine how God is fighting for you. Imagine how he protects you. Give thanks to Him for the ways you see His provision today.

WEEK 5: I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Memorize Psalm 23
Take a nature walk. In DC, Rock Creek Park and the National Arboretum are great places to walk with your kids. As you walk enjoy the quiet but also remind your kids about the sheep and the Good Shepherd.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Don't buy anything you don't need this week. Find good toys you no longer use to give to an organization that serves children.

SEEKING ART

Painting

Enjoy some time at the National Gallery of Art to see and reflect on the series of paintings by Jean Honoré Fragonard in Gallery 55. These images evoke the green pastures of Psalm 23, and remind me that God delights in our play, brings us to beautiful places, and wants us to dwell with him. Questions for your children:

SEEKING ART contd.

- What do you see happening in these paintings?
- What would you like to do if you were in these paintings?
- What do you feel when you see these paintings?

Remind them that Jesus says he is the Good Shepherd and He brings us to places like this.
Contrast those paintings with the landscapes found in Gallery 49. These dark paintings might remind us of the valley of the shadow of death and God says He is there with us too.
How/Where do you imagine Jesus to be with us in these paintings?

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

This poem speaks to the practical nature of taking care of sheep. The beautiful words and images that come to mind add a layer of understanding to Jesus calling himself the good shepherd. Wonder together with your children about taking care of sheep. Wonder about making beautiful poems out of the practical chores we do each day. Take a cue from Wendell Berry's poem and reflect in prayer and gratitude the beauty of an ordinary act.

Sabbath XI
by: Wendell Berry

Though he was ill and in pain,
in disobedience to the instruction he
would have received if he had asked,
the old man got up from his bed,
dressed, and went to the barn.
The bare branches of winter had emerged
through the last leaf-colors of fall,
the loveliest of all, browns and yellows
delicate and nameless in the gray light
and the sifting rain. He put feed
in the troughs for eighteen ewe lambs,
sent the dog for them, and she
brought them. They came eager
to their feed, and he who felt
their hunger was by their feeding
eased.

From no place in the time
of present places, within no boundary
nameable in human thought,
they had gathered once again,
the shepherd, his sheep, and his dog
with all the known and the unknown
round about to the heavens' limit.
Was this his stubbornness or bravado?
No. Only an ordinary act
of profoundest intimacy in a day
that might have been better. Still
the world persisted in its beauty,
he in his gratitude, and for this
he had most earnestly prayed.

SEEKING ART contd.

Music

House of God Forever, Jon Foreman

Listen to music together, dance or lay down on the ground, ask your children what they hear and feel, or just enjoy. Remind your children that Jesus says He is the good shepherd. This is a lovely meditation on Psalm 23, and listening to this song might help them memorize those verses. Wonder with your children:

- What does this song remind you of?
- What images do you think of when you hear this song?
- What instruments do you hear? What voices do you hear?

Other music to enjoy this week:
Lead us, Sarah Wilcox
Lead On Oh King Eternal, Sara Groves
With Great Gentleness, Sandra McCracken
Pifa Pastoral Symphony, Handel's Messiah

OATMEAL CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Recipe: Mom's One-Bowl Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies
by: "Half Baked Harvest" Tieghan Gerard

Ingredients
2 1/2 cups old fashioned oats
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup canola oil use a little more if dough seems is too dry
2 large eggs
4 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips or chocolate chunks + more if desired

Instructions
Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with a silpat or parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl or bowl of a stand mixer add the oatmeal, flour, sugar, brown sugar, baking soda, salt, canola oil, eggs and vanilla, beat until the dough is moist and all the ingredients are combined. The dough will be crumbly. Mix in the chocolate chips.

Using your hands clump together a tablespoon of dough. Use your hands to really squeeze the dough into a ball. If the mixture is not holding add 1 tablespoon more of oil. Place on prepared baking sheet. If your balls are a little crumbly do not worry, they will come together while baking. Repeat with remaining dough.

Bake for 10 -12 minutes or until set and golden. (Don't over bake)

Enjoy a few together on this feast day, then save the rest to give away next week.

WEEK 6: I AM THE VINE

Jesus says I am the Vine and you are the branches.
In order for us to live fully we must be fully connected to Him.

M O N D A Y

Reading: John 15:1-8

Questions for Children: Have you ever seen a plant or fruit growing on a vine before? Have you noticed the different parts, the fruit, the branch, the vine? How are they different? I wonder what Jesus means when He says that He is a vine? I wonder what it means for me to be a branch?

Parents: What does a vine look like when it has been pruned? Have you ever felt like that kind of branch? What does that say about God's love? Are there areas of your heart that God is pruning? What fruit do you see in your life?

T U E S D A Y

Reading: Psalm 80:8-11

Questions for Children: Remember that God is the gardener. Here it says that He found a vine and wanted to move it to a new place. What does a gardener have to do to get ready to plant something? I wonder why a gardener would move a plant? I wonder once that vine was planted, would it grow and flourish and bear fruit?

Parents: I wonder how the Israelites felt to be delivered from "known slavery" into "unknown freedom?" Is it hard to see yourself as a transplanted vine? Do your branches reach to the sea? How do you see God tending to you?

W E D N E S D A Y

Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

Questions for Children: I wonder how wild grapes taste different from cultivated grapes? I wonder why the vineyard only produced wild grapes? I wonder how the person who tended the vineyard feels?

Parents: Consider the way in which God was looking for His people to be like "sweet grapes." On our own, our efforts to bear fruit is futile. What areas in your life are you trying to bear fruit apart from Christ? Bring this to God in prayer today, trusting and abiding in Him to work despite your weakness.

T H U R S D A Y

Reading: Matthew 20:1-16

Questions for Children: I wonder how the workers felt when they got paid? I wonder if they could be friends with each other? I wonder what it means for the last to be first, and the first last?

Parents: Which set of workers do you identify with more easily? Why? Ask God to reveal more of His generous nature to you, and as you stay connected to Jesus, ask the Spirit to help you in your generosity with others.

F R I D A Y

Reading: Matthew 21:28-32

Questions for Children: I wonder what it is like for them to work in this vineyard? I wonder why one son said yes and one said no? I wonder why one did the work and one did not? I wonder how the father feels about his sons? I wonder which son you'd like to be in this story?

Parents: Most of us probably identify with both sons, consider how God, our Father, feels about us when we answer Him yes or no. What things have God called you to that you know and believe to be true but that you haven't acted on?

S A T U R D A Y

Reading: Jeremiah 2:21

Questions for Children: I wonder how a vine that has been planted and tended carefully "goes bad" and yields only bad fruit? I wonder if you have planted something that didn't grow even though you took very good care of it? I wonder what happens when seeds just don't grow?

Parents: Consider the slow manner of plant growth. I wonder how this might take place in our lives in small, slow steps rather than in big, dramatic choices? What small steps of growth are in front of you today? Can you offer them to God in prayer?

WEEK 6: I AM THE VINE

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Find a garden to spend time in: US Botanic Garden, Dumbarton Oaks Garden, Tudor House and Garden, Smithsonian Pollinator Garden. Show your children parts of the plants and talk about the things these plants need to survive. Spend a day cleaning your own yard as a way to prepare for the next season of planting. Sometimes we have to prune and pull to make space for new growth.

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Fast from the delicious cookies you just made on Sunday; after everyone has 1 (or 2) cookies, pack up the remainder. Give the cookies to neighbors or friends. Feel free to include a note of love or thanks to your friends, share with them that you are fasting and why, or just give them with a smile.

SEEKING ART

Painting

Enjoy an afternoon at the National Gallery of Art to see and reflect on the paintings in the East Gallery, Tower 1, Mezzanine. The Olive Orchard, Vincent Van Gogh. Mountains at Collioure, André Derain. Woman Sitting in a Garden, Pablo Picasso. Flower Garden, Kneeling Woman with Hat, Emil Nolde.

SEEKING ART contd.

Questions for your children:

- What do you see happening in these paintings?
- How are these paintings similar, and how are they different?
- How do you feel when you see these paintings?

Remind them that Jesus says he is the Vine and God is the gardener.

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

This short poem reflects that when our perspective is about being right, an arguably selfish stance, nothing can grow. What then can grow if we start from a place of love, rooted in Jesus? Wonder together with your children, what do relationships look like when rooted in Jesus? What can grow when rooted in love?

The Place Where We Are Right
by: Yehuda Amichai

From the place where we are right
Flowers will never grow
In the spring.
The place where we are right
Is hard and trampled
Like a yard.
But doubts and loves
Dig up the world
Like a mole, a plow.
And a whisper will be heard in the place
Where the ruined
House once stood.

SEEKING ART contd.

Music
Hymn, Brooke Fraser

Encourage your kids to lay down on the ground with you, hands at your side and palms up, eyes closed, and listen to Hymn by Brooke Fraser. The melody is soothing and the words full of desire to only follow Jesus. Ask God to nourish you and your child's heart, the way a vine would give nourishment to it's branches. Rest in the song, knowing God's desire is for us to remain connected to Him.

Other music to enjoy this week:
Give Reviving, Indelible Grace
You Cannot Lose My Love, Sara Groves

PENNE ALLA VODKA

Recipe: Penne Alla Vodka
Half Baked Harvest Super Simple pg 126

Ingredients

4 table spoons salted butter
2 garlic cloves, minced or grated
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
½ cup vodka
1 20 oz can crushed tomatoes
½ cup sun dried tomatoes packed in olive oil, drained and chopped
Ksoher salt and freshly ground pepper
 cup heavy cream
1 pound box penne
1 cup grated Paremesean cheese plus more for serving
Fresh basil for serving

Instructions

1. In a large saucepan, combine the butter, garlic, and red pepper flakes over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring often, until the butter is melted and the garlic is fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add the vodka and bring to a simmer. Cook until reduced by one-third, 2 to 3 minutes more. Add the crushed tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, and a large pinch each of salt and pepper. Simmer the sauce over medium heat until reduced slighly, 10 t0 15 minutes. Transfer the sauce to a blender or use an immersion blender to puree the sauce until smooth, 1 minute. Stir in the cream until combined.

2. Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of salted water to a biol over high heat. Add the penne and cook according to the package directions, until al dente. Drain and add the pasta and Paremesean to the sauce, tossing to combine.

3. To serve traditionally, divide the pasta among plates or bowls. Garnish with basil and Parmesan.

WEEK 7: I AM THE RESURRECTION

Holy Week is a week of extremes. In Palm Sunday we rejoice and shout "Hosanna", and on Good Friday we hear "Crucify Him!" The story goes from the emotional high to a devastating low. Life to death. But, Jesus says I am the Resurrection. Jesus brings life to the physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually dead.

M O N D A Y

Pray together the collect for Monday of Holy Week (BCP)

Almighty God, Whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the Cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus CHrist our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: John 11: 1-16

Questions for Children: I wonder how the sisters feel as they watch Lazarus die? I wonder what they think when Jesus didn't come right away?
Parents: Imagine being in this story, what feelings arise as you picture yourself in the story? Reread vs. 5 with your own name in it. Receive that love.

T U E S D A Y

Pray together the collect for Tuesday of Holy Week (BCP)

O Lord our God, whose blessed Son gave his back to be whipped and did not hide his face from shame and spitting: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: John 11: 17-26

Questions for Children: I wonder how Martha feels when she sees Jesus? I wonder why Jesus loves Mary, Martha and Lazarus?
Parents: Imagine being in this story, who do you identify with? What posture do you imagine Jesus taking when talking with Martha? Jesus was meeting Martha in her grief, where do you need Jesus to meet you?

W E D N E S D A Y

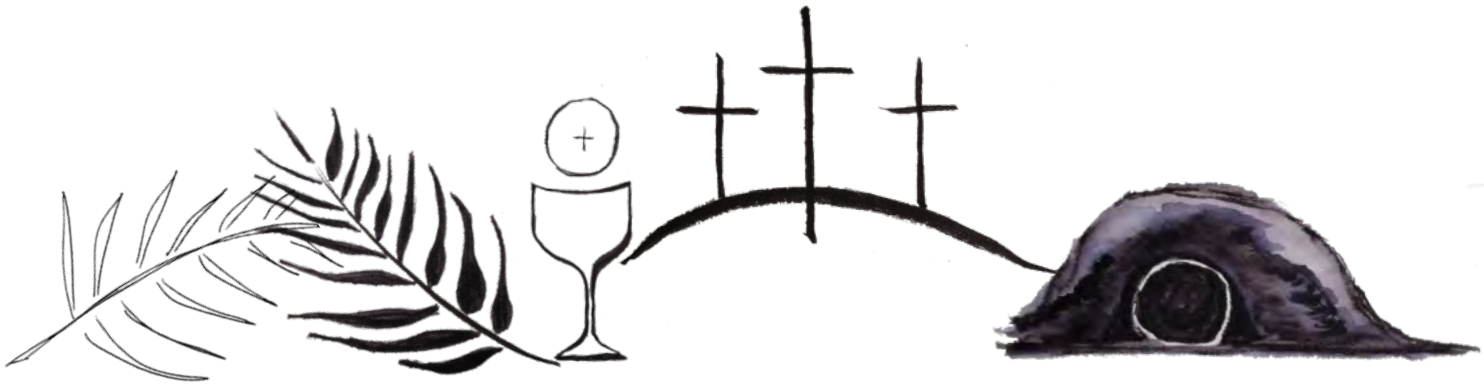
Pray together the collect for Wednesday of Holy Week (BCP)

Assist us mercifully with your grace, Lord God of our salvation that we may enter with joy upon the meditation of those mighty acts by which you have promised us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: John 11: 25-27, 39-46

Questions for Children: I wonder how Martha knows Jesus is the Christ? I wonder how it feels to come to life again? I wonder how all the people that were around felt when they saw Lazurus alive again?
Parents: Remember those words in vs. 5, Jesus loves you, then imagine the roller coaster of this story. Do you see the glory of God? What areas of your life are broken or dead? Where do you long to see a resurrection?

HOLY WEEK



M A U N D Y T H U R S D A Y

Pray together the collect for Maundy Thursday (BCP)

Almighty Father, whose most dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it in thankful remembrance of Jesus Christ our Savior, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: John 13: 5-20

Questions for Children: I wonder how the disciples felt having their teacher wash their feet? I wonder if the water was warm or cold?

Parents: How do you feel seeing Jesus humbly washing his disciples' feet?
Are you like Peter, saying no to this act of service? Are you able to receive help from others when offered? Who are you serving? How do you serve?

G O O D F R I D A Y

Pray together the collect for Good Friday (BCP)

Almighty God, we beseech you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the Cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: John 13: 5-20

Questions for Children: I wonder how Jesus felt in the garden all alone? I wonder if He felt sleepy? I wonder what He means when He tells God "not what I will, but what you will?"
Parents: Imagine the garden, the path Jesus walks from His prayer point to His disciples, the smells and the sounds of the night.

H O L Y S A T U R D A Y

Pray together the collect for Holy Saturday (BCP)

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; through Jesus Christ or Lord. Amen.

Reading: John 19: 38-42

Questions for Children: I wonder why Joseph was afraid? I wonder why he took Jesus's body? I wonder where Jesus's other friends were? I wonder, what other stories do we know that talk about myrrh?
Parents: We know how this story ends, but on this Holy Saturday spend some time in quiet reflection, remember those 3 days of death. Prepare your heart for what is to come.

WEEK 7: I AM THE RESURRECTION

ACITIVITY of the WEEK

Attend the family friendly Stations of the Cross.

Make a Garden Tomb. As mentioned in the introduction, lent is a long season for kids, lent is less like a desert and more like preparing a garden in spring. Here are detailed instructions on how to make one of these https://wearethatfamily.com/2012/03/diy-mini-resurrection-garden/

Easier version for smaller kids/less time:
http://www.catholicinspired.com/2013/03/calvary-hill-paper-plate-craft.html

FASTING & ALMSGIVING

Choose 1 or 2 meals this week to fast from meat. Eat a simple meal of beans and rice. Give a meal to someone else, either through an organization (Sunday Lunch Café, DC Central Kitchen) or by offering a meal to a friend who does not have a home or a kitchen.

SEEKING ART

Painting

Spend some time at the National Gallery of Art looking at Salut Tom by Joan Mitchell, it is on view in the East Building, Upper Level – Gallery 407B. Look at the painting close up and far away then sit and rest as you take in the large painting. Engage your children with questions about what they see.

- What do you think this painting should be called?
- What do you think of when you see this painting?
- When you stand back look at the painting with the sculpture in front of it, (Blue Construction by David Smith), how do these interact?
- What type of movement do you see in the sculpture?

Other works in the East Building that struck me as Resurrection pieces:
Beasts of the Sea by Henri Matisse
Gallery EU-403B
Brownie, Sunny, Dave, and Al by Al Loving
Gallery EU-406C

Poetry

Read the poem together, or encourage one child to memorize and recite for the family.

This poem paints little vignettes of Jesus coming from death to life. What is it like to come back to life? What do you feel when you hear these words, what do you sense about the resurrection that you have never thought of before? What images come to mind when you read or hear this poem?

Descending Theology: The Resurrection

by: Mary Karr

From the far star points of his pinned extremities,
cold inched in - black ice and squid ink -
till the hung flesh was empty.
Lonely in that void even for pain,
he missed his splintered feet,
the human stare buried in his face.
He ached for two hands made of meat
he could reach to the end of.

In the corpse's core, the stone fist
of his heart began to bang
on the stiff chest's door, and breath spilled
back into that battered shape. Now
it's your limbs he comes to fill, as warm water
shatters at birth, rivering every way.

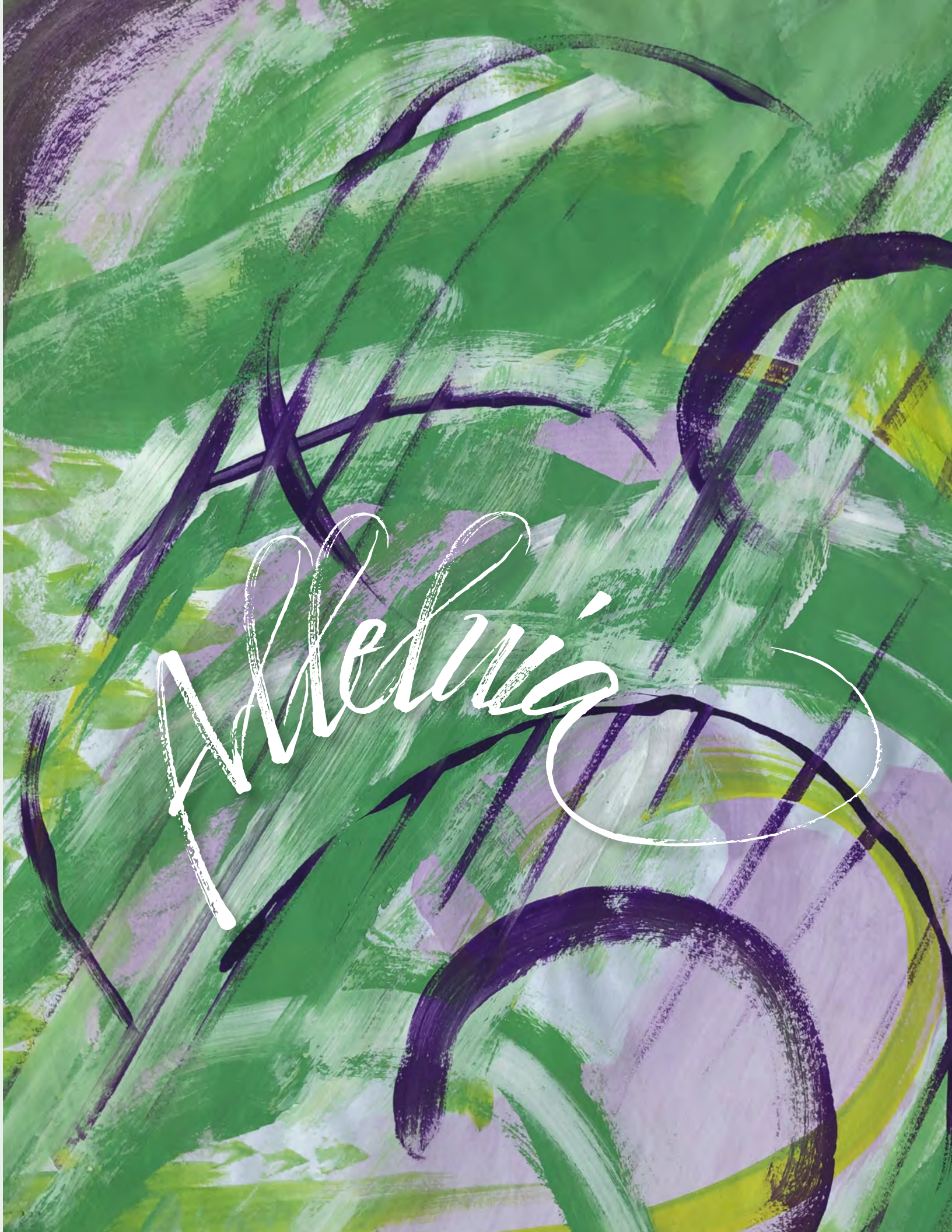
SEEKING ART contd.

Music
Nimrod from Enigma Variations, Edward Elgar

Listen to this piece of music with your children, encourage them to respond to the music with their bodies, take note in how they move and when the song is over reflect back to them what you saw. Wonder with them about the music, Holy Week, and the resurrection.

I wonder how this music makes you feel?
I wonder what the Resurrection sounded like?
I wonder why we listened to this song today?

Other music to enjoy this week:
Death of Death, Wendell Kimbrough
Father Let Your Kingdom Come, The Porter's Gate
We Are Not Overcome, Bifrost Arts


Medio

EASTER LITURGY

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia!
The light of Christ
Thanks be to God

Collect for Easter Day

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may, by your life-giving Spirit, be delivered from sin and raised from death; through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Just as you were intentional about setting aside time during Lent to fast and prepare your families hearts for Easter, consider how you might include feasting during the 50 days of Easter. Perhaps your family says the brief Easter liturgy each morning during breakfast, maybe you listen to an Easter playlist. We have additional activity suggestions below.

EASTERTIDE

Easter
by: Benjamin Alire Saenz

My mother woke us that Sunday – her voice a
bell proclaiming spring. We rose
diving into our clothes, newly bought.
We took turns standing before mirrors,
combing, staring at our new selves.
Sinless from forty days of desert, sinless from
good confessions, we drove to church in a
red pickup, bright and red and waxed for the
special occasion. Clean, polished as apples,
the yellow-dressed girls in front
with Mom and Dad; the boys in back, our
hair blowing free in the warming wind.
Winter gone away. At Mass,
the choir singing loud: ragged
notes from ragged angel's voices;
ancient hymns sung in crooked Latin.
The priest, white robed, raised his palms
toward God, opened his mouth in awe:
"Alleluia!" The unspoken word of Lent
let loose in flight. Alleluia and incense
rising, my mother wiping her tears
from words she'd heard; my brother and I
whispering names of statues lining
the walls of the church. Bells ringing,
Mass ending, we running to the truck,
shiny as shoes going dancing. Dad
driving us to see my grandmother.
There, at her house, I asked about the new
word I'd heard: resurrection. "Death, death,"
she said, her hands moving downward,
"the cross – that is death." And then she
laughed: "The dead will rise." Her upturned
palms moved skyward as she spoke. "The
dead will rise." She moved her hands toward
me, wrapped my face with touches, and
laughed again. The dead will rise.

EASTER ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Add white and gold fabric to your lenten table (or the place that you were counting down the 40 days), add flowers, paper butterflies, and other signs of life.
- Make an Alleluia banner and hang it in your home. (keep it for next year to 'hide' during Lent)
- Walk around the neighborhood, looking for signs of new life.
- Sing! Before dinner, say the brief Easter liturgy and sing a favorite Easter song or Alleluia.
- List or draw as many "Easter verbs" as you can, for example: breathe, ignite, run, arise, bless, triumph, touch…
- Make or buy cards to welcome those baptized on Easter.
- Decorate a large, white candle as a paschal candle at home. Light it for each meal during the Easter season.
- Buy fresh flowers each week as an Easter treat.
- Feast, have a special feast (maybe pick what each family member fasted from during Lent to have a special treat)
- Feast, invite others over for a weekly meal, desert, or gathering.
- Drink Champagne (and sparkling juice for the kids)
- Spend time outside in nature observing the signs of new life and spring.
- Keep a gratitude journal for 50 days.
- Pray for signs of the resurrection. Where is God wanting to do something new in your life, relationships, etc.?
- Listen to an Easter playlist.
- Color Easter eggs.
- Don't participate in Easter egg hunts before Easter, especially not Holy Saturday. (If you already did, have another one in reparation, and switch your family tradition to Easter egg hunts during Easter. You have 50 days to hunt eggs -- don't do it on the day Jesus is in the tomb)

EASTER SUNDAY FEAST

HERB - ROASTED LAMB

Recipe: Herb - Roasted Lamb by Ina Garten

THE BEGINNING OF EASTERTIDE—50 DAYS OF FEASTING

Ingredients

12 large unpeeled garlic cloves, divided
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary leaves
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 (6-pound) boneless leg of lamb, trimmed and tied
4 to 5 pounds small unpeeled potatoes (16 to 20 potatoes) 2 tablespoons good olive oil

Instructions

1) Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Place oven rack in the lower third of oven.
2) Peel 6 of the cloves of garlic and place them in bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade. Add rosemary, 1 tablespoon salt, 1 teaspoon pepper, and butter. Process until garlic and rosemary are finely minced. Thoroughly coat top and sides of the lamb with the rosemary mixture. Place, uncovered in refrigerator and let sit for eight hours or overnight. When ready to proceed, let meat sit at room temperature for one hour.
3) Toss potatoes and remaining unpeeled garlic in a bowl with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Place in bottom of a large roasting pan. Place lamb on top of the potatoes and roast for 15 minutes at 450 degrees, reduce heat to 325 and continue roasting for 1 to 1-1/2 hours, or until internal temperature of the lamb is 135 degrees (rare) or 145 degrees (medium). Remove from oven and put lamb on a platter. Cover tightly with aluminum foil. Allow lamb to rest for about 20 minutes. Slice and serve with the potatoes.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings.

DAILY LITURGY

We light the candle to remind us of Christ.
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
His mercy endures for ever.

"Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." *Joel 2:12*

God of all Mercy, you love all that you have made.
You forgive the sins of all who are truly sorry and humbly repent.

Sing Together

Create in me a clean heart, O God.
And renew a right spirit within me.
Create in me a clean heart, O God.
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence O Lord.
Take not thy holy spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,
And renew a right spirit within me

Parents: Let's quiet our hearts and get ready to listen to God's good words.
(take a Deep Breath as a way to calm everyone)

Read today's scripture and wonder together.
At the end of your wondering blow out the candle and say:

May the bright sadness of Lent prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter

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"We are Easter people! We stand on resurrection ground. Easter is not only our greatest party... Easter is the only reason we are here at all! We should meet regularly for Easter parties. We should drink champagne at breakfast. We should renew baptismal vows with splashing water all over the place. And we should sing and dance and blow trumpets and put out banners in the streets. And we should invite the homeless people to parties and we should go around town doing random acts of generosity and celebration. We should be doing things which would make our sober and serious neighbors say, 'What is the meaning of this outrageous party?'"
- N.T. Wright

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THE CHURCH OF THE
RESURRECTION

Special thanks to our team of creators and contributors:
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