

Religious Education

My thoughts and prayers are with you all. I have put together some ideas for the end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week and Easter season.

Lent is the season when Christians practise both giving and giving-up, to identify with the complete self-offering of Jesus which is remembered in the liturgy of Holy Week and the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil).

In his Gospel, Matthew makes it clear that in loving and caring for other people we are loving and caring for Jesus.

Word of God

“For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick, and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly, I tell you, as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Matthew 25:35-40

- Q What does this scripture passage say to you?
- Q Have you been moved by the need of another or ignored the need of another?
- Q Do I really believe that everyone is made in the image of God?

Catechism of the Catholic Church

“Lent: By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert.” (CCC540)

“The seasons and days of penance in the course of the Liturgical Year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church’s penitential practice. These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works).” (CCC1438)

No one was an eyewitness to Christ’s Resurrection and no evangelist describes it. No one can say how it came about physically. ...although the Resurrection was an historical event that could be verified by the sign of the empty tomb and by the reality of the apostles’ encounters with the risen Christ. It remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history.” (CCC647)

RESPOND

- Q How can you give of yourself to your family in a way which encourages them to give to others?
- Q Is there any situation where you find self-giving difficult?
- Q What can you do to make it easier to give yourself more whole heartedly in that situation?

Share this reading

A Problem for Peter(based on Mark 14:26-31)

After they finished supper Jesus and his disciples set out for the Mount of Olives. Jesus said, "You will all run away and leave me." Peter said, "Even if everyone else runs away I will never leave you." Jesus said, "I'm telling you, three times tonight, before the cock crows twice, you will say you do not know me." Peter protested, saying, "I will die before I deny you." And the other disciples said the same.

The Greatest Week

Gethsemane(based on Mark 14:32-46)

When they reached the place called Gethsemane, Jesus said to his apostles, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." He took Peter, James and John with him. He was very frightened and he said to them, "My heart is ready to break. I'm so terrified of what is going to happen to me. You wait here and stay awake." He went a little further on, threw himself on the ground and prayed. "Father," he said, "You can do anything. Take this suffering from me. But I will do what you want, not what I want." He came back and found his friends asleep and he said to Peter, "Simon are you asleep? Could you not stay awake even for one hour? Stay awake and pray." He went away once more and prayed saying the same words. Then he came back and found them asleep again. They could not keep their eyes open, and they did not know what to say to him. When he came back a third time he said to them, "You can sleep on now and have your rest. The hour has come. I am going to be betrayed and handed over to violent people. Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is not very far away." He was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve apostles came with some soldiers. They were armed with swords and sticks. They had been sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders. Judas had said to them, 'The one I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him and make sure he is well guarded as you lead him away'. As soon as Judas arrived, he went up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi," and kissed him. Then they took hold of Jesus and arrested him.

Questions linked to the text

- How did Jesus feel when he got to the garden of Gethsemane? What did he do?
- What does this story tell you about Jesus' generosity?
- Why do you think Jesus took his disciples with him and why did he ask them to stay awake?

- What do you think about how the disciples behaved and why? How do you think Jesus felt when his betrayer arrived with the soldiers?

Additional Activities

- Freeze frame aspects of this event and explain the actions of the people within it. Use photos from this activity and add dialogue through speech bubbles or sound buttons.
- Imagine you are Jesus in the garden. Write a prayer to God your Father using ideas from the scripture text to help you.
- Draw an Easter scene.
- Draw and write captions for you own Stations of the cross.
- Create your own reflective service in your own home.
- Create an Easter Garden, showing the cross and tomb.
- Write an account of this event from the point of view of Peter, exploring the ways he found it hard to give of himself.
- You could make a daily prayer log during these difficult times.

Prayer and Reflection

Lord, when I am hungry
give me someone to feed;
When I am thirsty
give water for their thirst.
When a burden weighs upon me
lay upon my shoulders
the burden of my fellows.
Lord, when I stand
greatly in need of tenderness,
give me someone who yearns for love. May your will be my bread;
Your grace my strength; Your love my resting place.
(Quaker prayers, Peace and Service, The Society of Friends)