

Church of Ireland Children's Ministry

Lent & Easter Newsletter



Jesus gives us new life. This Resurrection Tree created by Rathfarnham Parish Sunday and Midweek Clubs shows the celebration and joy that bursts forth from the resurrection. Jesus is Alive! Make your own symbols of new life for display in church this Easter.

Lent: All Age Service/Sunday Club Talk:



(Adapted from a talk entitled 'Giving Up for Lent' on www.assemblies.org)

Invite a volunteer to the front. Talk about how excited you are for the Easter Holidays. You'll get to sleep in (hand volunteer a duvet), watch television (hand them a remote), get new Easter clothes (hand them clothes and credit card), go visiting family and friends (hand them keys). But Easter is about so much more than the holidays. Do you want to know what it's all about? Invite the volunteer to open a Real Easter Egg (found in Tesco's) - or a locked box with a Bible in it, to read the Easter story. The volunteer will eventually have to put some things down to access the Easter Egg and the story. Talk

about how none of those things were bad, but sometimes they can take over and we need to take time to make space for God. Lent is a time of year that we de-clutter. We put down some of the things that we think we really need and are really important, so that we have space to spend time listening to God and learning more about Him. So when we give up things for Lent; it's to make room for Jesus! We give up to take up.



Holy Week: Walking with Jesus

Mapping out the sequence of events as they happened enables the children to see the timeline and to mark important points in the story. Here we are giving ideas for Holy Week, but you can easily adapt them for a journey through Lent.

You will need: A large cloth; picture story cards (see ready-made ones from Flame Creative Ministries); cut outs of foot templates for in between each section

Find the printable resource here:

<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.ie/2015/03/easter-story-picture-card-games-print.html>

Lay out the cloth and put the foot templates on it as if they are on a meandering journey. In order of the events of Holy Week put the story cards in between the feet. Pick up the story cards and chat briefly about what

happens in each one. Avoid information overload by preparing 3 sentences about each event in advance.

Game: Once they have the bigger picture, you can take two copies of the picture story cards and turn them upside down. Play a matching game with the children where they take turns turning over 2 cards trying to find a match. When the game is over, put the children in 2 groups and ask them to put the story in order. Ask them to tell the story of Holy Week in their own words.

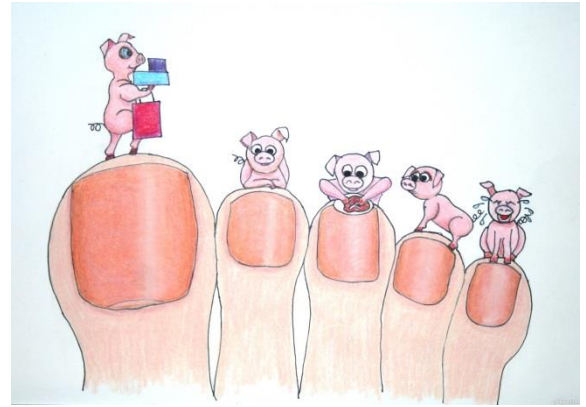
The foot templates can be decorated as part of a craft and the following week the whole picture story can be on the notice board, blu-tacked to the wall or each section put on a large lollipop stick with numbers on the back for taking home. In the coming sessions you can focus on different aspects of the story using a prop to talk about it in more detail. For example, a palm branch and clothes for Palm Sunday, a basin and water for Maundy Thursday, Sad Face props for Good Friday and Happy Face props (alongside New Life symbols and Feet butterflies!) for Easter Sunday

Creative Prayer Idea:

Adapted from Leprosy Mission UK:

This Little Piggy Prayers can be used throughout the journey through Lent as the focus is on Feet or you can use it as part of your Maundy Thursday prayers:

This Little Piggy Prayer: In socked feet, ask the children to hold on to each toe, moving from their biggest to their smallest as they pray:



This little piggy went to the market: Pray for people who don't have jobs and who are worried about how they will feed, clothe and shelter themselves and their families.

This little piggy stayed at home: Many people who are poor have little or no housing. Often after earthquakes or floods people lose their homes. Pray that poor around the world can have clean, secure houses.

This little piggy had roast dinner: People need a good diet to stay healthy. Drinking dirty water can make you sick. Pray that people all over the world can have good meals and clean water.

This little piggy had none: Pray for those who are bullying and leaving others out. Pray that they learn to show love instead of power and control. Pray for those who are left out, that they will know peace, love and friendship.

This little piggy went 'we, we, we, we' all the way home: Pray that you and I will understand that WE have a part to play – that WE can make a difference and that with God's help WE can and will respond to the needs of the world.

There are lots of little take home craft ideas that the children can make to remind them to pray for the unemployed, the homeless, the hungry and the left out of this world.

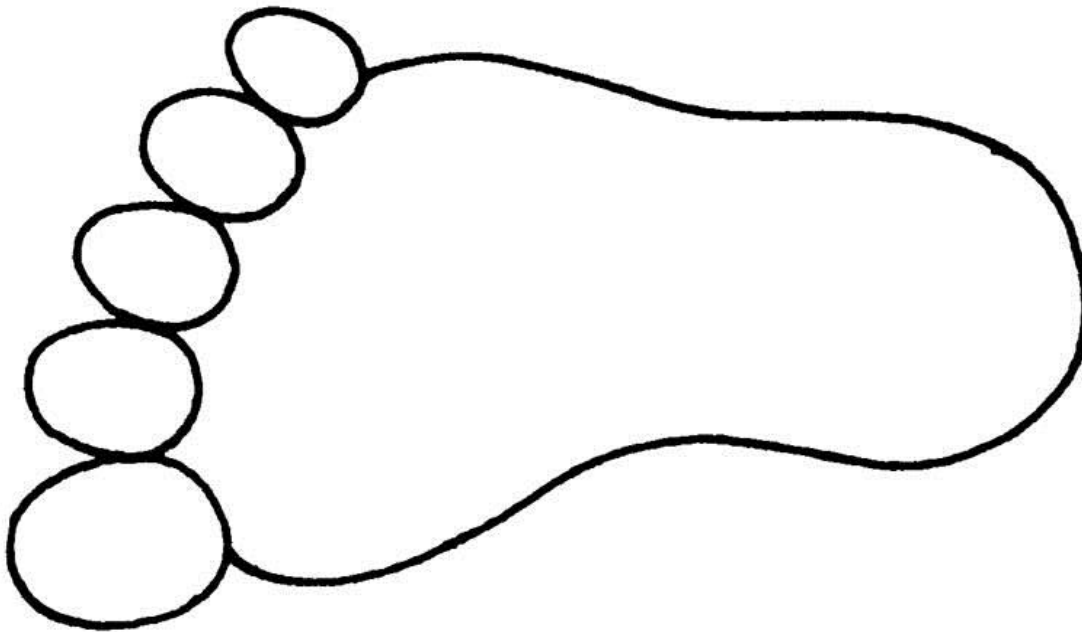


Craft Ideas:



As mentioned above, the foot templates used for mapping the journey through Lent or Holy Week can then be decorated and the journey put up on a noticeboard so that the sequence can be referred to as you explore different parts of the story.

At Easter the journey ends at the Cross on Good Friday where Jesus says 'It is Finished' and although we are sad, we know how the story ends. We know that Jesus is stronger than Death and that on Easter Sunday we will celebrate that He is Alive. Children can use the foot crafts (have some spare made up for visiting children) to make butterflies or chickens or flowers – all signs of new life - and can take them home.



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