Holy Week

During Holy Week we remember Jesus’ Passion and Death. We follow in Jesus’ footsteps by forgiving and praying for those who have hurt us, just as Jesus forgave and prayed for those who crucified him.

Prayer

Jesus, help us forgive and pray for those who have hurt us, just as you forgave those who hurt you.
The Path to the Cross

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday when we remember Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. As Jesus arrived people cried out, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.” While Jesus was in Jerusalem, he spent time teaching in the Temple and preparing the apostles for what was to come.

On Holy Thursday we remember the Last Supper. That evening, after sharing a meal with his disciples, Jesus was arrested. The next morning, Good Friday, Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate. When Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate to be judged, the crowd turned against Jesus and shouted for his Crucifixion. Pilate told the crowd that Jesus had done nothing wrong, but the crowd insisted that Jesus be put to death. In his place the crowd demanded the release of Barabbas, a criminal and murderer. Pilate did as the crowd asked. He released Barabbas and condemned Jesus to death.
The Crucifixion

After Pontius Pilate condemned Jesus to death, Jesus carried his cross to the hill where he was crucified next to two other criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. Before he died, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”


Forgive Others

When we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we ask forgiveness of our sins. We also follow Jesus’ example by promising to forgive those who have hurt us. On the lines below, write a prayer thanking Jesus for the strength to forgive others.

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Leader:  Praise be to God, who fills our lives with love and joy.

All:  Praise be to God.


The Gospel of the Lord.

All:  Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader:  Let us offer our prayers of petition.

That we follow the example of your only Son, who forgave those who crucified him, we pray to the Lord.  R.

Leader:  That we forgive those who do us harm so that we will not be filled with anger but with your love, we pray to the Lord.  R.

Leader:  Father, we pray to you with a spirit of forgiveness so that we can be open to the love you are offering us. Hear these prayers and the prayers of our heart. We pray through Jesus, your Son, and with the Holy Spirit.

All:  Amen.
Easter celebrates the Resurrection, when Jesus Christ rose from the dead and appeared to his followers before ascending into Heaven. Through his Resurrection and Ascension, Jesus brings to all of us the gift of Salvation and the peace that comes from knowing we can be saved.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for the gift of Salvation. May our words and actions always show thanks for this gift.
On the Road to Emmaus

After Jesus' Death, two of his followers were walking together to a town called Emmaus. As they walked together, they expressed their sadness at Jesus' Death. Another man, Jesus, began walking with them, but they did not recognize him. They shared with him the story of Jesus' Death. As they approached Emmaus, it appeared that Jesus was going to continue walking. The two, however, urged Jesus to stay with them since it was almost evening. Jesus agreed, and while he was with them, he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to them. Immediately the two men recognized that it was Jesus before them. Jesus, however, had vanished from their sight. The two men returned to Jerusalem, where they told the other disciples that Jesus had appeared to them.*

adapted from Luke 24:13-35

Illustrate the Story

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a picture illustrating the story of Jesus and his disciples walking on the road to Emmaus.
Jesus Is with Us

When Jesus appeared to the disciples after his Resurrection, they realized that Christ’s peace and love were still present among them. Likewise, Christ’s peace and love are present among us.

In our families and communities, we strive to share this peace and love with others, especially with those who are suffering. We try to help people know that they are not alone and that their suffering can be eased.

Share Peace and Love

Whom do you know that could use some cheering up? Write what you can do to share Jesus’ peace and love.
Pentecost

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, giving them the strength and confidence to continue Jesus’ mission on earth.

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit to help us live as your disciples.
Descent of the Holy Spirit

After Jesus’ Ascension the disciples were gathered together. Suddenly the room was filled with a great, rushing wind. Above the head of each person, a tongue of fire appeared. The disciples were filled with the desire and the strength to continue the mission begun by Jesus Christ.

At this time Jerusalem was filled with visitors from many different places. The disciples left the room and addressed the crowd. Miraculously each visitor understood what was being said, as if the disciples had been speaking in that person’s native language. In giving witness to Jesus, the disciples began to carry on his mission in the world.

adapted from the Acts of the Apostles 2:1–12

Filled with Strength and Courage

Before they received the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were probably discouraged. Jesus was no longer with them. How could they carry his message into the world without him? The Holy Spirit, however, brought them the strength and courage to teach others about the promise of Salvation through Jesus Christ. We are also called to carry on this mission.
Holy Spirit Detectives

Imagine that you are a “Holy Spirit detective.” You have been asked to find evidence of the action of the Holy Spirit in your home and neighborhood. What clues do you think you will find? How do they show that someone has carried out Jesus’ work? Think of the many ways that members of your family and people in your community carry on Jesus’ work.

On the lines below, list two examples of the action of the Holy Spirit in your home. Then list two examples of his work in your neighborhood. For each example write why you think the Holy Spirit is active in the events you have shared. Be specific in your description.

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Leader: Let us listen to the story of Pentecost.


The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us pray prayers of petition.

For the strength and determination given to the disciples at Pentecost, we pray to the Lord. R.

Leader: For the power to carry on Christ's mission as the disciples did, we pray to the Lord. R.

Leader: For the richness of the Word of God, that we might bring it to everyone we meet, we pray to the Lord. R.

Leader: God, thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who helps us continue Jesus' mission in the world. May we always turn to the Holy Spirit for the strength to follow Jesus.

All: Amen.