



Christian Formation  
Episcopal Diocese of Texas

# LENT CURRICULUM

2009

## What is Lent?

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*prayer for the good of your soul*



*fasting for the good of your body*



*almsgiving for the good of your neighbor*

## Focus

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What is Lent? Why do we observe this season?  
What are some symbols appropriate for the season?

## Scripture

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Matthew 4:1-11

## Other Resources

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**Book of Common Prayer** - Ash Wednesday liturgy, Collects for Lent  
YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxKxGmLOf4> (Music by Joseph Arthur.  
Cartoons by Si Smith). for teens.

## Activities

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Make a Mite Box to take home  
Copies of the Lenten at Home for each student  
Make the pretzel man (directions in Resource Section.)

## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

Matthew 4: 1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes  
from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels  
concerning you,'  
and, 'On their hands they will  
bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your  
foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,  
and serve only him.'"

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

## What is Lent?

The church has a calendar too. The church year uses the same month names but assigns different seasons and adds special observances which have meaning for the faithful, such as saints' days and special happenings. Lent is the fourth season of the church year.

The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten" the time of the year when days grow longer. The season begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on the Saturday before Easter (Holy Saturday or Easter Even.) The period of Lent covers 40 days excluding Sundays since every Sunday is a "little Easter." We are reminded of Jesus' forty days spent in the wilderness and the temptation by Satan before Jesus began his ministry. We are also reminded of the Israelites' wanderings in the desert 40 years before they entered Canaan, and also of the 40 days of rain on Noah and the ark.

In the early church, Lent was the time for preparation for Easter baptisms for converts to the faith. Those people fasted and studied during Lent to prepare for their baptism and being received into the church. It was also a time for people who already had been baptized to repent their sins and make restitution with those whom they had offended.

In our liturgy we will see changes, reflecting the more somber tone of Lent. You may have purple or burlap altar hangings, some churches will not have flowers. Some churches may use plainer Eucharistic vessels, no brass Gospel Book cover, no Glorias and no Alleluias! Some crosses will be draped, Stations of the Cross may be put up.

Lent is a time for looking at the things we have done that are wrong, asking God's and other people's forgiveness; for giving up things that keep us from being loving people; for doing extra things that will help us grow closer to God; and a time to be more aware of what it means to love as God loves us.

## For Children

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Tell the story of Jesus' temptation or use a Bible storybook to do so. Talk about how Jesus must have felt. Then discuss what Lent is, how we observe it, what can we do?

Make a Mite Box for a Lent offering. Decide how you would like to use this offering. Project Heifer is a good choice, Hurricane Ike relief is a good choice. Local Women Centers or homeless shelters are also good choices.

To make the mite box use a clean soup or vegetable can and cleanly remove one end. Measure white contact paper to fit the can ahead of time and then affix to the can. Have the children decorate the can using markers or appropriate rubber stamps (if you do this stamp before putting the contact paper on the can.) Cut a circle of purple construction paper for the top - leave a 1 inch surplus. Cut a slit for the money and then attach to the can with a rubber band.

If possible, take the children into the church to see the different hangings and other Lenten symbols that you may have in the church and talk about them.

Talk about Ash Wednesday - next Sunday's lesson - while the service is fresh on children's minds. Tell them that will be the lesson next Sunday.

Send home a copy of the Lent at Home resource (part of this curriculum). There are detailed instructions about a Lenten calendar's usage in those pages along with other ways to observe the season of Lent at home.

You may also wish to enlarge the clip art included with each lesson. These could be colored or made into posters.

To encourage attendance (perhaps a Lenten resolve) you might want to make attendance charts for each child.

For example,

Easter Lily - each week the student adds dirt (brown construction paper), then a stem, then leaves, then bud, then petals and flower - enough pieces to add a separate piece each Sunday of Lent.

## For Youth

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The YouTube video will generate conversation among teens. Talk about temptations, resisting evil. Have the students make mite boxes as well. See directions in "For Children." It was during this time of temptation that Jesus realized what he was called to do. The chorus "I'm no longer who I was, no longer who I thought was, no longer who you thought I was" is a vivid reminder of this realization.

How will you observe a holy Lent this year?

Discuss how to keep a holy Lent.

During Lent, we will have a Bible Study on <http://edotchristianformation.blogspot.com/> on forgiveness and reconciliation. You may either participate in the blog or you can download the Bible Study from [www.epicenter.org/christianformation](http://www.epicenter.org/christianformation). Click on Lenten Bible Study.

## For Adults

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Read the passage from Matthew. Discuss what it means to resist temptation. What are the modern day parallels to the temptations Jesus resisted?

It was during this time of temptation that Jesus realized what he was called to do. Adults may like to watch the YouTube video selection in the “For Youth.” The chorus “I’m no longer who I was, no longer who I thought was, no longer who you thought I was” is a vivid reminder of this realization. How will you observe a holy Lent this year?

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# LENT CURRICULUM

2009

## Ash Wednesday

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*Remember man  
that you are  
dust and into  
dust you shall  
return.*

### Focus

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What is Ash Wednesday?  
How do we observe Ash Wednesday

### Scripture

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Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21

### Other Resources

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*Book of Common Prayer* - Ash Wednesday liturgy, Collects for Lent

### Activities

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You may like to make batiks of the clip art on each lesson. Students can work in pairs on a larger piece or make their own individual one. See Resource Section for details.

Prayer Beads are a good Lenten project. Directions are in the Resource Section of this curriculum. See ongoing projects in Resource Section.

## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

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Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show other that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

## What is Ash Wednesday?

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**The Exhortation** (Book of Common Prayer p. 264-65)

*Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.*

*I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.*

The Exhortation reminds us of the actions which became part of the development of the Lenten season - the preparation for baptism, penitence, fasting and instruction for both those desiring baptism or those desiring to repent their sinful ways.

The ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from the palm branches from Palm Sunday the year before. They are wiped on our foreheads in the shape of a cross. The ashes are a sign of our mortality and of our penitence.

## For Children

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Tell the story again of Jesus' temptation in the desert. Paraphrase the Gospel reading for this lesson and discuss the following with the children:

1. How can we pray like Jesus told us?
2. What is wrong with letting everybody know what we are doing - like praying or fasting?
3. What is right about praying and fasting?

## For Youth

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Read the Gospel lesson for this lesson and then read the Exhortation.

Discuss how we are to keep a holy Lent, without showing off.

Recall the YouTube from last week. How did that format help you understand the story better?

Understand Jesus' awareness of his ministry?

See activities listed on first page of this lesson and in the resource section.

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on forgiveness and reconciliation. You may either participate in the blog or you can download the Bible Study from [www.epicenter.org/christianformation](http://www.epicenter.org/christianformation). Click on Lenten Bible Study.

## For Adults

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Read the passage from Matthew. Discuss what it means to resist temptation.

How can we observe a holy Lent in today's world?

Adults may like to make prayer beads as well.

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## Palm Sunday

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### Focus

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What is Palm Sunday?  
How do we observe Palm Sunday?

### Scripture

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Mark 14:1-15:47

### Other Resources

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*Book of Common Prayer* - Palm Sunday liturgy, Collects for Lent

### Activities

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See ongoing projects in Resource Section.

## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

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The passage is too lengthy to be included in this lesson.

Some churches do a dramatic reading of this Passion Gospel on Palm Sunday. You may wish to have your class participate in such a manner.

## What is Palm Sunday?

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There are records of special observances on Palm Sunday as early as 381-384 A.D. An old Armenian lectionary is said to have been based on the services at the holy sites in Jerusalem and took all day to complete. The celebration of Palm Sunday began in Spain in the 5th century. By the 12th century the custom of blessing the psalm with a procession following was in practise almost everywhere.

In biblical times, palm fronds were considered a sign of victory and it was the custom to wave palm fronds in greeting important people or as a sign of respect. Some churches used palm fronds, others wove the palm fronds into little crosses. Some countries use other plants if palm branches are not available. In some parts of England and Poland this Sunday is called Willow Sunday because they use branches from willows since they have no palm branches.

Since the branches have been blessed they are to be treated respectfully and many people take them home and place them behind crosses or religious pictures to stay there until the following year before Ash Wednesday, when they are removed, taken to church and burned for the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

We begin the Palm Sunday liturgy with a parade, palm branches and happy singing. At the point in the liturgy when the Gospel is read, however, the passion narative turns the joyful mood of the service into a very somber mood. The parade is over. The tension between the suffering of Jesus and the glorious triumph is set immediately before us. Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king, riding toward a destiny of suffering and death while those around him are shouting praises and then turning against him.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, the people who greeted him expected a powerful hero. They did not understand that Jesus' power was not physical strength, but the power of love.

## For Children

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Remind the children that today is not actually Palm Sunday, we are just learning about it today. You may like to have role play for this lesson. Children could make palm branches out of construction paper and a small paper cloak and lay them down for Jesus to walk on. (They will get the rest of the Passion Gospel in the next 2 lessons)

## For Youth

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Read the Gospel lesson for this lesson.

What key word or phrase comes to your mind?

What did you hear today that was new?

Read over the Passion Gospel in Matthew (Matthew 26:36-27:54(55-66)

Read over the Passion Gospel in Luke (Luke 11:39-23:49(50-56)

How are they different? Similar?

During Lent, we will have a Bible Study on [http://edotchristianformation.](http://edotchristianformation.blogspot.com/)

[blogspot.com/](http://edotchristianformation.blogspot.com/) on forgiveness and reconciliation. You may either participate in the blog or you can download the Bible Study from [www.epicenter.org/christianformation](http://www.epicenter.org/christianformation). Click on Lenten Bible Study.

## For Adults

---

Read the Gospel lesson for this lesson.

What key word or phrase comes to your mind?

What did you hear today that was new?

Read over the Passion Gospel in Matthew (Matthew 26:36-27:54(55-66)

Read over the Passion Gospel in Luke (Luke 11:39-23:49(50-56)

How are they different? Similar?

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# LENT CURRICULUM

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## Maundy Thursday

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### Focus

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What is Maundy Thursday?  
How do we observe Maundy Thursday?

### Scripture

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Exodus 12: 1-14 (Passover)      Matt. 26:17-30 (Last Supper)      Matt. 26:36-46 (Jesus in Garden)  
John 13: 1-17 (Foot Washing)

### Other Resources

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*Book of Common Prayer* - Maundy Thursday liturgy, Collects for Lent

### Activities

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You may wish to wash feet in this lesson or have a Passover dinner.

## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

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The passages are too lengthy to be included in this lesson.

## What is Maundy Thursday?

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The name “Maundy” comes from the Latin word “mandatum” meaning command, from the two commands Jesus gave at the Last Supper to his disciples. They are to celebrate the Eucharist and to love and serve one another as He had loved and served them.

Maundy Thursday also recalls the Last Supper. In the Eucharist we have the promise of his presence with us always. When Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, he commanded them to follow his example to love and humbly serve one another.

Other countries refer to this day with other names: In German-speaking countries, this day is called “Green Thursday” from the word “grunen” which means to mourn. It was the custom to give people who publicly confessed their sins on Ash Wednesday a green branch that signified that they had done their penance and were now full members of the church again.

Another name for this day was “Pure or Clean Thursday.” This name came to us from the tradition that everyone took a great cleansing bath, washing clothes, bathing, shaving in preparation for Easter.

In England this day was called “Shere Thursday” meaning clean. And yet another name for the day is Holy or Great Thursday, based on the fact that this is the one Thursday of the year on which the sacred events of Christ’s Passion are celebrated.

The Eucharist is celebrated on this day, usually in the evening. It is one of the most solemn services of the church year. It com-

memorates the “birthday” of the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist. The color of liturgical vestments for Holy Week is red.

Many churches have a foot washing service as part of this day’s observance. The clergy wash the feet of parishioners and leaders of the congregation wash feet as well in some instances.

After the celebration of the Eucharist, many churches strip the altar and sanctuary, removing all hangings, candles, Eucharist vessels, Gospel books, etc. Some will wash the altar with a mixture of wine and water, paying close attention to the five crosses which are carved in most altars’ tops symbolizing the five wounds of Jesus. The Tabernacle (if used) is emptied and left standing open. The Reserved Sacrament is removed and the Sanctuary Lamp is extinguished. Some churches have an altar of repose upon which the Reserved Sacrament is placed for the evening. Some churches have a Night Watch this night with people taking turns staying in the church all evening in prayer, reminding us of Jesus’ prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane and his exhorting the disciples who could not stay awake with him.

Many popular traditions are associated with Maundy Thursday. In France church bells are silenced at the end of the Maundy Thursday service and the children are told that the bells will fly to Rome and return on Easter Day. They are told the bells have gone to fetch the Easter eggs which will be delivered to them on Easter Day. In some Latin countries, sugared almonds are eaten on this day. In Central Europe, the name “Green Thursday” also involves eating green things.



## For Children

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You may wish to do a foot washing service with the children or have a Passover meal with them. See the Resource Section for more information.

Tell the story of The Last Supper. You may wish to find a copy of da Vinci's Last Supper or some other art work depicting this event.


## For Youth

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You may wish to do a foot washing service with the youth or have a Passover meal with them. See the Resource Section for more information.

Tell the story of The Last Supper. You may wish to find a copy of da Vinci's Last Supper or some other art work depicting this event.

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## For Adults

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Read the words to the Servant hymn - see Resource Section.

What does it mean to be a servant today?

Read the scripture passages for this lesson. Make sure that all know the sequence of events and the story.

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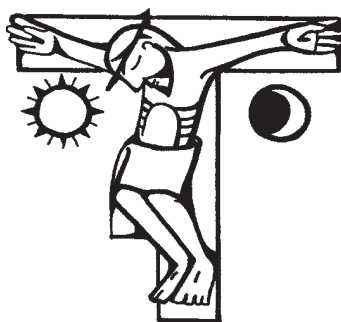
Christian Formation  
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# LENT CURRICULUM

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## Good Friday

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### Focus

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What is Good Friday?

How do we observe Good Friday?

### Scripture

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John 18:1-19:42

### Other Resources

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*Book of Common Prayer* - Good Friday liturgy, Collects for Lent

### Activities

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If your church has Stations of the Cross you may wish to walk them at this time, stopping at each one, reading the prescribed reading but then talking about what happened at each station, your feelings about the happenings, bringing in the modern day parallel.

You might like to make hot cross buns to enjoy today.



## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

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The passages are too lengthy to be included in this lesson.

## What is Good Friday?

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How can such a terrible day be called “Good?”

Good Friday is good because Jesus proclaimed God’s forgiveness from the cross in spite of what happened in Holy Week. He forgave Peter who denied him, he forgave those who caused his death, and he will forgive us.

We remember Jesus’ death on Good Friday. The church looks even more different. All the crosses may be draped. In some churches, the altar has a black cloth on it and the crosses are draped in black. There is no Eucharist celebrated on this day (unless done so out of the Reserved Sacrament.) There are usually no flowers. Some churches bring a large wooden cross into the sanctuary. Many churches have special observances of the Stations of the Cross.





## For Children

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Recall the events of the day with the children. If you have stations of the cross in your church, take the children around to see each station and talk about what happened. There are several books on the stations in the Diocesan Resource Library for children.

## For Youth

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Read the various stations of the cross to the class and invite them to illustrate each station either with drawings or using photos or articles from magazines and newspapers.

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## For Adults

---

Read the various stations of the cross to the class and invite them to illustrate each station either with drawings or using photos or articles from magazines and newspapers.

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# LENT CURRICULUM

2009

## Holy Saturday

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### Focus

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What is Holy Saturday?  
How do we observe Holy Saturday?

### Scripture

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Matt. 26-28    Mark 14-16    Luke 22-24    John 18-32

### Other Resources

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### Activities

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Wrap up ongoing activities.

## Scripture (taken from NRSV)

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The passages are too lengthy to be included in this lesson.

### What is Holy Saturday?

Holy Saturday is an unusual day in the church year. We remember that Jesus had not yet risen from the dead on this day.

In the Book of Common Prayer there is a brief service for Holy Saturday. There is no celebration of the Eucharist on this day. In the early church Holy Saturday marked the end of Lent, the time for preparation for converts to join the church. A service was held around midnight and the people were baptized and received the Eucharist around sunrise on Easter Day. Following the service, people celebrated Jesus' resurrection and their entry into the church and went home.

## What is the Easter Vigil?

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Some churches have Easter Vigil services in the evening on Holy Saturday or Easter Even. (Remembering that in the biblical world the next day began at sundown.)

The Easter Vigil Service is one of the most beautiful of our liturgies. The Exsultet is often chanted (by a deacon if one is present) as the new Paschal Candle is brought into the darkened church to the altar where it will remain until Pentecost.

The congregation listens to the stories of the family from the Old Testament stories. We will hear stories of creation, the flood, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea, God's presence in a renews Israel, Salvation offered freely to all, A new heart and a new spirit, the valley of the dry bones and the gathering of God's people. These are the stories of our salvation. Then follows a renewal of the Baptismal Vows unless there are baptisms scheduled (and if so these vows are part of that liturgy. And then the altar candles are lighted from the Paschal Candle and the whole church is in light again.

## For Children

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Children may wish to make a special Paschal Candle for their home. If possible, show the children the new Paschal Candle that will be used in your church this year. Usually the candle will have the year's date on it. Some candles have five red pins or markings on the cross to symbolize the five wounds of Jesus. Often there will be a lamb on the candle (Christ) the Greek letters Alpha and Omega - "I am the beginning and the end." Some candles have a lily symbolizing purity. The candle will remain at the front of the church until Pentecost at which point it is moved to one side. It is also lighted at every baptism and at every funeral.

You can make a beautiful candle using a large white taper. You can order sheets of colored wax from HearthSong ([www.hearthsong.com](http://www.hearthsong.com)) and using cookie cutters or knives cut out the shapes and numbers. There are directions with the wax to tell you how to affix it. Or you can use stained glass paints and paint glass votive holders and place a votive in.

Remind the children that next week is Easter. If you do not have church classes on Easter Sunday tell them that they will hear the Easter story again on the first Sunday after Easter.

## For Youth

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Read the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Focus upon a key person (choose one)

Peter	John	Judas Iscariot	Mary Magdalene	Mary, Jesus' Mother
The Crowd	Pilate	Soldiers	Other Disciples	Political Authorities

What are the feelings the person had toward Jesus?

Why did the person feel or act the way he did?

What specific encounters did the person have with Jesus?

If you were that person how would you feel?

How did the person react to the death and resurrection of Jesus?

## For Adults

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Read the four Gospel accounts of the death and resurrection of Jesus. (see first page of lesson)

How are they alike? How are they different? Which version is most familiar?

Make a list of the questions asked of Jesus and his answers.

What do you notice about the way in which he responds and the answers he gives?

Does he respond in the same manner to everyone, or do some groups of people receive different responses?

What are the main actions of Jesus?

What are the responses of the people to those actions?

Compare the different responses of various groups., Think about the reactions people have today about Jesus.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			25 – Ash Wednesday Go to church	26 Decide how you will observe Lent	27 Choose a book to read as a family during Lent	28 Memorize a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer
1 Write two sentences or draw a picture about the sermon	2 Read some of your chosen book	3 Say the prayer you have memorized	4 Read the Gospel from Sunday	5 Do something nice for someone today	6 Memorize another prayer	7 Write a note and send to someone you love
8 Illustrate a hymn you sang in church today	9 Read more of your book	10 Say the prayer you memorized	11 Read the Gospel from Sunday	12 Do something for someone without being asked	13 Memorize a verse of a Lenten hymn	14 Plant some flowers
15 Draw a picture of the Gospel lesson today	16 Continue reading your book or choose a new one	17 Sing the hymn you memorized	18 Read the Gospel from Sunday	19 Think about what it means to forgive someone	20 Write your own Lenten prayer	21 Take a walk and see spring
22 Find an article in the newspaper or magazine that reflects the Gospel reading	23 Read some more of your book. Spend some time talking about it.	24 What is your favorite Gospel story? Read it.	25 What is your favorite Old Testament Story? Read it.	26 What is your favorite Psalm? Read it.	27 Write a Lenten poem.	28 Invite a friend to dinner.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
29 Have a family Q&A about the Gospel reading today	30 Read more of your book or another one.	31 Help someone	1 Draw a picture of your favorite Bible story.	2 Discuss reconciliation.	3 What have you learned in Church School this Lent?	4 Make hot cross buns and enjoy them.
5 Palm Sunday Bring your palm cross or branch home and place it on your table.	6 You may wish to read the lessons from the Easter Vigil this week. See Lenten Resources for the Home for the readings.	7 Get your Easter Basket ready. Make a basket for someone who might not have one.	8 Illustrate one of the stories from the Vigil readings.	9 Maundy Thursday Attend church. If you washed feet in your service, talk about that at home. Talk about Jesus' Last Passover.	10 Good Friday If your church has Stations of the Cross find time to walk them. You may wish to illustrate your own.	11 Holy Saturday Draw pictures of butterflies, a symbol of the Resurrection and put them on your Easter table.
12 Easter Jesus is Risen! Alleluia Celebrate this day.						