

Palm Sunday/Holy Week

During the weeks of Lent, we have focused on different aspects of the season. This week we especially focus on Palm Sunday and the sacred Triduum, the three-day period that begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and ends with the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday.

Lent leads us to this holiest week of the liturgical year. This week opens with great jubilation on Palm Sunday; it turns solemn with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday; and it ends with hopeful anticipation.

A variety of activities is provided so you can choose those that best fit your children's needs. Some activities call for quiet reflection and others involve group projects or discussions. Some require advance planning in order to gather supplies for craft projects. You may want to flip to the back of the book to the reproducible pages to see if there are any additional materials you might like to use.

Week-at-a-Glance

Prayer Experience	91	Chalice	97
Story		Light of Christ Candle	98
Sunday Dinner	92	Flower or Butterfly Pens	99
Discussion Starters		Kitchen Fun	
for Grades K-3	95	Easter Bible Cookies	101
Discussion Starters		Family Take-Home Pages	103
for Grades 4-8	95	Family Customs & Traditions	105
Crafts			
Clothespin Crucifix	96		

Teacher/Parent preparation:

Prior to the prayer service, you will need to assemble a cross from Styrofoam, palm leaves from construction paper and create simple flowers from construction paper (1 per child).

Supplies needed for cross and palm leaves:

Styrofoam cross, about 16" tall
11" x 17" green construction paper
(1 per child)
pencils (1 per child)
scissors
tape

Directions:

Have children fold construction paper in half lengthwise and cut out a giant egg-shaped "leaf" from the paper. With paper still folded, cut slits in the "leaf," stopping 1 inch from the fold. Open the "leaf" and tape a pencil inside the fold, letting it extend 3 inches from the bottom of "the leaf" to form the "stem."

Supplies needed for prayer experience:

cross (made of Styrofoam)
palm leaves (1 per child)
red construction paper (with a heart already traced on the paper;
1 per child)
scissors
tape
crayons
strips of paper of various colors (1 per child, and large enough for child to write first name)

Children should proceed to the prayer table, waving palm leaves. There, they will place

their palm leaves at the foot of the table.

Have children gather quietly around the prayer table and light the Lenten candle.

Say to the children: The weeks of Lent have led us to the holiest week of the year. Our palm leaves remind us of the wonderful welcome Jesus received when he entered Jerusalem more than 2,000 years ago. The people honored him with shouts of "Hooray! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord! (Mark 11:9) But later that week, one of Jesus' own disciples betrayed him. The actions of some of the religious leaders and the Roman authorities led to his death on the cross.

Explain that Jesus' death showed God's love for us. Jesus' arms are outstretched, as if to give us a hug. On the cross, Jesus hugged the whole world. (Have the children cut out the red heart as a symbol of how much Jesus loved us.)

Jesus suffered so that we could live forever with him. This shows how much Jesus loves us. Mention that even if your child was the only one in the world, Jesus would have died for him or her. (Pass out the strips of paper and have each child write his or her name on a strip, and then tape it to the Styrofoam cross.)

End the session with one of these prayers.

Closing Prayer for Younger Children

Jesus, thank you for loving me.
I love you, too.

Closing Prayer for Older Children

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving and forgiving me.
How could I ever thank you enough?
Show me how to live a new life with you.

Sunday Dinner

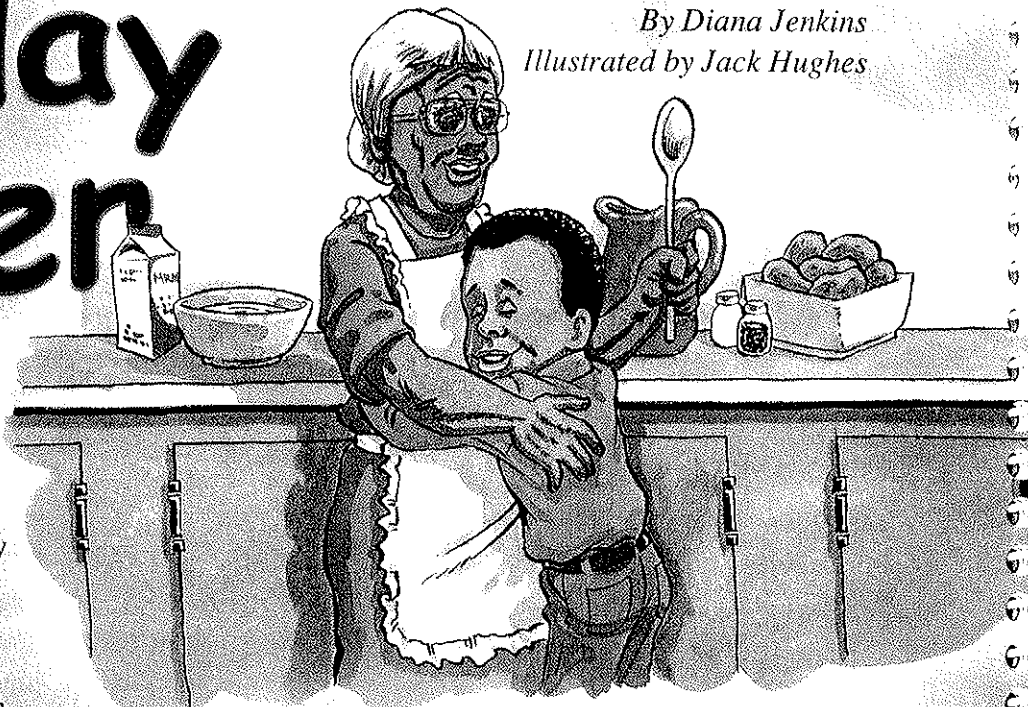
By Diana Jenkins
Illustrated by Jack Hughes

The first Sunday after Grandma's funeral, I didn't want to get out of bed. Especially when I heard, "Aldo! Time to get ready for church!"

I burrowed under the covers, but I could still hear Mom calling. That's the problem with living in a small apartment. "Aldo! Aldo!"

Next, puny fists pitter-pattered on my door, and my little sister Jaime yelled, "Get up!"

So I dragged myself to church, but I didn't pay much attention to the service. All I could think about was how we



wouldn't be going to Grandma's house for Sunday dinner after Mass today. Or ever again.

Grandma was the best cook in the world! Every Sunday, the whole family used to drive to her house (which was in the middle of town for everybody) for a big, delicious feast!

But don't think that I only cared about Grandma because of her cooking!

Grandma was the nicest person you could ever meet. She wasn't afraid to show how much she loved us all. She was always hugging and kissing people. Her

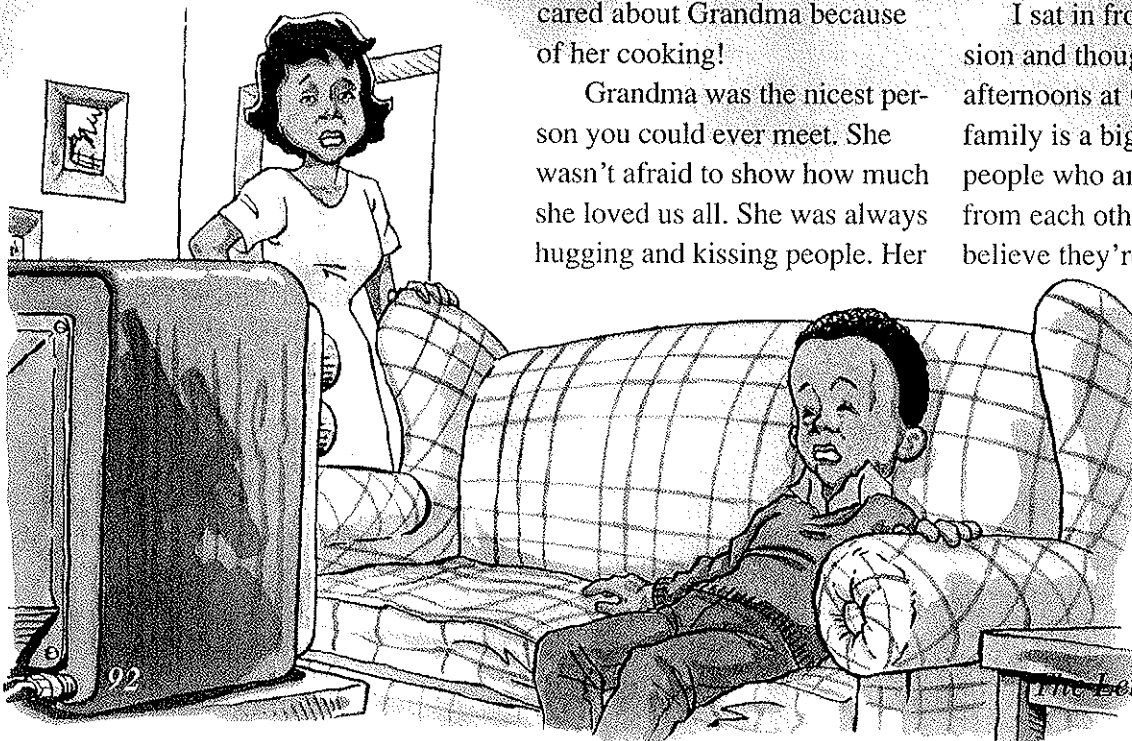
cooking was just another way that she showed her love.

After Mass, Mom picked up fried chicken for our Sunday dinner. It didn't taste anything like Grandma's chicken! After we ate, the day dragged by like a lazy snail. It didn't seem like Sunday at all—being at home with just Mom and Jaime.

I sat in front of the television and thought about Sunday afternoons at Grandma's. Our family is a big, noisy bunch of people who are all so different from each other that you can't believe they're in the same

family. Somehow, Grandma brought us all together every Sunday. We had so much fun!

Mom came into the living room and said,

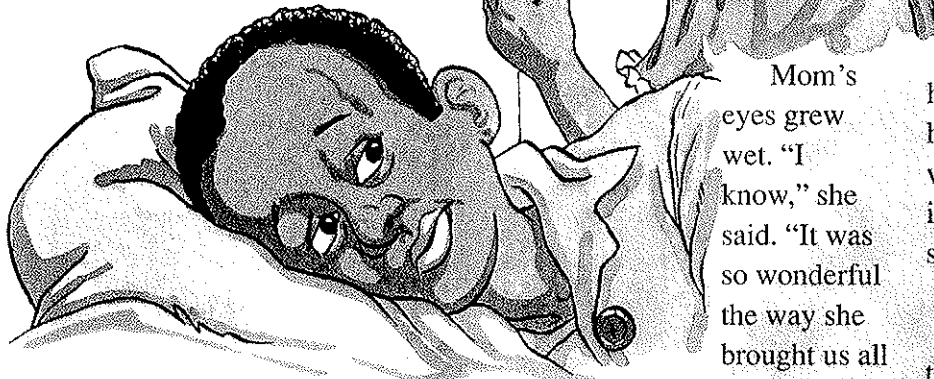


"It's too nice a day to watch television."

"I don't feel like doing anything else," I muttered.

Mom sat down and took my hand. "It's hard, I know," she said. "I miss her, too."

Mom was trying to make me feel better, but I just wanted to feel how I felt. I pulled my hand away and started



Mom's eyes grew wet. "I know," she said. "It was so wonderful the way she brought us all

together, wasn't it?"

"Yeah," I choked out of my tight throat.

"I know you're feeling sad, Aldo, but in hard times we need God more than ever," Mom said. "Please get ready for church."

It sounds terrible, but I zoned out as soon as Mass started that morning. I sat and

stood and knelt along with everyone else, but I didn't hear anything that Father McBrearty said. It was like my body was in church, but I was really somewhere in the past.

I was just thinking about how Grandma once showed me how to knead bread dough, when a sharp, little elbow poked into my ribs. I looked down and saw Jaime frowning at me.

"What?" I hissed at her.

"You're not saying anything," she whispered.

Mom was frowning our way, so we both faced front. For a moment, I focused in on the service. I realized that we were already at the Eucharistic Prayer part of the Mass. Father McBrearty was just saying, "May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit."

at the television until she left. Then I sat there wondering if our family would be getting together much anymore. Without Grandma and her big house, it didn't seem likely.

I could tell you about the next Sunday and all the ones after that, but each Sunday was as depressing as the one before. I hated going to Mass! It was just this unhappy reminder that it was another Sunday without Grandma and her special Sunday dinner.

One Sunday I played sick, but I couldn't fool Mom!

"Aldo," she said after she'd taken my temperature. "Is this about Grandma?"

"I guess," I said, not sure how to explain. "It just doesn't seem like Sunday without Grandma."



Palm Sunday / Holy Week

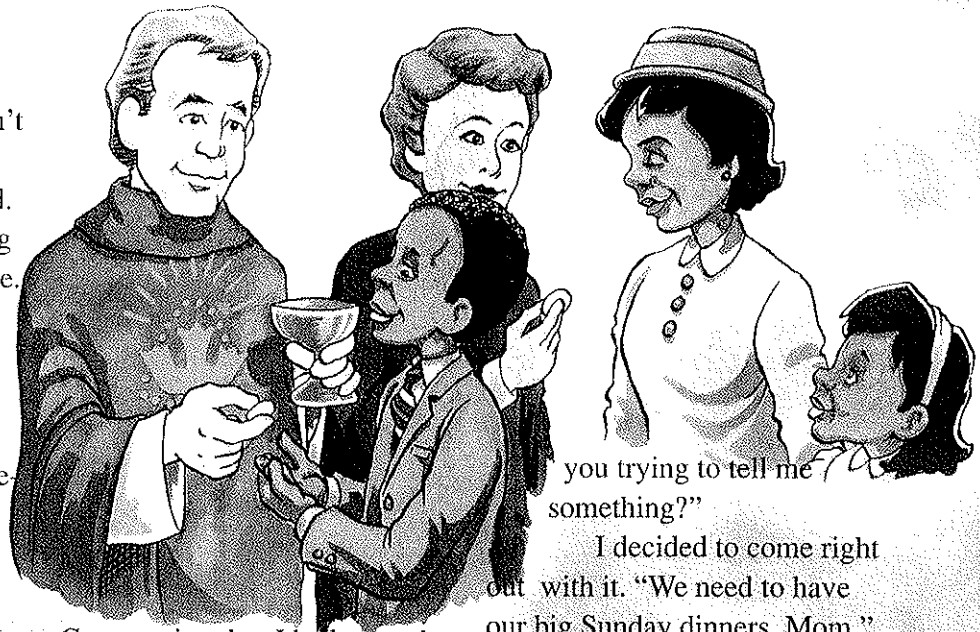
After that, my mind flew off again, but this time I wasn't zoning out. I was thinking about the words I'd just heard.

It was the part about being "brought together" that got me. It sounded so much like what Mom had been saying—and I had been thinking—about Grandma bringing our family together. It was cool that something in the Mass and something in my real life went together like that!

Then I realized something else amazing. Grandma brought our family together with her special meals, and when we "share in the body and blood of Christ" in Holy Communion, that was a meal, too! Just like my mixed-up family, all the different people in my church were coming together—for the most special meal of all!

Then I had another cool idea! The night before Jesus died for us, he brought a group of people together to share a meal. Jesus gave us the Eucharist at the Last Supper!

My head was practically spinning as we lined up for



you trying to tell me something?"

I decided to come right out with it. "We need to have our big Sunday dinners, Mom," I said. "To bring our family together."

"But Grandma's house is sold, Aldo," said Mom. "And nobody else has a big enough place for the dinners. And we all live so far apart!"

"But can't we figure something out?" I said.

Mom looked out the front window until someone honked at her and she had to drive on. Finally, she glanced at me and said, "Yes, I think we can."

Which we did. Mom found out that we could use the parish hall at Grandma's church, which is right in the middle for everybody. Everyone pitches in, and we have a great Sunday dinner. For a while, we're one family again!

So every Sunday, my church family comes together for the Eucharist (one meal). Then my "real" family shares dinner, which makes a second meal! I think Grandma would be happy to know I'm so well-fed!

Communion, but I had a good feeling as I received Jesus in the host. I guess it just meant something so...well, real to me!

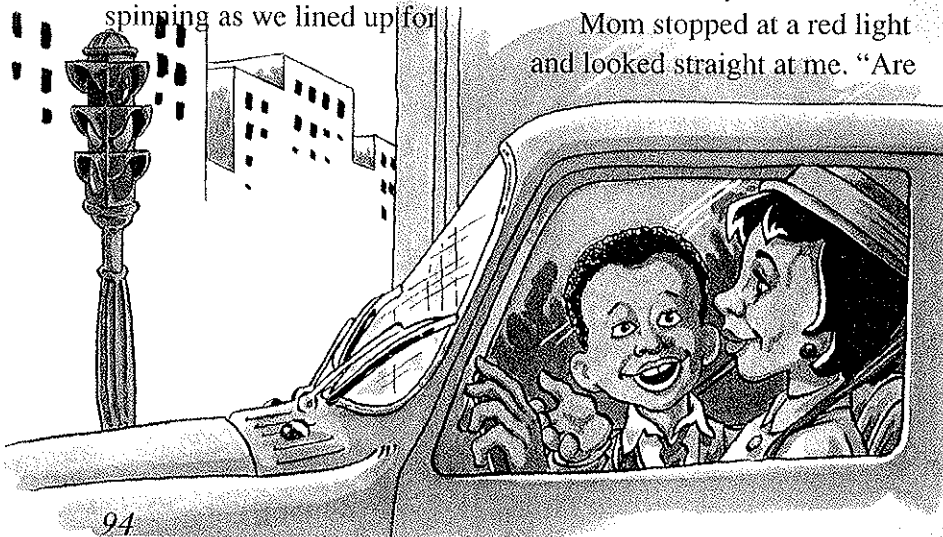
On the way home from church, I felt better than I had for a long while. Maybe that's why I was able to come up with a great idea!

"Eating a meal brings people together, doesn't it?" I said to Mom.

"Yes, it does, Aldo," she said.

"And no matter how different they are," I went on, "they become like one family for a while, don't they?"

Mom stopped at a red light and looked straight at me. "Are



Discussion Starters for Grades K-3

Think of special occasions, like birthdays or family reunions, when your family gathers to celebrate and share a meal. What are some of the things you share at these family gatherings? Do relatives hug or shake hands? Do they share conversations? Good news? Do you share some of your favorite foods? Do you pray before the meal?

- We share some of these same things with our “church family” when we gather for Mass. Which ones do we share?
- What gifts did Jesus share with his apostles during the Last Supper? How do we share these same gifts today?

Discussion Starters for Grades 4-8

Teacher/Parent Preparation:

Obtain for each child copies of the Order of the Mass from a missalette and the readings from a Bible.

Think of family reunions or special anniversaries when family and friends gather to celebrate and share a meal. What are some of the things that you share at these gatherings? Greetings? Hugs or handshakes? Good news? Words of praise? Tips or advice? Does your family share traditional foods? Which are your favorites? Does your family share a prayer before the meal? Do they make plans for another reunion?

- How is the celebration of the Eucharist similar to your special family gatherings?

Look through the photocopies of the Order of the Mass together. Identify the parts of the Mass that correspond to what happens at a family gathering (e.g., Gathering Song: arrival of the family members and greetings; Readings: listening to each other’s stories and discovering more about each other’s lives, desires, meaning, and how that affects the family as a whole; Preparation of the Gifts:

setting the table and prayer before the meal, etc.).

- In the story, Aldo missed his grandma, but he also missed the tradition of gathering for Sunday dinners. Do you think that coming together with the Church family each week is important?
- Aldo also missed Sunday afternoon dinners at his grandma’s house because it was there that his grandma showed how much she loved each family member. Do you see that kind of love in your Church family? What would you want to see in your Church family and in worship together?

Read the following passages about the Last Supper Jesus had with his apostles: from the Gospel of John 13:1-15, 14:1-4, 15:9-15; from the Gospel of Luke 22:19-20.

- What are some of the gifts Jesus shared with his apostles at the Last Supper?
- How do we continue to share those same gifts today?
- How can we thank Jesus for his tremendous gift of love?

Clothespin Crucifix

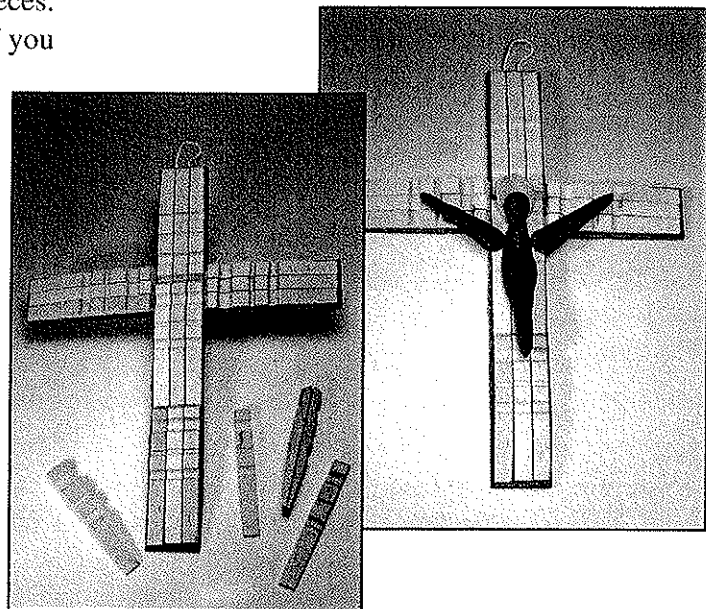
During Holy Week, we focus on remembering Jesus' love for us which he showed in his crucifixion and death. But we also look forward to the Easter celebration of Christ's triumphant victory over death when he rose from the dead. Help your children reflect on Jesus' perfect sacrifice of love by making crucifixes they can hang on a wall at home.

Supplies needed:

- clothespins with metal spring
(11 for each child)
- 8 1/2" x 11" piece of cardboard
(1 per child)
- pencil
- ruler
- scissors
- craft glue
- 5" piece of cord or ribbon (per child)
- Optional:* modeling clay for corpus
(the kind that dries out or the kind you bake)

Directions:

1. Have children remove the metal spring from each clothespin. They should have 22 pieces. (You may want to do this beforehand if you are working with younger children.)
2. Place wooden pieces of clothespins flat side down on the cardboard as follows: 9 vertical and 6 horizontal. (See photo.) (Except for the 3 vertical pieces at the bottom, the thin part of all pieces should face the center.)
3. Trace around the cross, and then remove the clothespin pieces. Cut the cross from cardboard.
4. Cut a small square of cardboard about 1 1/4 by 1 1/4 inches and set aside for later use.
5. Lay the clothespin pieces on the cardboard as in step 2, then glue to cardboard cross.
6. Use modeling clay to make the corpus. When clay is dry, it can be glued to the cross. Or take two wooden pieces of clothespins that are similar in color and glue them together, flat sides back to back. Students will need 4 more pieces for the arms and legs. Lay these pieces on the cross, and then glue them into place. (See photo.)
7. To form the loop for hanging, fold a 5-inch piece of cord (or ribbon) and glue to the back of the cross.
8. Glue the 1 1/4 by 1 1/4-inch piece of cardboard over the section of the cord (or ribbon) that has already been glued to the cross.



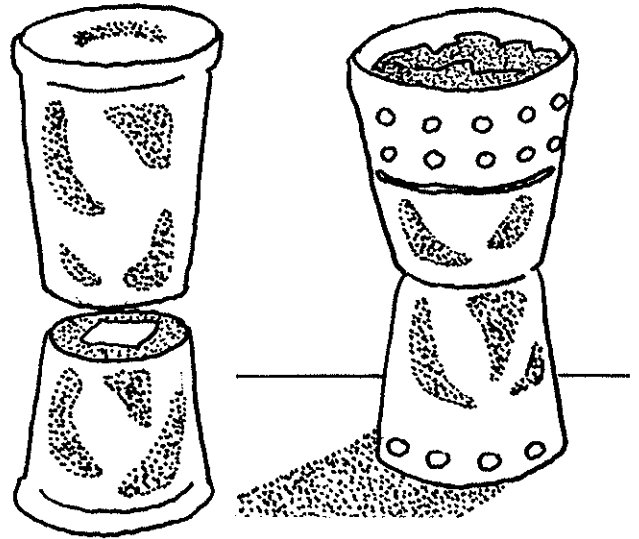
Chalice

Easy

The Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday marks the first day of the sacred Triduum. It commemorates the institution of the Eucharist, the institution of the priesthood, and Jesus' command to us to love one another. Help your children to reflect on the Eucharist and the priesthood by making a chalice that can be used as a centerpiece at home throughout the holiest week of the year.

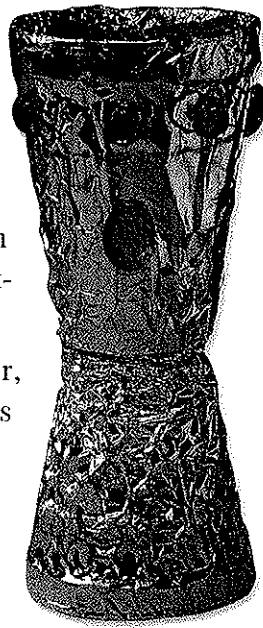
Supplies needed:

- 1 8 oz. Styrofoam or paper cup (for base of chalice)
- 1 12 oz. Styrofoam or paper cup (for cup of chalice)
- 1 sheet aluminum foil, approximately 12" x 17"
- rhinestones, beads, or glitter glue
- red tissue paper or a piece of red construction paper
- wide masking tape



Directions:

1. Wrap both cups in aluminum foil.
2. Roll a piece of masking tape and attach cups, bottom to bottom.
3. Decorate chalice with beads, rhinestones, or glitter glue.
4. Stuff red tissue paper, symbolizing the Precious Blood, into the top cup. You can also cut a circle out of the red paper to fit in the open end of the cup and set it inside.



Reflection

We have a particular penchant for "individual" penances to fill the days of Lent. What about a "family" resolution to turn this Lent into a 40-day track meet for family growth. Some families benefit from deciding to soften the way they speak with each other, offering to help out where needed, praying for each other, communicating more—kids sharing with parents where they've been and what they've been doing, parents expressing to their children the love and acceptance they long for.

Sr. Kathryn James, FSP

Light of Christ Candle

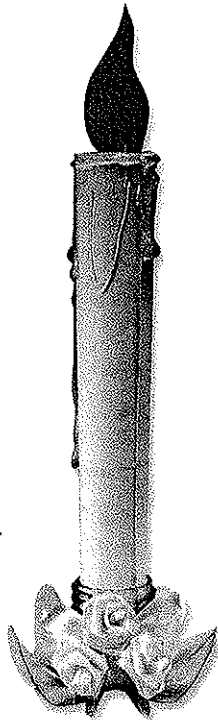
Even the darkness of death could not extinguish the light of Christ. On the third day he rose, conquering sin and death. Help your children understand the significance of the paschal candle by making these candles.

Supplies needed:

- 12, 16, or 20 oz. plastic beverage bottle (1 per child)
- scissors ribbon
- small silk flowers
- quick-drying craft glue
- 8 1/2" x 11" white paper
- black, red, and blue markers
- yellow or orange paper

Teacher/Parent Preparation:

Cut off the top and bottom of the bottle.



Directions:

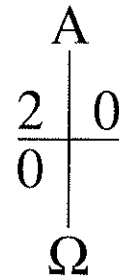
1. Tie a ribbon around the neck of the bottle, and then glue on silk flowers.
2. Attach top to the bottom with craft glue.
3. Roll white paper to form the "candle," making sure it fits into "candle holder." Use glue to keep paper from unrolling.
4. Using markers, decorate "candle" as you read the Rite aloud.
5. Place the "candle" into the holder, using craft glue if necessary.
6. Cut a flame from yellow or orange paper and glue it to the top.
7. Drip white craft glue onto candle to form "melting wax."

Rite for Christ Candle

Show children what the candle will look like. Explain that as you pray the "Rite" aloud, they will make the appropriate marks on their candles.

As you pray the prayer, you show actions in parentheses on the board.

1. Christ yesterday and today (have children mark the vertical arm of the cross)
2. the beginning and the end (horizontal arm)
3. Alpha (alpha, above the cross)
4. and Omega (omega, below the cross)
5. all time belongs to him (the first numeral [of current year] in upper left corner)
6. and all the ages (second numeral in the upper right corner)
7. to him be glory and power (the third numeral in the lower left corner)
8. through every age for ever (the last numeral in the lower right corner). Amen.



By his glory and glorious wounds may Christ our Lord guard us and keep us.

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds. Amen.

(You may wish to have this last prayer photocopied so the class can pray it together.)

Flower or Butterfly Pens

Butterflies and flowers remind us of new life. Both thrive in the warmth of the sun. We too thrive in the presence of the Son. Jesus Christ is our Lord and God.

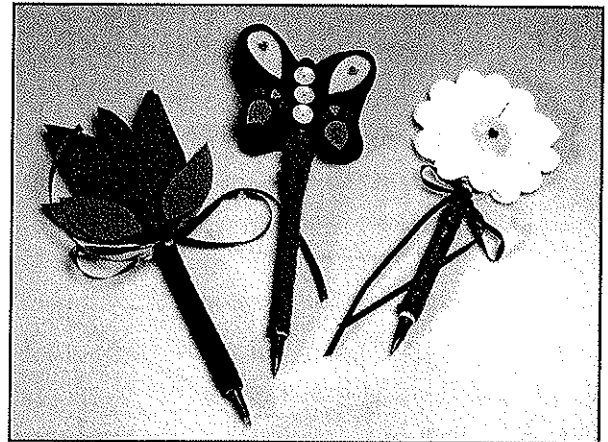
Help your children to make these colorful pens to use during the Easter season or to give as Easter gifts, along with the Prayer Journal found on page 21.

Supplies needed:

- pens (non-click, non-cap; at least 1 per child)
- 1 1/2 yards of yarn
- foam sheets, various colors (one 8 1/2" by 11" piece yields 3 or 4 "pen toppers"; use scraps for details)
- scissors
- wiggly eyes
- hole punch
- fast-drying tacky glue
- sequins, beads, glitter
- stapler

Directions:

1. Have children tie a piece of yarn to pen, nearest the point, using a double knot. Do not trim off the "tail" of the knot, but hide the "tail" under the yarn as they wrap the entire length of the pen with the rest of the yarn.
2. When pen is completely wrapped with yarn, tie a double knot at the end and trim excess yarn.
3. Choose a design from the templates, or come up with one of your own. Children should trace the design onto foam sheets. They will need 2 of each design, one for the front and one for the back of their pen "toppers."



4. Glue or staple "toppers" together along the sides and top, but not the bottom. Add decorative pieces using more foam, sequins, beads, wiggly eyes, or glitter. (Form tiny circles with foam using the hole punch.)
5. Once "toppers" are dry, glue "toppers" to tops of pens using fast-drying tacky glue.

Reflection

The "sacrifices" we choose for ourselves during the 40 days of Lent remind us that we are good, that we are sacred and saved, that there is more to life than immediately meets our eyes. Giving up a favorite TV show or candy bar creates room for spirit and for the Invisible.

Sr. Kathryn James, FSP

Patterns for Pens

