

Palm Sunday: Praise

Materials needed

Rainbow: plain paper, felt tips/colouring pencils/scrap of coloured paper, glue

Pipes: drinking straw, scissors

Musical shaker: paper cups, sticky tape, uncooked rice, scraps of coloured paper, glue, paint

Story: John 12:12-13

NRSV

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—
the King of Israel!”

Reflection

The people of Jerusalem were so excited to see Jesus entering their city that they ran out to greet him, waving branches in the air and shouting ‘Hosanna’, which is a shout of praise and thanksgiving.

How do you think Jesus felt when the people were cheering him?

How would it have felt to have been in the crowd?

Something happened a couple of weeks ago that was a little like that event. Thousands of people, all across the United Kingdom, stood in their doorways and at their windows to clap and cheer and say thank you to all the people in the NHS who are doing so much to help us at the moment. I wonder if you joined your families in praising all the doctors and nurses and hospital staff? It was a wonderful way for people to join together and show their gratitude. It must have felt so good for the NHS to hear all the shouts and cheers. It is a good reminder to us of how important it is to celebrate people, to cheer them on, and to thank them.

Suggested Activities

Make a rainbow: If you haven't already, maybe you could create a rainbow to spread cheer and to show your thanks to everyone working in the NHS. You could make one with paints or felt tips, or colourful paper, and put it in your window. Or if you have a driveway at the front of your house, maybe you could draw one using colourful chalk.

Pipes: You can make a simple pipe, similar to a flute or a recorder, with nothing more than a drinking straw and a pair of scissors. Squash down one end of the straw so it becomes flat. Then, using the scissors, cut the flat end to make a point. Put the pointed

end between your teeth and blow. It can take a little bit of practice, but soon you will find you are making musical notes. If you want to make different notes, cut straws to different lengths. The shorter the straw, the higher the note!

Musical Shaker: Why not make a shaker that you can use to cheer people you want to celebrate and say thank you to? Take a paper cup and put about one tablespoon of uncooked rice into it. Place the open end of a second paper cup over it and use sticky tape to secure the two cups together. Hurrah! You have a shaker! Why not decorate your shaker by painting it in bright colours, or gluing scraps of coloured paper around the outside?

Prayer

*Father in heaven,
We praise you for the gift of your son Jesus
And for all that he has taught us.
Thank you for the NHS,
For all the doctors and nurses;
For all the medical and hospital staff.
Thank you for everything they do to help people and to make them better.
Be with them as they go to work each day,
Protect them and keep them healthy.
Help us to support each other at this time.
Help us to be kind,
and to remember to say thank you to everyone who helps us each day.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.*



Washing of Feet: Service

Materials needed

Acts of Kindness Jar: jar, paper, pens/pencils

Story: John 13:3-9 & 12-14

The Message

Jesus knew that the Father had put him in complete charge of everything; that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So he got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his apron. When he got to Simon Peter, Peter said, "Master, *you wash my feet?*" Jesus answered, "You don't understand now what I'm doing, but it will be clear enough to you later." Peter persisted, "You're not going to wash my feet—ever!" Jesus said, "If I don't wash you, you can't be part of what I'm doing." "Master!" said Peter. "Not only my feet, then. Wash my hands! Wash my head!" After he had finished washing their feet, he took his robe, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table. Then he said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Master,' and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other's feet.

Reflection

This is a wonderful story. Jesus taking water and a cloth and kneeling at the feet of his friends and taking their feet in his hands and washing them, and gently drying them. You can understand why Peter felt so uncomfortable – not because he was embarrassed (it was common custom for a guest's feet to be washed upon entering a house) but because it was Jesus doing it. He was more than a friend, he was his Lord, and Peter felt that he should be washing Jesus' feet, not the other way round.

Jesus is setting us a wonderful example here – he is telling us to go and do the same. Not actually washing feet (although it might be fun!) but rather to show people love by doing an act of service. We should treat everyone as if they are an important guest, and think about what nice things we can do for them. How can we serve others?

Suggested Activities

Acts of Kindness Jar: On small pieces of paper write down some nice things that you could do for someone in your family. It could be 'tidy my room without being asked', 'make breakfast in bed for my mum', 'clean out the cat litter', 'pay my brother a compliment', 'learn some jokes and make my dad smile', 'give my sister a spontaneous hug', 'phone my grandpa', 'empty the dishwasher' etc. Fold the pieces of paper in half and pop into a jar. Each day pull out a piece of paper and do the act of kindness written on it. Your family will love it!

Love the Planet: When we think of doing kind things we usually think of doing them for people. But what about doing something kind for the planet? Here are some ideas. You could chose to do one of them, or all of them. Our planet will be very grateful!

- Plant bee-friendly plants in your garden
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room, or your TV when you are not watching it
- Grow some vegetables in your garden, or some herbs on your windowsill
- Swop plastic bottles of water for a reusable aluminium or bamboo one
- Always bring a canvas or reusable bag with you when you go shopping
- Use rechargeable batteries in your games controllers
- Go through your books and toys and collect ones you don't need any more to give to charity
- Instead of killing spiders, trap them in a cup and put them outside so they can continue their hard work
- Put some seeds and nuts in a bird feeder for birds

Join a local Community Action Group: within your wider community there will be lots of organisations that do things to help people, or to create a better neighbourhood. Community groups often get together to sing, or plant community gardens, or visit nursing homes. Why don't you do some research into the community groups in your area so that you can join one and help out. Maybe you can volunteer at a foodbank, or plant some trees, or litter pick in a local park, or become part of a befriending scheme. We might not be able to do these kinds of acts of service at the moment but it will be possible soon.

Prayer

*Dear God,
We thank you for the wonderful world we live in,
For its plants, its animals and its people.
Help us to always be kind to the planet and to each other.
Help us to grow in courage and compassion,
So that we can follow Jesus' example and serve others.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer. Amen.*



The Last Supper: Community

Materials needed

Chat with Friends: access to facetime or a video-conferencing app such as zoom or houseparty (make sure they are password enabled, or chats are locked so they are safe)

Bear Hunt: a favourite bear, or other animals

Community Prayer Chain: paper/card, pens, scissors

Story: Matthew 26: 26-29

NIV

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Reflection

Spending time with friends and loved ones is so important. Jesus had 12 close friends, and although they sometimes argued with each other, and they didn't always understand him, he loved them. They would have spent many evenings with Jesus, eating with him, listening to him, talking to him, and hopefully laughing lots too! Just like any group of friends. When they ate their Passover meal together, they didn't know it was to be their last meal with him. They didn't know that one of them would betray him, and one of them deny him. Jesus knew, and he loved them anyway.

Sometimes friendships are hard. Living with our families can frustrate us. Communities, such as churches, can include people we don't really like. But when Jesus gives the bread and wine to his disciples he talks about forgiveness, which reminds us that it is important to forgive. And he also gives them something to remember him by. Every time we come together at Holy Communion (or the Eucharist) we remember that we are part of the community of the church, a group of people who love God and follow Jesus. And every time we come together with our families, or friends, or wider communities to eat and drink and laugh we are getting a little glimpse of what it will be like in God's Kingdom.

Suggested Activities

Chat with Friends: why don't you set up a time for all your friends to facetime together, or you could use a video conferencing app like zoom or houseparty? In a group you can go around and say one thing you love about the other people. It might not be the same as getting together in person, but it can still be lots of fun, and remind you that you are part of a special community.

Bear Hunt: It can be hard to feel like part of a bigger community when we all have to stay inside our homes. Some towns and villages have started putting bears in their windows so that when families go on their daily walk together they can go on a bear hunt. Maybe you would like to do that too? Perhaps you can call your friends and neighbours and ask them to do it so that you can go on a bear hunt as well. Or maybe you can use all kinds of animals and make it into a safari...

Why don't you take pictures of your bears and send them to us on twitter @stpaulsedu?

Community Chain: Using paper or card make a chain of people. Click [here](#) for instructions. Write the job of someone who is helping in your community now (or the name of someone you know who is doing that job) onto each person. For example: health workers, the people who are working in shops, the refuse collectors, tube and bus drivers, postal and delivery workers. Pin or stand the chain up in a place you use a lot in your home. Then at a certain time of every day you could say a prayer, or agree a special thank you with each other, to remember those people who are working hard for our communities right now. And then remember to say a thank you to them when you see them again in person 😊

Prayer

Lord God,

Thank you for our families, our friends,

And our communities.

Thank you for the people who work hard to keep us safe

And to keep us healthy.

We pray for all of those people who are feeling lonely right now,

Be with them and comfort them.

Help us to be good friends, and good neighbours to those around us.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.



Garden of Gethsemane: Prayer

Materials needed

Garden Labyrinth: sticks/stones/plants/toys

Prayer Pebbles: 2 jars or bowls, pebbles or stones, felt tip pen

Story: Mark 14: 32-36

Good News Translation

They came to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James, and John with him. Distress and anguish came over him, and he said to them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch."

He went a little farther on, threw himself on the ground, and prayed that, if possible, he might not have to go through that time of suffering. "Father," he prayed, "my Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want."

Reflection

Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane because he needed a quiet place to pray. He knew that he was going to have to go through a tough time, and he was worried. So he prayed to his father in heaven. This wasn't a prayer of thanksgiving or of praise. It was a difficult prayer. Knowing that even Jesus struggled sometimes can be a comfort to us. It is good to remember that it is ok to have hard questions about life, and to have worries and doubts, and to tell God about that. God can handle it. Sometimes it can be hard to put those kinds of prayers into words. So sometimes it can help to pray in a different way.

One of our activities today is called a prayer labyrinth (or prayer path). A prayer labyrinth is a path that is walked slowly in prayer or reflection. It is usually a circular shape which winds back and forth. Walking a labyrinth slows us down and helps us to focus on God, on our life, on our prayers, and on our questions. Sometimes people pray as they walk, and sometimes they pray when they reach the centre. It can be done in many different ways.

The important thing about prayer isn't how we pray – just that we **do** pray. Hopefully you will enjoy trying different ways to pray this week.

Suggested Activities

Garden Labyrinth: Follow the instructions below (on the next page) to create your very own labyrinth (prayer path) in your garden, using sticks, stones, plants in pots, or even toys! Walk the path slowly and when you get to the centre pause and pray. It could be a prayer of thanks, or a prayer of intercession (a prayer on behalf of someone else). If you



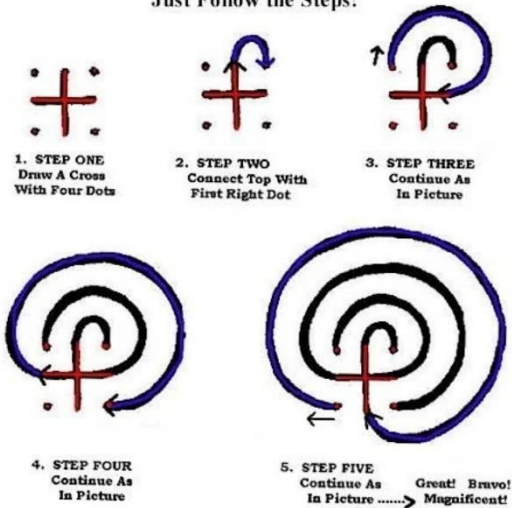
don't have a garden you could make a prayer path in your living room or bedroom. Just be careful to clear it up when you are finished so no one trips on it!

Prayer pebbles: Gather some small stones or pebbles and on each one write the name of someone you would like to pray for. Put them into a jar or bowl, and each day choose one or two and pray for that person/people. Place their stone/pebble into a second bowl/jar. When all the stones/pebbles have been moved (and all the people prayed for) start over again.

Silence: Sometimes our prayers are so big we can't put them into words. And that's ok, because God can see the prayers in our hearts. Sometimes we don't know what or who to pray for. And that's ok too. It can be easy to forget that prayer is a conversation, not just us talking to God. We need to listen to God too. Sitting in silence can be a good way to start to listen to God.

Find a comfortable place, maybe somewhere in the sunshine, where you won't be disturbed, and sit down (in a chair, or on the floor – either is fine). Relax, close your eyes and take deep breaths. Listen to the sounds around you. What can you hear? Birds, kids playing, a kettle boiling, a radio or TV in another room? Let the sounds wash over you like a gentle wave. Do this for a couple of minutes the first day. Try it again another day for 5 minutes, and so on. It might be hard at first but the more you do it, the easier it gets. Don't worry if nothing seems to happen. Just sitting still in God's presence is enough. It tells God that you are waiting and listening.

How To Draw a Simple Three Path Labyrinth Just Follow the Steps!



© Peaceful Endeavours

Prayer Garden

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The Trials of Jesus: Justice

Materials needed

Picture: Blank paper and pens/pencils
Collage: Paper and old magazines/newspapers

Story: Mark 14: 53, 55-59

Good News Translation

Then Jesus was taken to the High Priest's house, where all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the Law were gathering. The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some evidence against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they could not find any. Many witnesses told lies against Jesus, but their stories did not agree.

Then some men stood up and told this lie against Jesus: "We heard him say, 'I will tear down this Temple which men have made, and after three days I will build one that is not made by men.'" Not even they, however, could make their stories agree.

Reflection

Jesus had two trials, one in front of all the religious leaders, and one in front of Pilate, the Roman Governor. They happened very quickly, and according to the writers of the Gospels, many of the people giving evidence lied. Jesus was sentenced to death, but they weren't fair trials; there was no justice.

We might think that kind of unfair trial doesn't happen anymore but unfortunately it does. In many countries all over the world people are in prison, not because they broke the law, but because of who they are or what they said. It is important that we know about these injustices, and organisations like [Amnesty International](#) and [Christian Peacemaker Teams](#) do lots of work to make sure that these people aren't forgotten.

But what can we do in our daily lives to make sure that injustice doesn't happen? Maybe we can start by telling the truth, and by avoiding lies, and by being kind to those around us. It might seem small, but it can make a big difference!

Suggested Activities

Discussion: On the 10 December 1948 the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) was created by the United Nations. It was written because of the belief that every human being should have equal rights and freedoms, regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, or country of birth.

One of the rights states that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to a fair trial, but that doesn't always happen in practice.

Think about the following questions and talk about them with other members of your family:

- In your community are some people treated in different ways?
- What might give some people an advantage over others?



- Why is it important that everyone is equal before the law?

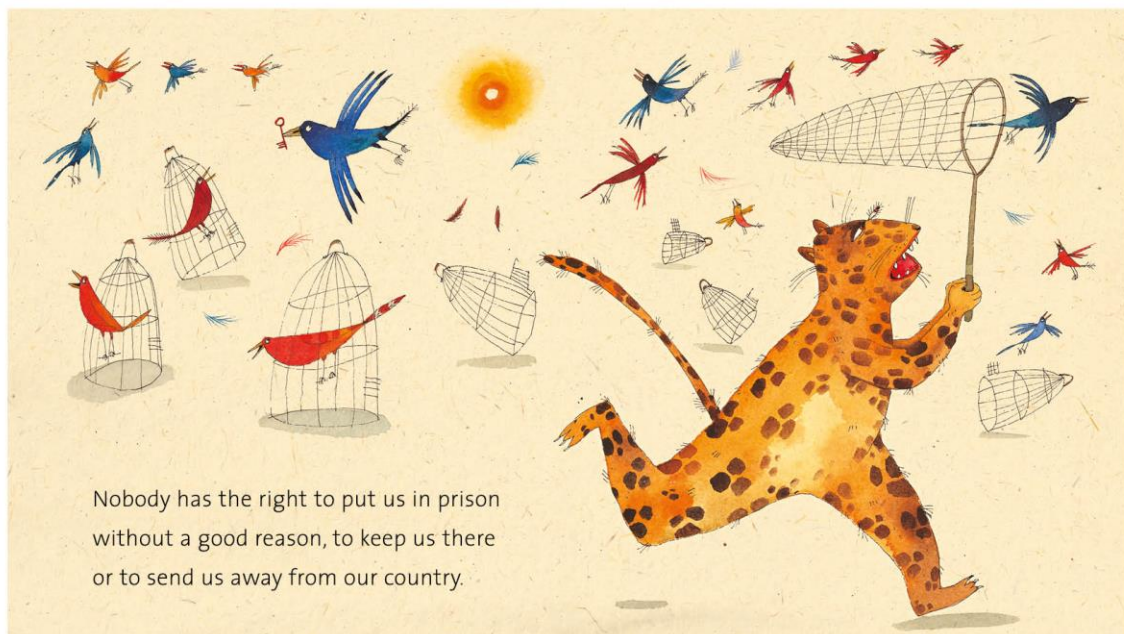
Become a Young Activist: You could join Amnesty International's Junior Urgent Action Network. Click the link and have an adult fill in the form to receive a newsletter with all kinds of actions you can get involved in such as writing postcards of support for prisoners who haven't had a fair trial.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/junior-urgent-action-network>

Create a picture or collage: Amnesty International has created pictures to go with the different articles (statements) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is their picture for Article 9.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 9



Nobody has the right to put us in prison
without a good reason, to keep us there
or to send us away from our country.

Artist: Piet Grobler

We Are All Born Free. Amnesty International UK/Frances Lincoln Children's Books

Why don't you draw your own picture or make a collage for Article 3 which states: **We all have a right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.**

Prayer

*Heavenly Father,
We pray for all those people who are suffering
Because of violence, war or injustice.
We pray for an end to unfairness.
Help us to play our part,
To be kind, and to take action
So that justice and peace cover the earth. Amen.*

Jesus on the Cross: Forgiveness

Materials needed

Forgiveness Tree: paper (plain and coloured), pens/pencils, scissors, glue
Ice Candle Holder: 2 containers, one small and one larger (yogurt pots are ideal), tape, weights (glass beads or marbles), water, small beads or leaves/twigs/berries, freezer

Story: Luke 23: 32-43

Good News Translation

Two other men, both of them criminals, were also led out to be put to death with Jesus. When they came to the place called "The Skull," they crucified Jesus there, and the two criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing." They divided his clothes among themselves by throwing dice. The people stood there watching while the Jewish leaders made fun of him: "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah whom God has chosen!" The soldiers also made fun of him: they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, and said, "Save yourself if you are the king of the Jews!" Above him were written these words: "This is the King of the Jews." One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!" Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

Reflection

What an amazing story of forgiveness! Jesus asks God to forgive everyone involved in killing him, even before they did more cruel things to him. He forgave the criminal on the cross next to him, simply because he recognised that Jesus was innocent. If Jesus can forgive like that, then surely forgiveness is possible for us. And we should try to follow Jesus' example and show forgiveness to others, even when it is hard.

Suggested Activities

Forgiveness Tree: Draw a tree trunk and branches on a large piece of paper. Cut out lots of leaves or blossom from coloured paper. On each leaf or blossom write something you need to forgive someone for or something that you need to say sorry for. Turn it over and glue it onto the tree with the writing facing down. By doing this you have named your hurt or the hurt you have caused someone else, but you have transformed it into something new and beautiful. You have committed to 'turning over a new leaf'!
Take a picture of your Forgiveness Tree and tweet it to us @stpaulsedu

Ice Candle Holder: This activity helps us to think about the things we do that hurt others (sins) and shows us that when we are really sorry, then we can be forgiven.

1. Put a small container into a larger container. Pour water into the gap between the two containers. The smaller container should rise up as more water is poured in. Pour in water until the rim of the small container is at the same height as the rim of the large container.
2. Fix the smaller container in place in the middle of the large container using tape (tape from the inside of the small to the outside of the large container). You should use four pieces of tape to secure the small container in all directions.
3. Pour more water into the gap between the two containers until the water is as high as you want your candle holder to be. In case the small container rises up, weigh it down with small weights, such as glass beads or marbles.
4. Take your beads, leaves, twigs, or berries and as you put each one into the water, say sorry for someone you have hurt, or something you did which you shouldn't have done.
5. Put the containers into the freezer overnight.
6. Once the water is completely frozen, take out the containers. Start with the small container. It might be helpful to pour a little bit of hot water into it to release it. Once the small container is out, take off the large container. Again it might be easier if you let some warm water run over it.
7. Now place a candle or tea light into the ice candle holder. If you wish to keep it inside, remember to place a bowl or plate under it to collect the water.
8. As the candle melts the water imagine that all your sins are being washed away. You are being forgiven.

Prayer

*Creator God,
You love all that you have made.
You forgive the sins of all who are truly sorry.
Create in us clean hearts,
So that we may know your forgiveness and blessing
And help us to forgive others as you have forgiven us.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



Jesus Dies: Sorrow

Materials needed

Cloud Rainbow: plain white and coloured paper, scissors, pen, glue or cellotape
Look for Beauty: camera, or sketchpad and pencils
Gratitude Journal: book and pen

Story: Luke 23:44-46

NIV

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

Reflection

Imagine the sorrow Jesus' family and friends felt after he died. So many hopes ended. It must have been a bleak, desolate time for them. Maybe you have felt that kind of sadness. Maybe you have lost someone you love. Maybe right now, you are missing people you love who you aren't able to see or to spend time with. It's ok to feel sad and sometimes we just need to let ourselves feel it. But sometimes it helps to be reminded of the good and the beauty that exists in the world. The activities below will help you do that.

Suggested Activities

Cloud Rainbow: On some blank paper draw and cut out a cloud shape. Then cut some colourful paper into strips. On the strips of paper write things that make you happy or that make you smile (one thing on each strip). They can be happy memories or fun activities. Glue or stick the strips of paper onto the cloud. Whenever you feel upset or sad, look at your cloud and read some of the rainbow strips. Maybe you can do some of the fun activities you listed!

Look for Beauty: Sometimes when we are feeling sad it can help if we try to look for beauty around us, especially in the small things. It can be the way the light falls through a window, our favourite mug, a bird on a branch, or the laughter lines on an older person's face. Maybe you could photograph them and create a photo series on beauty. Or you could sketch or paint some of the beautiful things you see. Remember beauty is all around us. Sometimes we just have to look a little harder to see it.

Gratitude Journal: When we feel sad it is sometimes good to think about something we are thankful for. This could be something huge like the love we get from a parent or



sibling. Or it could be something small like a soft pair of pyjamas, or a cup of yummy hot chocolate. Maybe you could start keeping a Gratitude Journal and every day you can try to write down one thing you are grateful for. This is an amazing habit because the more you do it, the more things you will think of.

Whenever you feel very sad, you can look back and remember that the sadness will pass, and there is so much to be glad about.

Prayer

Father God,

Thank you that you have filled this world with beauty,

As a sign of your love for the world and for us.

Help us to see beauty when we are feeling sad,

And to remember that we are loved.

Help us to be there for our family and friends when they are feeling sad,

So that they know that it is ok,

And that they are not alone.

We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen.



Easter Sunday: Joy

Materials needed

Have a Party: cake/pizza/whatever you want to eat! Fancy clothes/pyjamas/whatever you want to wear!

Plan a Party: party invitations

Spread some Joy: cards/writing paper, postage stamps

Story: John 20:11-16

The Message

Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she knelt to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there, dressed in white, one at the head, the other at the foot of where Jesus' body had been laid. They said to her, "Woman, why do you weep?"

"They took my Master," she said, "and I don't know where they put him." After she said this, she turned away and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't recognize him. Jesus spoke to her, "Woman, why do you weep? Who are you looking for?"

She, thinking that he was the gardener, said, "Mister, if you took him, tell me where you put him so I can care for him." Jesus said, "Mary." Turning to face him, she said in Hebrew, "*Rabboni!*" meaning "Teacher!"

Reflection

Can you imagine how Mary felt when she saw her friend Jesus after he rose from the dead? She must have been filled with both disbelief and joy! She thought she would never see him again and then there he was standing in front of her. What a happy time it must have been!

Jesus coming back to life reminds us that death is not the end. It gives us hope that there is something beyond this world. We don't know what that will be like but we do know that it will be filled with joy.

Right now we are probably missing our friends. Imagine what it will be like to see them again in person, to spend time with them, to hug them and to laugh with them. It will be amazing! Right now, on this Easter Sunday we can live in hope because of Jesus' resurrection. And we can feel the excitement of anticipating what it will be like for us to be with our friends again.

Suggested Activities

Have a Party: Why not celebrate by having a party at home with your family? It could have a theme: maybe a fancy afternoon tea with home-made cake, and everyone can dress up in their finest clothes? Or a pyjama pizza party where you all get to choose your favourite topping and lounge around in your pjs? Why not take a photo and tweet us @stpaulsedu?

Plan a Party: Write a list of all the people you would like to invite to a party once lockdown is over. Decide on the menu. Maybe it will be a BBQ or a potluck where everyone brings their favourite dish. Design some invitations to post or email. Maybe you can send them now and tell people that you will decide the date later. That way they can get excited and look forward to a happy event in the future!

Spread some Joy: Many of us don't send cards or letters through the post any more, but they are so wonderful to receive! Why not write a letter to someone telling them why you love them, or why they make you happy. Guaranteed it will bring a smile to their face and spread some Easter joy!

Prayer

Hallelujah!

Jesus is risen!

He is risen indeed!

May these words touch our lives afresh this Easter Sunday

And may we live in the joy of Jesus' resurrection.

Hallelujah!

Jesus is risen!

He is risen indeed!

