

Crown of Thorns

Memory Verse: They (the soldiers) stripped Jesus and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. (Matthew 27:28-29a)

Study Plan: Lent is a time when we prepare for Easter. In studying this symbol, you will learn about the season of Lent and the things we do during Lent.



Step One: What is Lent and when is it?

Leader's initials _____

The Church sets aside a period of time before Easter to get ready to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. This period of time is called **Lent**. It is a period of forty days (not counting Sundays), beginning on Ash Wednesday and finishing on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. The name "Lent" comes from an old English word *lente* which means Spring, a time when days grow longer and warmer and brighter.

The date of Easter is different every year, because it follows a different kind of calendar used by the Jewish people. Easter occurs on the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or after March 21st. It always falls between March 22nd and April 25th. The seasons of Lent (before Easter) and Pentecost (after Easter season) are determined by the date of Easter.



- Why do you suppose the Christian calendar is based on the days we celebrate Jesus' birth and resurrection?



Do the number 1 and 2, and at least one of 3, 4 and 5.

1. Using a church calendar, find Ash Wednesday. Then count the days until Holy Saturday, remembering to leave out Sundays. How many days did you count? If your calendar shows the colors of the church seasons, what color are the days you just counted?
2. Find the tables on page 882-885 in the Book of Common Prayer. Use the tables to answer the following questions.
 - What is the date of Easter this year? _____
 - What is the date of Ash Wednesday this year? _____
 - What is the date of Pentecost this year? _____
 - What was the date of Easter in the year you were born? _____

3. Make a paper chain to help you count the days of Lent. You will need 34 purple strips, 5 lavender strips, 7 red strips, and 1 white strip. The purple strips represent the days of Lent; the lavender strips are for the Sundays of Lent, the red strips for Holy Week, and the white strip is for Easter.

Assemble the chain: begin with 4 purple strips, a lavender strip, 6 purple strips, a lavender strip, and work to Holy Week. Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday are red; Easter is white. To use the chain, tear off one link for each day, beginning on Ash Wednesday.

4. Make pretzels. Pretzels were once a special Lenten food. Some say the twisted center of a pretzel is like arms crossed in prayer. A recipe is found on page 7 of the Leader's List at the end of this study guide.

5. During Lent, some congregations use branches instead of altar flowers. These branches (twisted willow is one example) start out bare, but by Easter begin to bud, showing new life. Try it at home; get some branches, put them in water, and watch them throughout Lent. Your Altar Guild may be able to help you find the right kind of branches.



Step 2: How we observe Lent

Leader's initials _____

The celebration of Easter is too important to get ready for all at once. Starting in the early church, people got ready to celebrate Easter by observing a time of fasting, penitence, and preparation. This is still true today; we have the season of Lent to help us get ready to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

Some people give up something for Lent; it reminds them of how much Jesus gave up for us. They might give up eating a favorite food, or they might give up a particular thing they really like. Other people might decide to do something special to mark Lent, like reading a book about Jesus, or setting aside a special time for prayer, or by doing extra chores to earn money to put into their mite box. In many congregations, Lent is a time of study, to learn how we can grow and strengthen our lives as followers of Jesus.

The word **penitence** means to recognize that we have done something wrong and to tell God what we have done and that we are sorry. We ask God's forgiveness, and we commit to not do it again. Lent is a time when we can look at our lives and see where we need to ask for forgiveness and find new ways of doing things.



Easter is a traditional time for Baptism. The period of Lent was used as a time of preparation for those who were to be baptized, to learn about Jesus and the church. This happens today.



- Why do people often give up or take on something special for Lent?
- Think about some things you would like to do to observe Lent. Make a plan that will help you do these things.



Do at least one of the following activities:

1. Make a cootie catcher for your Lenten observances. Put one Lenten observance you plan to do on the triangles. Use your cootie catcher each day to pick a Lenten observance. Directions to make a cootie catcher are in the on page 9 of the Leader's List at the end of this study guide.
2. Make a bookmark to remind you of your Lenten disciplines.
3. Make sacrifice beads; use them to help you remember to make sacrifices in honor of Jesus' sacrifice for us. Directions are on page 7 of the Leader's List at the end of this study guide.



Step 3: The Passion of Our Lord

Leader's initials _____

The word **passion** means suffering. On Palm Sunday, we read the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, bless the palms, and form a procession with people carrying the palms. Then in church we read the Passion Gospel, the gospel which tells of Jesus' suffering and death.



Read this account of Jesus' passion, which is written for 7 parts.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane (From the Gospel of Matthew)

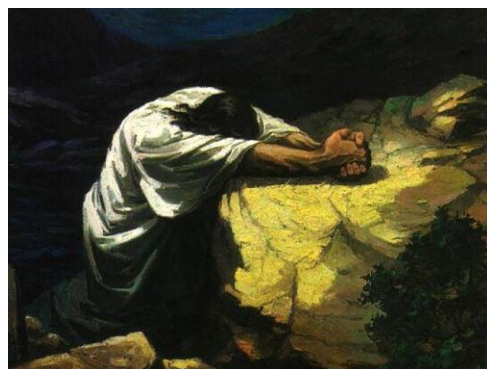
Narrator Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane.

Jesus "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

Narrator He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Grief and anguish came over him.

Jesus "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Narrator He went a little farther on, threw himself face downward on the ground,



and prayed,

Jesus “My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want.”

Narrator Then he returned to the three disciples and found them asleep; and he said to Peter,

Jesus “How is it that you three were not able to keep watch with me for even one hour? Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Narrator Once more Jesus went away and prayed,

Jesus “My Father, if this cup of suffering cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done.”

Narrator He returned once more and found the disciples asleep; they could not keep their eyes open. Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then he returned to the disciples.

Jesus “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinful men. Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!”

The Arrest of Jesus

Narrator Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs and sent by the chief priests and the elders. The traitor had given the crowd a signal,

Judas “The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him!”

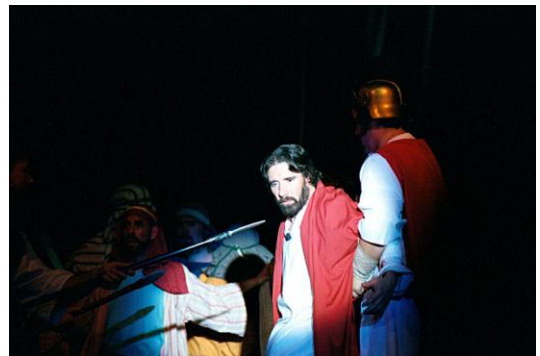
Narrator Judas went straight to Jesus.

Judas “Peace be with you, Teacher,”

Narrator and kissed him.

Jesus “Be quick about it, friend!”

Narrator Then they came up, arrested Jesus, and held him tight.



Jesus is Tried

Narrator Those who had arrested Jesus took him to the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, where the teachers of the Law and the elders had gathered. The chief priests and elders tried to find some false evidence against Jesus to put him to death; but they could not find any, even though many people came forward and told lies about him. Finally two men stepped up and said,

Bystander “This man said, ‘I am able to tear down God’s Temple and three days later build it back up.’”

Narrator The High Priest tore his clothes.

High Priest “Blasphemy! We don’t need any more witnesses! You have just heard his blasphemy! What do you think?”

Crowd “He is guilty and must die.”

Narrator Early in the morning all the chief priests and the elders made their plans against Jesus to put him to death. They put him in chains, led him off, and handed him over to Pilate, the Roman governor. Jesus stood before the Roman governor, who questioned him.

Pilate “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Narrator At every Passover Festival the Roman governor was in the habit of setting free any one prisoner the crowd asked for. At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them,

Pilate “Which one do you want me to set free for you? Jesus Barabbas or Jesus called the Messiah?”

Crowd “Barabbas!”

Pilate “What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Messiah?”

Crowd “Crucify him!”

Pilate “What crime has he committed?”

Narrator Then they started shouting at the top of their voices,

Crowd “Crucify him!”



Jesus is Crucified

Narrator Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; and after he had Jesus whipped, he handed him over to be crucified. Then Pilate’s soldiers took Jesus into the governor’s palace, and the whole company gathered around him. They stripped off his clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand; then they knelt down before him and made fun of him.

Soldiers “Long live the King of the Jews!”

Narrator They spat on him, and took the stick and hit him over the head. When they had finished making fun of him, they took the robe off and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene



named Simon, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. They came to a place called Golgotha, which means, "The Place of the Skull". There they offered Jesus wine mixed with a bitter substance; but after tasting it, he would not drink it. They crucified him, and then divided his clothes among themselves by throwing dice. After that they sat there and watched him. Above his head they put the written notice of the accusation against him: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Then they crucified two bandits with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left. At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. At about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout,

Jesus "Eli, eli, lema sabachthani?"
Narrator which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?" Jesus again gave a loud cry and breathed his last.
Narrator When the army officer and the soldiers with him who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else that happened, they were terrified.
Soldiers "He was really the Son of God!"



Do at least one of the following activities:

1. Color the Crown of Thorns on page 10 of the Leader's List, or design one of your own. You might want to make it out of wood, or of clay.
2. Make a crucifix using clothes pins. The directions are on page 8 of the Leader's List.
3. Make a cross. You might do this by carving a cross from a bar of soap, or by using a mold and plaster of paris.
4. Make a cross from branches and make a figure of Jesus to put on it. Or use a wooden cross, and draw or paint Jesus on the cross.



Leader's List

Pretzels

Ingredients:

2 packages of yeast
1 ½ cups water
4 cups flour
1 tsp sugar

1 egg
1 tsp salt
½ cup coarse salt



- Mix 2 packages of yeast with 1 ½ cups warm water.
- Stir in flour, sugar, and salt. Dough will be sticky.
- Put a good amount of flour on a clean counter top. Then scoop the dough out of the bowl onto the counter. Knead the dough by punching it down, then folding it. Turn and repeat for 10 - 20 times.
- Make 6 - 8 small balls. Roll and shape into a pretzel.
- In a small dish, beat the egg. Brush each pretzel with some of the beaten egg. Sprinkle with coarse salt.
- Bake in preheated 425 oven for 12 minutes, or until brown.

Sacrifice Beads

Materials:

10 pony beads
1 cross approximately 1 1/4 "
1 religious medal or another cross approximately 1 "
22" piece of waxed string



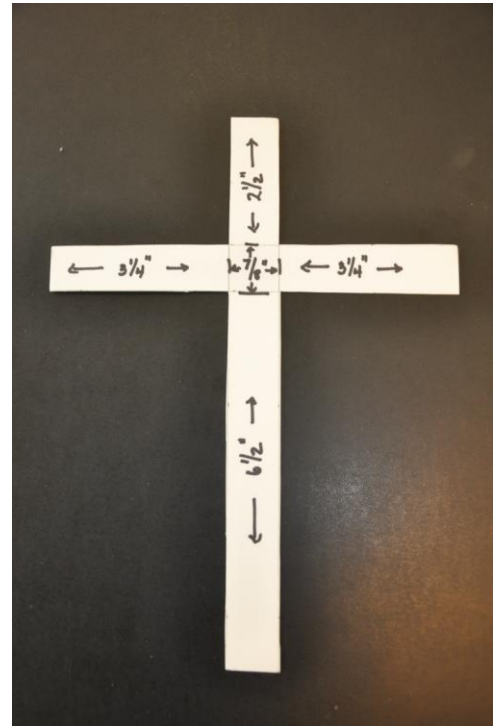
- First you'll need to attach your medal to the center of the string. It is easiest to fold the string in half and pass the fold through the ring on the medal, then pass the two loose ends of the string through the loop in the string. Now your medal is secured to the center of the string.
- Take your first pony bead and thread it onto the string by passing one end of the string through the hole in the pony beach and the other end of the string through the hole from the opposite side of the bead.
- The string that came out the left side of bead #1 should pass back through the hole in bead #2 from left to right and the string which exited bead #1 on the right should be passed through bead #2 from right to left.
- Repeat step #3 for the 8 remaining beads.
- Once all ten beads are on the string, knot the two loose ends of the string together.
- Finally we'll attach the cross in the same basic way we attached the medal to the other end. To do this, pass the knotted end through the loop ring (hole) in the cross then pass the opposite end of the string (the end with the medal and the beads on it) through this loop and pull taught. (continued on next page)

Your sacrifice beads are now ready to use. Start with all the beads at one end. Each time you may make “sacrifice” slide one bead down to the opposite end. By keeping the beads with you all the time, it will serve as a reminder to make sacrifices to honor Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice for us.

Clothes Pin Crucifix

You’ll need: poster board or cardboard, 8 spring clip clothes pins, glue

1. Remove the spring clip from the clothes pins and separate the two halves.
2. Cut a cross from poster board or cardboard of the dimensions shown, right



3. Glue six halves of the clothespins length-wise on the cardboard cross, placing them with the flat side down. Then glue two halves on each of the arms of the cross. See illustration to the left.

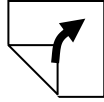


4. Now make the Jesus figure: one pair of clothes pin halves is for Jesus’ body. Placing the flat sides together, glue this first pair on the cross for Jesus’ body. The use the four remaining halves for Jesus’ arms and legs.

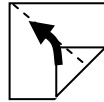
Lenten Cootie Catcher

How to make it:

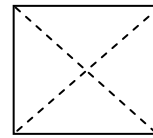
1. Start with a square piece of paper.
2. Fold diagonally from one corner to the other and then open it out.



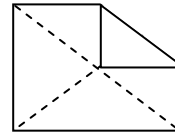
3. Fold from the other bottom corner, diagonally to the top and open it out.



4. Now the square has two diagonal fold lines.



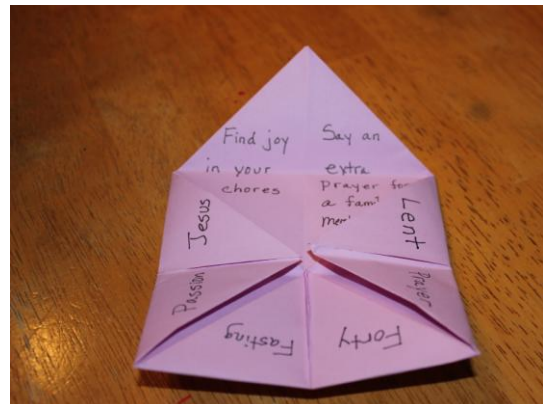
5. Fold all the corners into the middle.



6. Now turn it over onto the other side and fold all the corners into the middle again.
7. Write a word on each triangle on the inside of the cootie catcher.
8. Open out each flap and write a Lenten promise on the inside of the flap.

Game Instructions:

1. Put the cootie catcher on the thumb and first finger of each hand.
2. Choose a word.
3. Open and close the cootie catcher while spelling the word.
4. Choose another word and open and close the cootie catcher while spelling the word.
5. Choose another word. Open the flap under that word. Read the Lenten promise and observe it all day





Crown of Thorns coloring sheet