

FOLLOW ME
discipleship

a message from

BISHOP PATRICK

'because of that personal encounter with Christ, I would like to encourage each of us to hear and respond to his invitation to be his DISCIPLES, to follow him more closely, and to seek to serve him generously in our daily lives.'

Bishop Patrick's Pastoral Letter, 31st Sunday of Ordinary Time, Nov 2018



a message from

POPE FRANCIS

'What instructions does the Lord give us for going forth to others? Only one, and it is very simple: make disciples!'

Pope Francis



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

and what is in it

Welcome to 'Follow Me', the resource to help you to explore the theme of '**Discipleship**' during the Lent term. This resource is intended to support staff and students in exploring the theme of 'Discipleship' through acts of worship, activities and missions. It is set out in a way which harmonises with the NDCYS 'Extra-ordo-nary' calendar and has elements which you can pick and choose from. We hope you find it very useful!



CONTENTS

JOURNEY TOWARDS LENT

This section contains stand-alone pieces of input and reflection for you to use in the first half of the Lent term, as we look towards Lent.

It contains the following themes:

- Lourdes
- Being called
- Preparing for Easter
- Reconciliation

JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

This section takes the theme of the week from 'Extra-ordo-nary' and gives you ideas, scripture, activities and mission which could be used in prayer and retreat sessions. Each week is accompanied by a video, summing up the theme of the week and what is happening within it.

The themes covered are:

- Forgiveness
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Almsgiving
- Sacrifice
- Journey



Before you begin, lets take some time to think about what 'Discipleship' means. Here is a video to help you get thinking and talking about it!

LOURDES

On, or around, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes (11th Feb) is a fantastic time to explore how we can become better disciples by following the example of Our Lady. [This resource](#) will enable you to put in place a 'Lourdes in a day/week' experience, so that your young people can replicate the experience of a pilgrim in Lourdes.



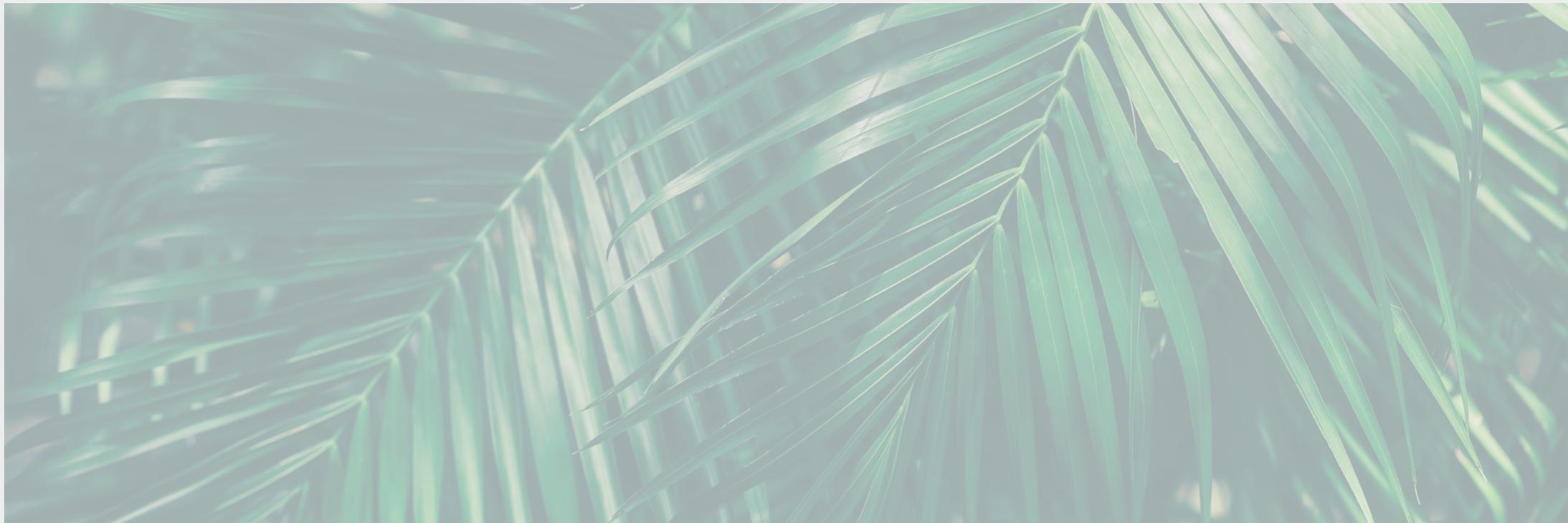


BEING CALLED

The disciples were called by Jesus. They left everything and followed him (Luke 5:28). How are you being called to be a disciple? What might your vocation be? [This resource](#) will help you to plan activities, liturgies or wider events to help your young people to think about how they might be being called as disciples, what is their vocation. It is also a chance to recognise how other people are disciples and to thank them for what they do.

PREPARING FOR EASTER

Your guide to navigating and understanding Lent and Holy Week!





RECONCILIATION

Lent is a perfect time for us to examine our conscience and repent for the things we have done wrong. Have a look at [this resource](#) and consider how you can support your young people with either sacramental reconciliation, a reconciliation service or some reconciliation reflections.

JOURNEY THROUGH LENT



As we begin our journey through Lent, it might be good to take a bit of time to think about what Lent is and why it is important. [This video](#), [this video](#) and [this resource \(preparing for Easter\)](#) will help you with that.

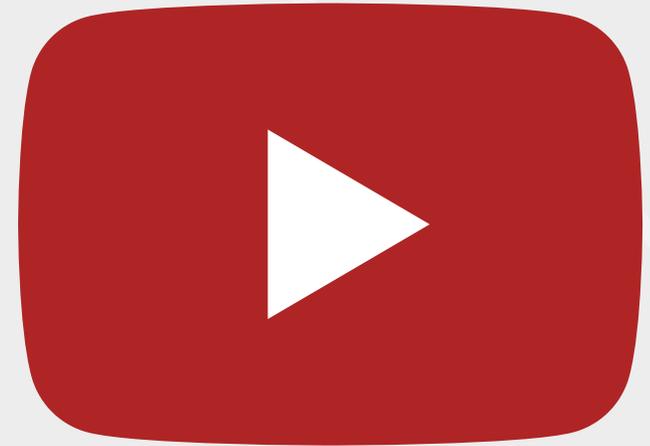
As we journey through Lent together, we'll take a look at one theme each week and think about our calling as disciples, and how we can use this time to become closer to God and to each other.

journey through

LENT



FORGIVENESS



This week we begin Lent - a very special and important time in the Church. On Wednesday, we will start our journey towards Easter with our Ash Wednesday liturgies and it is at this point that we are reminded that God's forgiveness and mercy is always there for us. The ashes remind us of the mistakes we have made, and of our sinfulness before God; but that we are still called in love by God who wants always to forgive us. Think this week about what Lent will mean for you, what will you do and how will you experience God's mercy?

SEE

Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, asked Jesus how often we should forgive others. For us, as disciples, it is important that we learn the same message, so let's see what Jesus' answer was.

The Unforgiving servant

(Primary): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i96GiseNSV8>

Discussion:

Why did the King forgive the servant? When the servant didn't forgive someone else, why did it make the King angry? Who is like the King in our lives? What is the message of this story? What does Jesus want us to learn from it?

(Secondary): (164) The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant - YouTube Or (164) The Parables of Jesus -- The Unforgiving Servant - YouTube

Discussion:

Who do you think the characters are supposed to represent to us? Who is the man who owes money? (us, you and I). The man who forgives the debt? (God). The man who owed a smaller amount? (The people who we have the chance to forgive). The amounts that the first person owed were huge (about £3.6 billion), more than he could ever possibly have been able to pay back by himself, without any help. What does this represent for us? (That we are not able to make amends for our sins, which take us away from God, and that there is nothing we can do ourselves to get rid of them. Is it only God who is able to do that for us).

What is the message of this parable? (That, for God to forgive us, we need to forgive other people and to do it from the heart).

HEAR

Here is some scripture focused on forgiveness. Could you use these in a liturgy or in a Lectio Divina session? Here is a link to a Lectio Divina guide to help you with that.

- *Matthew 18:21-35*
 - *In the story of the Unforgiving servant, Jesus tells us that we need to forgive other people 'from the heart'. What does this mean? How is it different from forgiving people, but not from the heart?*
- *Luke 23:39-43*
- *John 8:1-11 to see who Jesus forgave.*
 - *How do you think they felt after being forgiven?*
 - *Why might it be important for us to forgive others? How does it help the person who is forgiven and the person who forgives?*

THINK

- Why is forgiveness so important? Think of a time when you have been forgiven? How did it make you feel?
- What do you think Jesus is trying to teach us when he asks us to forgive 70 times seven?
- Do you think that Jesus is being realistic when he asks us to forgive this many times? Why?
- Can you think of a prayer which tells us that we should forgive other people in the same way that God forgives us? It is the only one which Jesus taught to his disciples (the Our Father). Let's try to be like Jesus' disciples by praying that prayer each day this week and thinking especially about the section on forgiveness and by making sure that we live it out!

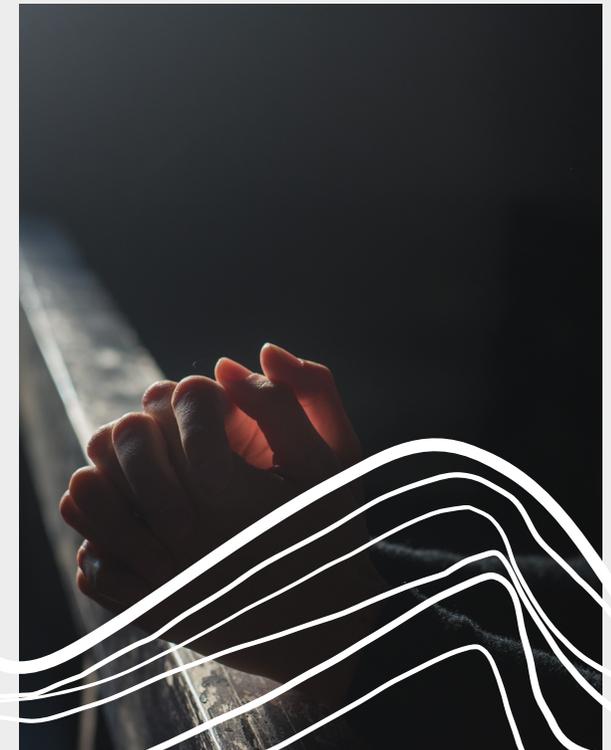
DO

Create a drama or role play about forgiveness. It could be a story from scripture or one you made up yourself.

Write a poem or a prayer about forgiveness. Could you use some of these in a liturgy, put them in a class prayer book or on your prayer board?

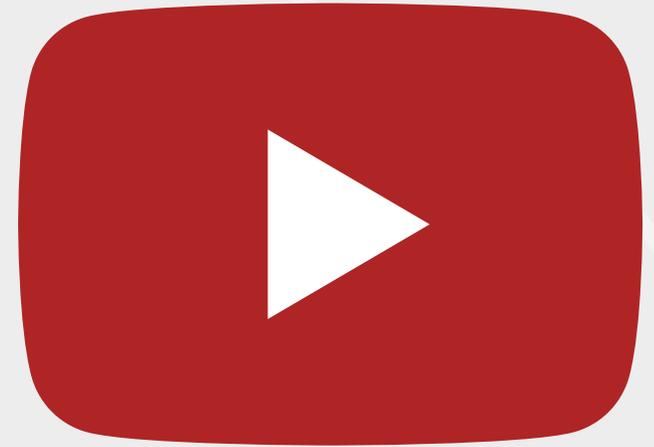
MISSION *suggestions*

Mission - Your mission this week is to think about why forgiveness is so important. Then, if you find yourself in a position to forgive someone, especially if it's in a difficult situation, try to remember why forgiveness is so important.



FORGIVENESS

PRAYER



Prayer is something that can be really hard to understand, let alone do. It is something which the disciples struggled with a bit; they needed to be taught how to pray by Jesus. Sometimes it comes naturally but often it's something we forget about and don't find time for. Prayer is simply a chat with God and you don't need to use the right words, you don't even need to use any words, you just need to put aside some time to be with God. It's amazing what a difference a few minutes each day can make - try it for yourself this week!

SEE

There are lots of different types of prayer we can pray to God. We can say thank you, sorry or ask Him for our needs or the needs of the world, or we can simply praise God for being God. These four traditional types of prayer are known as prayers of thanksgiving, contrition, petition, and adoration. We might also spend time with Him in silence. Here is a song of thanks you might enjoy listening to and making your prayer of thanks today.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=81&v=DN3_tSDhDpY&feature=emb_logo

HEAR & THINK

Listen and think about the following scripture:

Jesus taught the disciples how to pray. Matthew 6:5-6 "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites! They love to stand up and pray in the houses of worship and on the street corners, so that everyone will see them. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. But when you pray, go to your room, close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

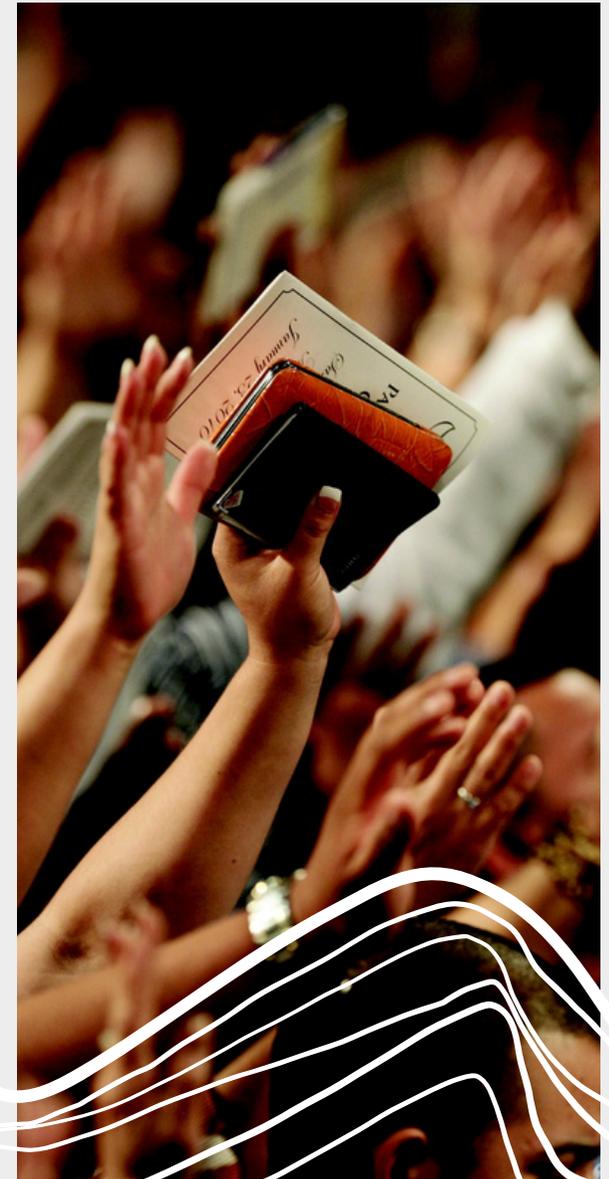
- *What do you think Jesus means when he says we shouldn't 'stand up and pray' where everyone can see us? I am sure that he doesn't mean we shouldn't pray together, or that we shouldn't let people see us pray. What does he mean though?*
- *What does this tell us about being a disciple? Even they were having to get pointers and guidance from Jesus, they weren't getting everything right! Do you think this makes it easier for you to be a disciple?*

DO

- One of the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus gave them the words of the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father. Create a poster or decorative letters of this prayer to display in your classroom or around school.
- You might like to split your class into groups to write some prayers for the needs of the world or the school community.
- As part of one of your liturgies this week you could pair up pupils with prayer buddies. Ask the pupils to pray for their buddy each morning and challenge them to try to do something nice for them during the day.

MISSION *suggestions*

Your mission this week is to reach out into your local community in prayer. Could you create prayer cards to send to a local nursing home or give to someone who needs our prayers at this time?



PRAYER

FASTING



We often give up things for Lent but fasting is not just about going without chocolate. It's about going without something you don't need in order to focus on the things you do. You might fast from watching TV or going on your phone and therefore spending more time with your family and friends. What can you give up for Lent that will help you understand the really important things in your life?

SEE

When we fast, we are giving up something so that we can focus more on our relationship with God and with other people. What examples of fasting can you see in this video? What are you trying to give up to be a good disciple during Lent?

Primary: (116) Jesus and His First Disciples | Bible Story | LifeKids - YouTube

Secondary or Primary: Watch these videos.

*What did these saints give up to follow Jesus and help others?
What impact did it have on other people and themselves? How can we follow their example?*

St Teresa of Calcutta: (116) Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta HD - YouTube

St Maximilian Kolbe: (116) St. Maximilian Kolbe HD - YouTube

HEAR & THINK

Nehemiah 8:10: "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." - How does this link to fasting? What might you need to ask God for his strength in this Lent?

You could explore this idea a bit more with this song from Rend Collective: 'The joy of the Lord is my strength' (116) Rend Collective - Joy of the Lord (Church Online) - YouTube

Matthew 6:16-18: "And when you fast, do not put on a sad face as the hypocrites do. They neglect their appearance so that everyone will see that they are fasting. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you go without food, wash your face and comb your hair, so that others cannot know that you are fasting—only your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you." What do you think this piece of scripture is saying to us? How is it asking us to act when we fast? Why might it not be the right thing to make a fuss about what it is we've given up?

DO

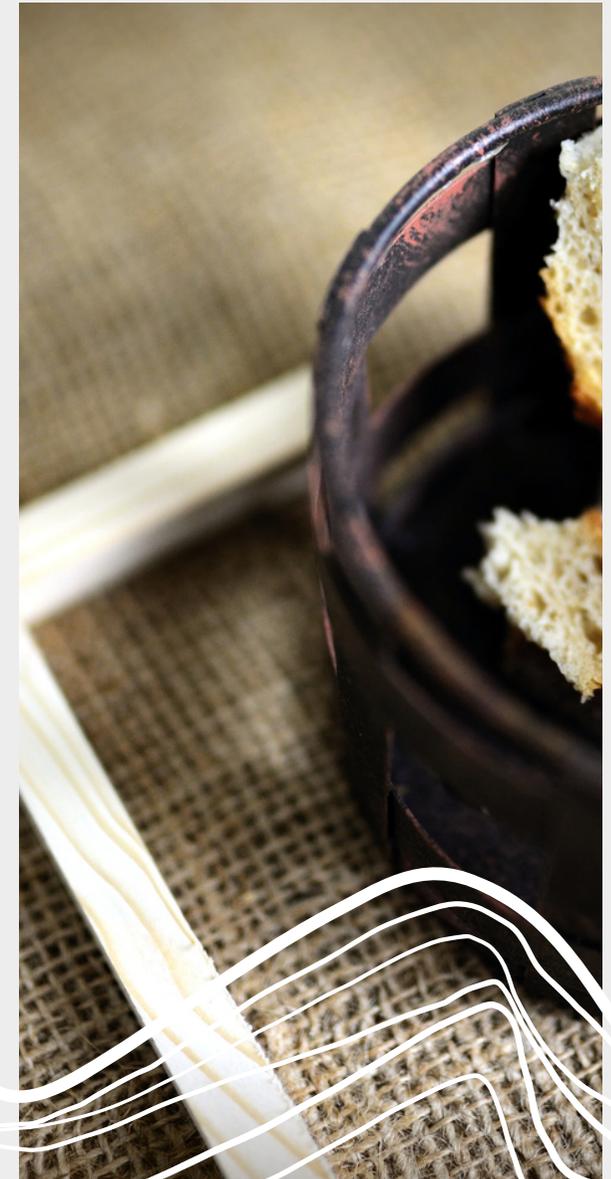
Liturgy action: In a liturgy this week, maybe you could invite people in your class to drop a coin (which you've given them, or even a paper one!) into a bowl and to take away a piece of paper. On the paper they could write or draw what extra thing they are going to try to do for someone this week or in Lent. This could encourage us to think about giving up some material things and doing extra for other people. It might link to this piece of scripture too: Mark 12:41-44 ESV - The Widow's Offering - And he sat - Bible Gateway

Fasting fellowship: There may be people in your school community who are fasting for Ramadan at the moment (or at another time in the year). Maybe you could ask them about what they are doing and why - what similarities and differences are there in what Catholics do during lent? Could your school have a 'fasting fellowship' day and encourage people to show solidarity with those in our community who are Muslim by following the Ramadan fasting conditions for a day?

MISSION *suggestions*

Most of you will have already given up something for Lent (how is it going? Keep going with it!), so your mission this week is to do something extra for someone else. The saints we have looked at this week gave up their time, their possession and their lives to help others. What could you do to help someone this week? Maybe you could:

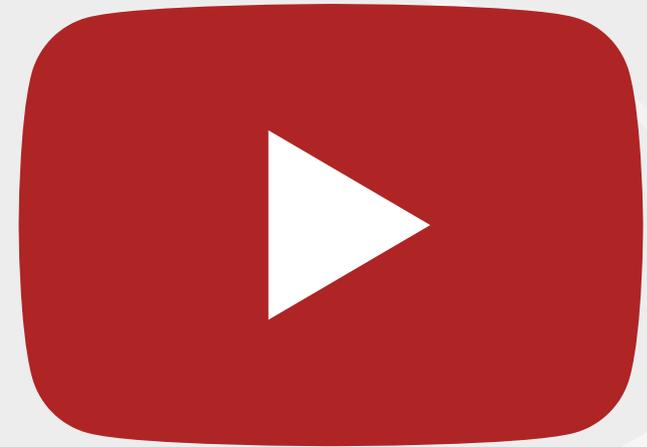
- Use some of your time at break or lunch to see if there is anyone looking lonely or upset and ask if they want to talk.
- Take the time to help a teacher with their bags or to tidy up after a lesson, or help catering site staff by picking up any rubbish you see in the canteen this week.
- Help out at home with siblings or housework.



FASTING

ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving means simply giving what we are able to those in need. It's not just about giving money to charity however. You can give of yourself in so many ways - you can give your time, your compassion or your love to those in need and by doing so truly understand what Lent is all about.



SEE & THINK

Watch the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=246&v=HOIK5d9-V2g&feature=emb_logo

Think about what it is encouraging us to do during this season of Lent... (answers might include things like: noticing the needs of those around us, being there for people who need help even when we are busy etc...)

Hear Matthew 6:2-4 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

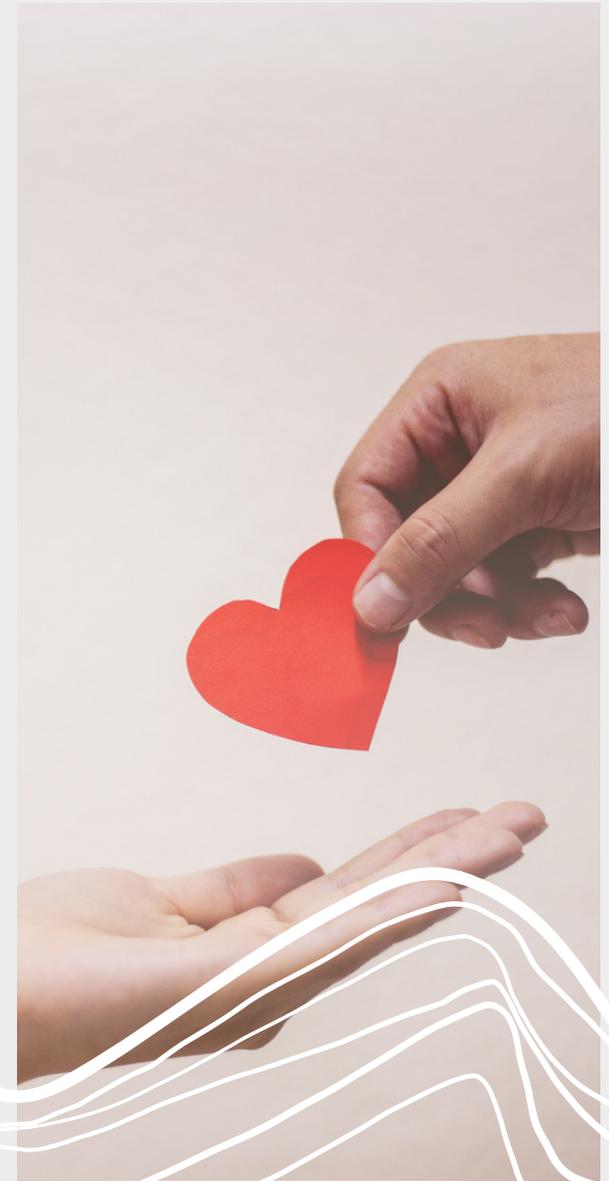
HEAR

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MISSION *suggestions*

You could create 'RAKtivist' cards (Random Acts of Kindness cards) this week which students can give to others when they have done an act of kindness for someone. Students then have to pay the kindness forward. Cards can be found here. [tag_youre_it_cards \(randomactsofkindness.org\)](https://www.randomactsofkindness.org)

You could have a look through this website for other ideas: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/become-a-raktivist>



ALMSGIVING

SACRIFICE



This week we will be thinking about the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. His death and resurrection are at the heart of our faith and they are the reason that we have our school and our Church today. We are called to make sacrifices too, not necessarily to give our lives, but maybe to give our time, or our love, or our compassion. Think about the people who make sacrifices for you, and what that means to you. Think about how you can make sacrifices for others this week.

SEE & THINK

Watch the following video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8mgNM8U13M&t=221s>

- *The disciples served others and taught all whom they met about Jesus. Our actions can also inspire others to know Jesus.*
 - *Do you think it is our actions or our words which are more important in being good disciples?*
 - *How are the people who work with Mary's Meals being good disciples?*
 - *Could you be a disciple by sacrificing something to make other people's lives better?*

HEAR & THINK

Listen to and think about the following scripture. What does it tell us about Discipleship? What does it inspire you to do?

Hebrews 15:16 "Let us, then, always offer praise to God as our sacrifice through Jesus, which is the offering presented by lips that confess him as Lord. Do not forget to do good and to help one another, because these are the sacrifices that please God."

DO

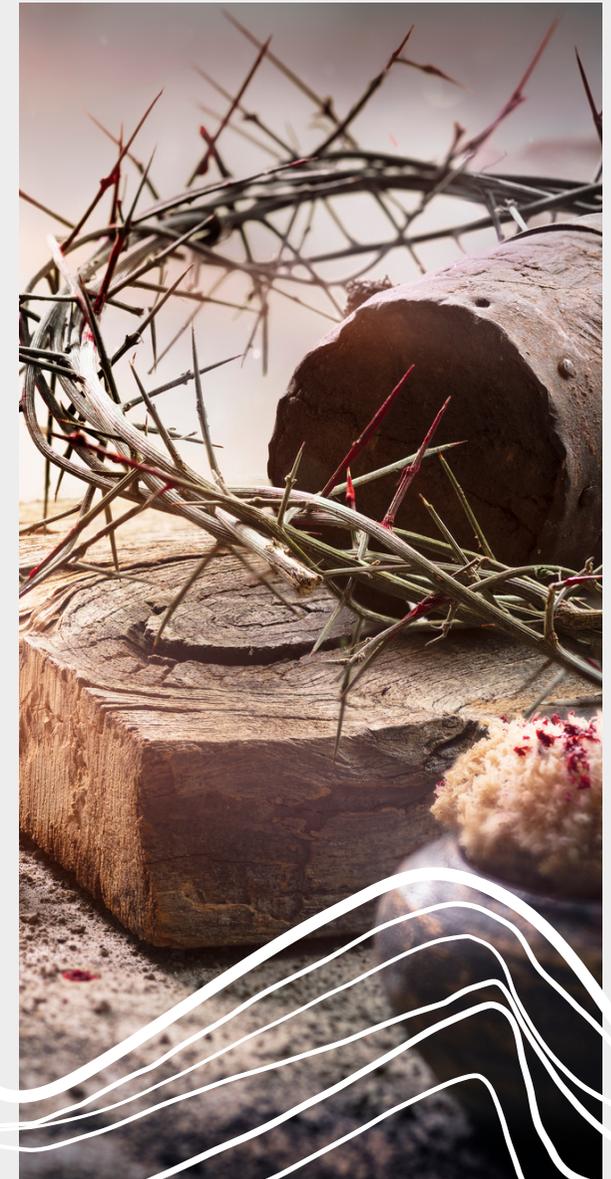
Could you invite your class to write thank you cards for the people who make sacrifices for them every day? These people could be parents, carers, school staff, NHS staff, friends, family, or anyone who gives up something to make their life better!

Could everyone in your class/tutor group write a promise to do something for someone else at a time they would normally be doing something they enjoy like watching TV, reading, drawing etc?

MISSION *suggestions*

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SACRIFICE

JOURNEY



Lent is a truly special journey that helps us walk with, and get closer to, Jesus. By trying to walk in his footsteps we can understand better about sacrifice and love. Think about your journey through Lent so far - how hard has it been? What have been the struggles you have faced? Think this week about what you've learnt from your journey and just how far you've come.

THINK & HEAR

We've been on a journey through Lent together and with Jesus. Jesus also journeys with us through life, through the hard times and the good. Listen to one of these songs and think about your own journey so far. Do any of the lyrics jump out to you?

'Head to the Heart', United Pursuit: [\(116\) Head to the Heart-United Pursuit - YouTube](#)

'Never alone', Hillsong young and free: [\(116\) HILLSONG YOUNG & FREE - Never Alone \(Lyric Video\) - YouTube](#)

Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." God tells us here that we will be with us along our journey, that he has a plan for us to help us to lead a happy life.

Read and think about this 'Footprints' reflection. When in your life do you feel like things have gone really well, and so God walked alongside you? When are the times when things were hard and there was only one set of footprints, and God carried you?

One night I dreamed a dream. As I was walking along the beach with my Lord. Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, One belonging to me and one to my Lord. After the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that at many times along the path of my life, especially at the very lowest and saddest times, there was only one set of footprints. This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it. "Lord, you said once I decided to follow you, You'd walk with me all the way.

But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life, there was only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me." He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you Never, ever, during your trials and testings. When you saw only one set of footprints, It was then that I carried you."

