

THE ASCENSION

# Lenten Companion

Walking with Jesus to Jerusalem

**Children's Guide  
(Ages 7-12)**



*The Ascension Lenten Companion: Walking with Jesus to Jerusalem Children's Guide (Ages 7–12)* is a free resource for families that is intended for use with *The Ascension Lenten Companion: Walking with Jesus to Jerusalem*.

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Ascension  
PO Box 1990  
West Chester, PA 19380  
1-800-376-0520  
[ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com)

## CONTENTS

A Letter to Parents .....	4
Ash Wednesday .....	6
The First Week of Lent .....	8
The Second Week of Lent.....	10
The Third Week of Lent .....	12
The Fourth Week of Lent.....	14
The Fifth Week of Lent.....	16
Holy Week .....	18
Holy Thursday .....	20
Good Friday.....	22
Holy Saturday .....	24
Easter Sunday .....	26

# A Letter to Parents

## Dear Parents,

Welcome to Lent. This season is a great opportunity to meet Jesus and grow in relationship with him. In this *Lenten Companion Children's Guide*, we offer reflections, activities, prayers, and more so that your children can enter into this season right alongside you.

This guide draws on the spirit of *The Ascension Lenten Companion: Walking with Jesus to Jerusalem* to help children appreciate Jesus' love and share it with others. Our hope is that it will help you talk about the things that matter as you read and act on the content together.

This Children's Guide includes resources for Ash Wednesday, each week of Lent, each day of the Triduum, and Easter Sunday. Below are explanations of each component. You do not need to do every single one; use what you find helpful.

## Reflection

Each week features a short reflection (100–200 words) for your child to ponder. These reflections connect thematically to the content found in *The Ascension Lenten Companion* and are intended to draw your child into a deeper experience of Lenten devotion. You may choose to read them aloud to younger children or allow older children to read and reflect on their own.



### Challenge of the Week

These practical challenges invite your child to put the week's reflection into action.

These fun activities allow your child to creatively express what they are learning as they reflect on and engage with the material.



### Activity of the Week

## Prayer

A short prayer helps orient your child to the focus of the week's reflection.

## Fasting

These ideas for how to fast in a special way each week are simple and adaptable to your child's understanding and needs.

## Almsgiving

Almsgiving is giving of our time, talent, and treasure. Each week there is an invitation for your child to give of themselves in some way during the Lenten season.



### For the Whole Family

Each week there will be questions and ideas for how to start a conversation with your family about the content of the reflection.



### Song of the Week

This song suggestion corresponds to the content of the week and is something you can listen to together with your child.



### Station of the Week

The fourteen Stations of the Cross are divided among the weeks of Lent, Holy Week, and the Triduum for individual reflection. To help your children through these prayers, we invite you to check out the [Stations of the Cross cards from Catholic Family Crate](#), available on Ascension's website.

The team at Ascension is praying for you and your family as you encounter our Lord Jesus this Lent. We pray that this time will be a season of growth, peace, and Easter joy.

God Bless,  
The Ascension Team

# Determined

## Reflection

Has your family ever hosted a special holiday celebration in your home—or have you ever had visiting relatives stay at your house for Thanksgiving or Christmas? If so, you probably know there are lots of things to do before people arrive. You may have seen your parents running around the house to prepare: throwing things in closets, vacuuming the floors, dusting surfaces, and sweeping off the front steps. They probably told you to tidy up your bedroom, too. When someone we love and respect is coming into our home, we want it to be ready for them.

Every day, Jesus wants to enter our hearts. Is your heart ready to receive him, or is it a little messy? Are there things in your heart that you want to hide or throw away? Are there some places in your heart that you need Jesus' help to clean up?

Lent is the perfect time to dust off our hearts and turn them into a beautiful place for Jesus to live. Do not be afraid. Jesus created your heart, and he knows how to help you get it ready to receive him.



### Challenge of the Week

Pretend that your heart looks like your bedroom. Are there things in your heart that you would be nervous for Jesus to see? Are there any hurts, sins, or experiences you've been carrying inside you that make you feel sad, upset, afraid, or angry? Take a moment to think about what these things are—then ask Jesus to help you “clean up.” A good place to ask for Jesus' help is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where you can tell Jesus what you found in the room of your heart and ask him to take care of it. A trip to the confessional would be a great way to start your Lenten journey.

Draw a picture of your heart as a house. What color is the house? How many rooms are there? Inside, draw the things that you love: people, places, things. What makes your heart skip a beat? What makes you excited? Finally, where does Jesus fit inside your house? Where would you place him in your heart?



### Activity of the Week

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, help me to become the person you created me to be. Amen.*

## Fasting

“Fasting” means giving up something—like sweets, TV, video games, or bad habits—so that we can stay focused on Jesus. What can you give up (fast from) this week? Maybe it’s watching a little less TV or saying “No, thank you” to a treat or dessert. These little sacrifices help us strengthen our will and make it easier for us to listen to Jesus!

On Ash Wednesday, try not to eat meat if you are able. If you are over the age of 14, ask your parents what the fasting guidelines are for Ash Wednesday.

## Almsgiving

Almsgiving is giving of our time, talent, and treasure. This week, go through the stuff in your bedroom. Is there something you own that you don’t use so much anymore? Consider giving it to someone who will be able to use and truly appreciate it.



### For the Whole Family

Share three things that you are grateful for and three things that you want to get better at. Invite your family to share too.



### Song of the Week

“Amazing Grace”

John Newton, arr. Sarah Kroger



### Station of the Week

**The First Station**

Jesus Is Condemned to Death

# Changed

### Reflection

Has an encounter with another person ever changed your life? For instance, have you ever met someone—and somehow meeting that person led to something new or different? Maybe you met a friend at school, and now you play soccer. Maybe your mom or dad met someone at church, and now they have a new job. Maybe a long time ago, your grandparents met each other—and now you, your parents, and all your aunts, uncles, and cousins exist!

Our lives change because of the people we meet. That is what living out the Christian life is all about: meeting Jesus and allowing that encounter to change our lives. Jesus isn't just some character in a book; he's a real person. Following Jesus isn't just about following the rules or memorizing prayers; it is about *building a relationship*. From that relationship, we can live out what it means to be a happy, holy, virtuous person.

How has being in a relationship with Jesus changed your life?



### Challenge of the Week

The best relationships challenge us to be better. Take a moment today to think about what Jesus is calling you to do to help you improve. Is he calling you to be kinder to others? More patient with others? Is he asking you to use your strengths and gifts to support others? Write down some specific things to help you remember, and then make a plan to act on these things this week.

Write a letter to a person who has changed your life, and send it to him or her this week. Then write a note to Jesus, telling him how he's changed your life.



### Activity of the Week



## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, help me to encounter you as the living person you are. Thank you for being there for me and for being my truest friend. Amen.*

## Fasting

This week, try to spend less time doing (in other words, fast from) solo activities like video games, TV, and scrolling. Instead, find ways to spend more time with your family and friends.

## Almsgiving

Part of almsgiving is giving of our time. Who in your life needs some of your time and attention? Can you spend a little more intentional time with them this week?



### For the Whole Family

Talk to your family about a person who has changed your life for the better. Then ask them to tell you about someone who has changed their lives.



### Song of the Week

[“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”](#)

Joseph Scriven, arr. Paul Baloche



### Station of the Week

The Second Station

Jesus Carries His Cross

# Mercy

### Reflection

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells a story about a Samaritan who helps a man who was beaten up and left on the side of the road. The Samaritan gently cares for the man and treats his injuries. Then he takes the man to an inn and pays for him to stay there and be cared for. When he is leaving the inn, the Samaritan shows his generosity by saying to the owner, “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back” (Luke 10:34–35). The Samaritan basically tells the innkeeper to give the injured man whatever he needs, without holding back—because he himself will cover the cost.

Just like the Good Samaritan in this parable, who went out of his way to help someone in need, Jesus finds us, helps us, and heals us when we are broken and hurt. More than that, he pours out his love, compassion, and mercy on us *without limit*. Jesus doesn’t say, “I’ll help you out, but only up to a certain point.” Instead, he is willing to do anything, go to any length, to care for us. Jesus longs to give us everything without limit.

Remember this whenever you are afraid to tell Jesus something or think that you are not worthy of his love. Jesus wants to give you everything you need.



### Challenge of the Week

What we *want* is often not what we *need*. Take a moment to reflect on what you need from Jesus. Is it more patience? More peace? More hope? As you reflect, ask Jesus to give you what you need. Jesus will give you everything you need to become the best version of yourself—a saint.

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### Activity of the Week

Imagine that you are a superhero. What powers do you have? What does your superhero suit look like? Draw a picture. Now draw another picture of yourself—but this time, give yourself the power of virtue. What virtues do you need to grow in? What are some things you would do differently if you practiced that virtue better? Choose one or more virtues from the list below and ask Jesus to help you grow in them.

- Generosity
- Diligence
- Humility
- Charity
- Patience
- Kindness
- Faithfulness
- Courage

#### Prayer

*Dear Jesus, I know that you want what is best for me. Help me to ask you for what I need so that I may become the best version of myself. Amen.*

#### Fast

This week, give up watching regular TV. Instead, find stories of the saints to read or watch so that you can learn about those who lived out heroic virtue.

#### Almsgiving

This week, give of your treasure. The Good Samaritan gave generously without worrying about what it cost him. How can you give generously this week?



### For the Whole Family

Talk to your family about how you can use your gifts generously to help others this week. Make a plan for how you can carry out your ideas together.



### Song of the Week

[“Whatever You Do”](#)

Willard F. Jabusch



### Station of the Week

**The Third Station**

Jesus Falls for the First Time

## The Third Week of Lent

# Listen

### Reflection

Have you ever gotten lost? It's scary when you don't know where you are or when you lose track of the people you were with. Sometimes we get lost and we're afraid of turning back—so we just try to figure out how to move forward on our own. When we don't find our way, it's easy to be ashamed that we didn't ask for help earlier.

The story of the Good Shepherd teaches us that Jesus is always looking for us when we are lost. And when he finds us, he isn't upset that we got lost. He is overjoyed to be reunited with us. No matter how far we stray—no matter how confused we get or how much we run away—Jesus is always ready to find us and bring us home.

If you've ever been lost, you know the relief of being found. That is what Jesus offers to us: the peace of being found, of going home.



### Challenge of the Week

In the story of the Good Shepherd, Jesus leaves the ninety-nine sheep to search for the one sheep that had gotten lost. Is there someone in your life who is often left out? How can you include them this week to help them feel welcome and loved?

Ask your family members or friends if they'd like to play hide-and-seek.  
Remember when you're playing that Jesus is always seeking you.



### Activity of the Week

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, help me to see that you are always seeking me when I am lost. Help me to be a good friend to those who need it the most. Amen.*

## Fasting

This week, make a small sacrifice for someone in your family. Fast from something like sweets, and offer the sacrifice up for that person. Or do someone else's chores without being asked, keeping your love for your family members in mind as you do them.

## Almsgiving

Almsgiving calls us to give of our time. Just as the Good Shepherd takes the time to find us and bring us home, take some extra time to help your mom or dad this week.



### For the Whole Family

Talk to your family about a time when they were lost and how they felt when they were found again.



### Song of the Week

["The King of Love  
My Shepherd Is"](#)

– Henry W. Baker, arr.  
Benedictines of Mary,  
Queen of Apostles



### Station of the Week

**The Fourth Station**  
Jesus Meets His Mother

# Commit

### Reflection

What is the best gift you've ever received? Did you get it for Christmas or for your birthday—or was it given to you “just because,” with no special occasion? Getting presents is exciting, especially when they are unexpected and better than you thought they'd be. Sometimes, though, there are things that we want very much, but we think *I'll probably never get it*. What is that thing for you?

In the Bible, a blind man asks Jesus for the gift of sight. After a life of begging on the side of the road, the blind man had probably given up hope that he'd ever see. But then Jesus—the one he's heard everyone talking about, the one who can perform miracles—walks down the road. Jesus comes to the blind man and asks, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man says, “Lord, I want to see.” And Jesus gives him that gift! Close your eyes for a moment and imagine if that was all you ever saw: nothing. Now imagine if you were able to see *everything*: the birds, the sky, the faces of the people around you, trees, flowers—*everything!*

What is a gift you would never expect to receive that you want to ask Jesus for?



### Challenge of the Week

Seeing things from other people's points of view is hard to do, especially when we disagree with them. This week, if you get into a disagreement or if someone hurts your feelings, take a moment to try to see things from that person's point of view. It's hard, but Jesus asks us to be patient with others and try to understand their hearts.

God is everywhere; watch for him! Throughout the week, keep track of all the times you see God's love at work in your life. Write them all down on the same piece of paper with different colored crayons or markers. You'll be amazed by how many you'll have written down by the end of the week.



### Activity of the Week

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for everything you've given to me. I ask you to bless those who go without all the things I have, so that they may also receive from your abundance. Amen.*

## Fast

Fast from regular books and movies this week and use your eyes to focus on Jesus. Read a book about him or watch a movie about his life and the miracles he did.

## Almsgiving

This week, give of your time and talent to show someone in your life something new. Maybe you could spend some time with your younger sibling and teach them how to do something you can do—or maybe you could visit an older relative and do something special for them, like sing them a song or draw them a picture.



### For the Whole Family

Ask everyone in your family about the best things they have ever seen. Say a prayer together thanking Jesus for filling your life with such beautiful things.



### Song of the Week

[“Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus”](#)

Helen Lemmel, arr. Lauren Daigle



### Station of the Week

**The Fifth Station**

Simon Helps Jesus Carry  
His Cross

## The Fifth Week of Lent

# Unwavering

### Reflection

This is the last week of Lent before Holy Week. During Holy Week, we remember Jesus' journey to the Cross—his suffering and death before rising again, just as he promised. The time leading up to Jesus' arrest was very hard for his disciples. They didn't want to lose their amazing friend, and they also didn't want to get hurt themselves. They were starting to become more and more afraid. But this week, Jesus asks them—as he asks all of us—to simply stay with him.

Sometimes it's hard to do the right thing, like getting involved when someone is being bullied or standing up for someone who's being made fun of. Jesus asks us to always remember these people and act in a special way toward them. As we hear about everyone pointing their fingers at Jesus and accusing him of doing something wrong, we remember that he is innocent. We know that he is God, who only wants the very best for us. Let's stay close to Jesus this week, reflecting on how much he gave up and suffered for us out of love.



### Challenge of the Week

This week, if someone you know is being bullied, left out, or made fun of, make a special effort to sit with them and do as Jesus would do: love them.

Take some clay and sculpt it into a circle. You can even braid it into a circle if you want! Then take some toothpicks and stick them into the clay when it's still wet, creating a crown of thorns. Let the clay dry completely.

Every time you do an act of kindness or sacrifice this week, break one of the toothpicks off. Try to get all the toothpicks broken off by Easter. Your acts of love will be a beautiful gift to give to Jesus.



### Activity of the Week



## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, help me to recognize the people you want me to serve, and please give me the courage and strength to be there for them. Amen.*

## Fast

Make a list of three special sacrifices you can make this week out of love for Jesus, who is sacrificing so much for you.

## Almsgiving

Almsgiving invites us to give of our time, talent, and treasure. Pick one of those three to give to the people around you in a special way.



### For the Whole Family

Talk to your family about why it is good to sacrifice and do things for others. Brainstorm together about some things you can do for others this week—maybe going to a soup kitchen to feed the hungry, donating goods to a charity, or helping someone in your neighborhood who is in need.



### Song of the Week

[“In Christ Alone”](#)

Stuart Townend, arr. Sounds  
Like Reign



### Station of the Week

**The Sixth Station**

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

## Faithful

### Reflection

It is Holy Week. This is the most important week of the entire year for the Catholic Church. It is the week when we see how much Jesus loves us. He loves us with *everything*. He gives us not only his love, mercy, kindness, and grace; he gives us his life, the greatest gift anyone can give.

Jesus endured people disliking him, accusing him, arresting him, and ultimately killing him. Sometimes Jesus asks big things of us, and we have to decide whether to say yes or no. However, most times Jesus asks small things of us. Every single day, we can choose whether we will listen to Jesus or ignore him.

These moments look something like this: *The kitchen table needs to be wiped down. I could take a minute to do an act of kindness, or I can wait for one of my parents to do it.* Or like this: *My mom asked me to clean my room. I can do it right away or wait until she gets upset with me after asking so many times.* Another example: *My dad asked me to be kind to my little sister. I can choose kindness, or I can keep bothering her until it becomes a bigger problem.*

In what ways can you listen to Jesus today? Jesus is giving us the gift of his life. Can you give him the gift of yours?



### Challenge of the Week

This week, when someone asks you to do something, don't wait until the last minute—do it right away.

Draw an outline of a cross on a piece of paper. Throughout the week, when you could have done something better, write it on the Cross. Know in your heart that Jesus forgives you and that he died on the Cross so that anything you do wrong can be made right. Holy Week is a beautiful time to receive the grace of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



### Activity of the Week

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for the sacrifice you made for me. Help me to offer all my daily sacrifices and irritations to you. Amen.*

## Fasting

This is the last week of Lent. What sacrifices can you make this week before Lent ends? Consider giving something up completely, like no sweets, no TV, or no music. It will be a great sacrifice to give to Jesus, but it will also make Easter that much better!

## Almsgiving

This week, go into your closet and see if there is anything you don't wear anymore or fit into anymore that you can donate. These clothes would be a great gift to someone who needs them.



### For the Whole Family

Have a conversation with your family about what you are doing this week to make small sacrifices for Jesus. Ask yourselves as a family: Is there a sacrifice or fast you can make together? That will help you all stay committed.



### Song of the Week

["How He Loves"](#)  
David Crowder Band



### Station of the Week

The Seventh Station  
Jesus Falls the Second Time

# Communion

## Reflection

This is the first day of the Triduum, the three sacred days leading up to Easter Sunday. On Holy Thursday, we remember the night when Jesus was betrayed and arrested. It is also the night when Jesus gave us the greatest gift: the Holy Eucharist.

At the Last Supper, Jesus blessed bread and wine and gave them to his Apostles. He told them that the bread was his Body, broken for them, and the wine was his Blood, poured out for them (Luke 22:19–20). Ever since that night, the Eucharist—the sacred gift by which God himself is truly present in the bread and wine—has been celebrated through the ages. We still participate in this beautiful sacrament as a Church today.

If you haven't received First Communion yet, you can still worship Jesus in the Holy Eucharist every week at Mass. When you do receive Holy Communion, know that Jesus is truly alive in your heart when you receive him in the guise of bread and wine. Thank Jesus for giving you this gift.



### Challenge of the Day

Tonight there will be a Mass of the Lord's Supper at your local parish. For your challenge today, if you are able, go to this Mass with your family and thank Jesus for the gift of the Eucharist.

Take a white sheet of paper and cut out a circle. Draw a little cross on the front of the circle. Then draw Jesus on the back of the circle. When you hold the circle up to the light, you will see Jesus in it. This will remind you that Jesus is truly present under the appearance of the little white Host at Mass.



### Activity of the Day

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for giving us the gift of your Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Help us to always appreciate and reverence your holy presence. Help us to believe more deeply in you. Amen.*

## Fasting

Consider fasting from any snacks after you come home from Mass (or after 7 p.m. if you're unable to go to Mass) to be one with Jesus, who spent the night of Holy Thursday in prison.

## Almsgiving

Consider giving your parents some of your time today. Ask them what they need help with, and do it for them.



### For the Whole Family

If you go to the Mass of the Lord's Supper, ask your family members what part meant the most to them. If you don't go, ask your family members about a time they encountered Jesus' presence in the Eucharist.



### Song of the Day

["Remember"](#)

Steffany Gretzinger, Matt Maher,  
and Ran Jackson



### Stations of the Day

**The Eighth Station**

Jesus Meets the Women  
of Jerusalem

**The Ninth Station**

Jesus Falls a Third Time

# Commit

## Reflection

Yesterday's reflection focused on the Eucharist and the great gift that it is in our lives. Today is Good Friday, the day we remember Jesus dying on the Cross. It is on the Cross that Jesus truly fulfills his words during the Last Supper: "This is my body which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). He gives his body to us for food in the Eucharist, and he offers up his body for us on the Cross to save us. Why did Jesus die on the Cross for us?

Do you remember the story of Adam and Eve? In the Garden, Adam and Eve disobeyed God—and after that, sin and death entered the world, and heaven was closed to everyone. The people of God waited for a Savior who would save them from their sins and open the gates of heaven to all. That is what Jesus did for us on the Cross: he gave his life so that we can be in heaven with him forever. Jesus is our Savior.



### Challenge of the Day

If you can, go to the Good Friday service at your parish with your family today. If you're not able to go, spend the hours between 12 and 3 p.m. in silence. These are the hours when we honor Jesus' time of suffering on the Cross.

Spend some time in nature today. Go for a walk, and in the silence, listen for God's voice.



### Activity of the Day

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the Cross to save me. I love you, Jesus. Help me to be faithful to you and never forget the sacrifice you made for me. Amen.*

## Fasting

Today on Good Friday, try not to eat meat if you are able. If you are over the age of 14, ask your parents what the fasting guidelines are for Good Friday.

## Almsgiving

Today, do some special acts of kindness for the people in your family. Sometimes fasting can make people grumpy; try to help by being as kind as possible.



### For the Whole Family

If you go to the Good Friday service at your parish, ask your family members what part meant the most to them. If you aren't able to go, ask your family members what Jesus' sacrifice means to them.



### Song of the Day

#### "Were You There?"

African American spiritual, arr.  
The Vigil Project



### Stations of the Day

#### The Tenth Station

Jesus' Clothes Are Taken Away

#### The Eleventh Station

Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

#### The Twelfth Station

Jesus Dies on the Cross

# Shroud

## Reflection

Today, the world is quiet. Jesus has died and is buried in the tomb. Before he died, Jesus told his Apostles that he would be raised from the dead—but at this moment, that promise is hard to believe. If someone dies, how can they come back to life? On this day between Good Friday and Easter, we sit in the quiet and wait with Mary and the Apostles.

This is a day to remember what Jesus did yesterday and to prepare our hearts for the joy that awaits us in the morning. Jesus will rise victorious over death, and he invites us to rise with him.



### Challenge of the Day

Even though Good Friday is over, we're still waiting for Easter today. Try not to celebrate too early; instead, rest in the solemn quiet of Holy Saturday.

The days after Jesus' burial were difficult for Mary, Jesus' mother.

Draw a picture of Mary—and beneath it, in your best handwriting, write our special prayer to her:

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*



### Activity of the Day



## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you for your sacrifice for me on Good Friday.  
Help me to love you always! Amen.*

## Fasting

Today, try to fast from noise. Music, TV, video games, talking too much ... try to give up or limit these things so that you can keep your heart and mind quiet today, as Jesus rests in the tomb.

## Almsgiving

Talk to your family and see whether there is one more donation you can make before Easter. It could make a big difference to someone in need.



### For the Whole Family

Go on a walk with your family and ask them to share memories from different Lents throughout their lives.



### Song of the Day

[“Crown Him with Many Crowns”](#)

Matthew Bridges



### Stations of the Day

**The Thirteenth Station**

The Body of Jesus Is Taken Down  
from the Cross

**The Fourteenth Station**

Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

# Remember

## Reflection

Happy Easter! Jesus is risen! Alleluia!

After praying, waiting, watching, and suffering with Jesus, now we rejoice! Jesus is fully alive in his glorified body: living, whole, no longer in pain. The same Jesus who rose from the tomb two thousand years ago is risen today, alive and walking with you on your journey to heaven. Remember all that you and Jesus have experienced together this Lent, and go forward in joy!



### Challenge of the Day

Today, be a light. Be the hands and feet of the risen Jesus by being kind to everyone you meet. Try to avoid sarcasm or drama. Instead, build up the people around you.

Have fun and celebrate with your family and loved ones. Maybe you and your family members can bake a special treat or decorate the house together!



### Activity of the Day

## Prayer

*Dear Jesus, thank you. Thank you for everything. Thank you for creating me and for living, dying, and rising for me. Help me to become the person you created me to be. Amen.*



### For the Whole Family

Spend time with your family celebrating and enjoying your time together.

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### Song of the Day

[“Christ Is Risen”](#)

Matt Maher