

Life to the Full:

Living faith within our families

Monthly newsletter for parents: **April 2019**



Looking Back

As we approach the end of Lent and prepare to celebrate Easter, now is a good time to reflect on our Lent journeys. Here is a reflection that children will use during the last week of term, which you might like to discuss or repeat with your child:

- **At the start of Lent they were asked to consider how they could give, act and pray more through Lent.**
 - Have they managed this? What was easy or difficult about it?
- **By drawing close to Jesus they learned to resist temptation and trust in God.**
 - What have they been tempted by? Were they able to resist?
- **They learned that looking at Jesus and spending time with Him helps us change to become like Him.**
 - Have they noticed themselves change?
- **They learned about God's mercy for them and how they should show mercy to others.**
 - What opportunities have they had to show mercy?
- **They learned about God's limitless love for them and how He asks us to be peacemakers.**
 - How does it feel to know God loves them? What situations have they brought peace to?

Throughout Lent we have focussed on the theme 'Draw Me to Your Presence, O Lord', where children have learned that by spending time with Jesus, we change to become more like Him and will be able to shine His light out into the world.

It doesn't matter how we feel our Lent journeys have been. It is never too late to draw close to Jesus. Below is an example of this, with a dramatised story of the thief on the cross, who in his last moments drew close to Jesus. You might like to reflect on this story during the holidays, particularly on Good Friday.

The Thief on the Cross

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

I am a thief. I know that I've done bad things in my life. As I dragged my cross up that huge hill, I knew this was fair. This was what I deserved.

Even when they drove the nails into my hands and feet and I cried out in pain, I knew this was fair. This was what I deserved.

But there was another man sentenced to death who people were calling the 'King of the Jews', the 'Messiah'. The Roman soldiers and the crowd all laughed at him and they whipped him until he bled. I don't

know how, but deep inside I knew this man hadn't done anything wrong. This man was truly the Messiah.

And they nailed him to a cross just like mine. This wasn't fair. This wasn't what he deserved.

Another criminal hanging on a cross shouted insults, saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" Through gritted teeth because it hurt so much to talk, I said to this other criminal, "You and I have done bad things and are getting exactly what we deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Prayer

This Easter, change me Jesus into who you made me to be.
**Jesus my King,
I give you my everything.**

Then I turned to the man in the middle, I think his name was Jesus. There was kindness in his eyes, despite the pain I knew he was feeling. In his eyes, I saw love and warmth and compassion like I'd never known in all my life. I said to him, "Jesus, remember me. Please, remember me."

Jesus answered, "Today you will be with me in paradise." And I knew he was speaking the truth.