

Who is leading? Monday: Mrs Wolfram, Tuesday: Class, Wednesday: KS leader/ Open the Book/Barney Ridgwell/Rev. John Walker/Mary-Jayne McCarthy

Good News!

Week 1	Epiphany - what can we offer? Although there are often Wise Men in the stable on our Christmas cards,				
	Church traditionally marks the visit of these travellers from the East on				
	Epiphany (6 January). Their journey, once they saw the star, would have				
	taken many months.				
Week 2	The four gospels				
Week 3	Gospel – Jesus brings good news				
Week 4	Gospel - Jesus brings good news				
Week 5	Gospel – Jesus brings good news				
Week 6	Lent: In 2024, Lent starts on Wednesday 14 February so it seems most logical to look at Lent before it starts as pupils might have their pancakes during half term!				

Notes:

- This is a live document. Please make sure you are opening it in Teams each day so that you have the most up-to-date version. Thank you.
- This term we a team from local churches who are coming in to run "Open the Book" assemblies. They will be in each Wednesday and will alternate between KS1 and KS2. They tell Bible stories, dress up and get the children dressed up and involved too. It's a really wonderful thing and they've organised this just for us.



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Epiphany – What can we offer?

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

https://www.voutube.com/watch?v=68k6dzdzoto&t=13s

Song ideas: We 3 Kings: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBwL3y-Wlms

Bank Holiday

THE WISE MEN OFFER GIFTS

Matthew 2 v 1-12

Look at some pictures of the wise men as painted by great artists. Search 'Adoration of the Magi' and the National Gallery website https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/podcast/podcasts/thenational-gallery-podcast-episode-86

https://www.nationalgallerv.org.uk/paintings/sandro-botticellithe-adoration-of-the-kings

https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/gerard-davidadoration-of-the-kings

Ask pupils:

I wonder what you can see in this picture?

I wonder what you like about this picture?

I wonder why the Wise Men are wearing crowns? (if they are) I wonder why artists show the Wise Men visiting the stable when it would have taken them many months to reach their destination.

I wonder who is the most important person in this picture?

The Wise Men represent the Gentiles, those from the whole world for whom Jesus has come into the world and to whom the good news of Jesus will be taken following his life on earth, his death and resurrection.

You could make a display of a treasure box for the class and invite pupils to add their gift to Jesus to this display as a prayer - focus on gifts that do not cost anything (their gifts, talents, time etc)

Pray for our world – think about situations in the news today and ask for God's help, love and blessings for those experiencing difficulties or worries around the world.

KS1: RR

KS2: RH

THE WISE MEN OFFER WORSHIP

Matthew 2 v 1-12

I wonder if you have ever received an invitation or sent one. Look at a range of invitations – wedding, birthday, supermarket double points, join a gym etc. Use a star shape – say that there is an invitation on the back – I wonder who this is for/what this invitation says. This star in the sky was an important invitation and, although everyone could see it, only the Wise Men realised what it meant. They accepted the invitation of the star even though it meant a very long journey. The invitation of the star was to come and worship Jesus, the gift of God to the world.

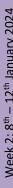
Different ways of telling the story – both reflect that the visit was probably up to 2 years after Jesus was born (not in the stable with the shepherds!) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQGPyLA7gcQ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22SMUUMsx0o&t=5s Alternatively use an appropriate Bible version with images

I wonder how we are invited to worship in school. In doing so, we are responding to the same invitation as was sent to the Wise Men so long ago to bring our gifts of worship.

We will think more about the actual gifts of the Wise Men later in the week.

You could make a display of a treasure box for each class or for a common area and invite pupils to add their gift to Jesus to this display as a prayer focus on gifts that do not cost anything (their gifts, talents, time etc)

2024 5th January 2^{nd} Week 1:





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The Four Gospels

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Song ideas: Go tell it on the mountain https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsX3tYbai1Q

The four Gospels: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN

Show some newspaper headlines on screen.

Have you read all about it? All those stories can be found in just one part of the Bible, in what we call the New Testament. That's the second half of the Bible, and deals with the stories about Jesus, and what happened after Easter. The New Testament has 27 smaller books, and all of today's 'read all about its' come from just one of those books — the book that we call the Gospel of Mark.

Mark's Gospel is the shortest of the four Gospels – the books that tell us the stories about Jesus – and it's also believed to be the first one that was written. It's written with a very good pace, so it never lingers for long on one story or scene.

We know from other stories in the Bible that Mark was a friend of St Paul, and travelled quite a lot around the Mediterranean with him and wrote down his memories of his life following Jesus.

But, more importantly, Mark was the person who wrote the first book about Jesus, probably writing down what Jesus' great friend Peter could remember, adding little bits like that short story that were part of Mark's own personal memories.

Two thousand years later, we are still reading that book! Imagine you writing stories that you thought were important, and then finding out that 2,000 years in the future, those stories would be the basis of what the Christian Church believes about Jesus!

Mark was not a special man. But he knew what he believed about Jesus, and wrote down those stories to share with other people. Today, along with millions of other people, we still read them.

It's easy to ignore the headlines of the day.

Not so easy when people have been spreading the same story for 2,000 years.

What will I contribute to the future?

Did Mark have any idea of how much he was contributing? May what I do today, and in every 'today' help make the world a better place in the future. To look at some of the symbols used to describe Jesus found in John's Gospel. You will need:

- some symbols or trademarks (see Resources at the end of this doc)
- Some pictures of the symbols used in John's Gospel, or actual items if possible: bread/roll, candle/torch, picture of gate or door (or use a nearby example!), pictures of a shepherd or sheep, a one-way sign, a grapevine or some grapes.

Ask the children if they have any fun nicknames (be sensitive to unkind name-calling). Ask if there is a particular reason why they are called this name – does it describe them well? If you had any as a child tell them – if you can!

Show the children any well-known symbols and ask them to guess what they represent Explain that in the Bible there were lots of symbols that Jesus used to describe himself. He was trying to make it easy for his followers to think about him and his message. Today we are going to look at some of the symbols Jesus used. You could hold each picture/item up as you go along and see if the children can guess before you explain.

<u>John 6.35: I am the bread of life:</u> What is bread? An important food – almost every country in the world has some kind of bread. It is a food that gives us energy and helps us to grow and survive. Christians believe that Jesus feeds us by his teachings about love.

<u>John 8.12: I am the light of the world:</u> What is light? Something that stops darkness. Light can make us feel safe, help us to see clearly. Christians believe that Jesus can help to show them the correct way to live and be of comfort when they seem to be in dark or sad situations.

John 10.9: I am the gate or door: What is a gate or doorway? An opening or entrance to another room or place. Christians believe that if they trust in Jesus he will be their gateway to living a better life now and after they die.

John 10.11: I am the good shepherd: What does a shepherd do? Looks after sheep. Shepherds know all about their sheep, their names and differences. Christians believe that Jesus is like a shepherd because he wants to take care of us. He knows everything about us, our names and differences. He wants everyone to become part of his flock.

<u>John 14.6: I am the way:</u> What does this sign show us? The way to go. Who has ever been lost? How did you feel? Christians believe that Jesus can show us the right way to lead our lives. They can follow the example of Jesus by doing good to others.

<u>John 15.5: I am the vine:</u> What is a vine? What grows on a vine? Grapes. The grapes need the vine so that they can grow into strong healthy bunches of grapes. The vine gives them everything that they need. Christians believe that Jesus is like a vine because he gives them everything that they need. If they read the Bible and pray they will grow as Christians, becoming better people.

Challenge the children to try to remember some of the symbols used to remind people of Jesus.

Dear God, Thank you for giving us lots of symbols that help to remind us of Jesus and how he wants us to live. Please help us to live, work and play in harmony with everyone around us. Amen.

KS1: Vision and Values assembly - RR

KS2: Vision and Values assembly – RH/SB $\,$



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Gospel – Jesus brings good news

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Song ideas: Rescuer (Good News) by Rend Collective: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAg7rn7fH3Q

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS (GOSPEL) THAT JESUS BRINGS? Luke 10: 25-37

For the next 3 weeks we are going to look at the GOOD NEWS that Jesus brought and what it means for us, our community and the wider world.

We are going to continue to look at Jesus' life and teaching in the gospels which encapsulates the Gospel. I wonder what Jesus taught about embracing difference and helping everyone to belong? I wonder who is your neighbour? Explore the story of the Good Samaritan https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zcyr87h (BBC clip)

http://www.bricktestament.com/the parables of jesus/index.html#the good samaritan (Brick Testament)

I wonder why some people simply ignored the man lying injured? I wonder if we ever ignore situations that need our help and understanding? During the time of Jesus, people believed Samaritans were people to be avoided. They were seen as different and not as important and so people tried to stay away from them. They didn't belong. That is why it is so surprising that it is not the priest or the Levite that stops to help the injured man, but a Samaritan! The first two men the ones who did belong - could have helped, but they let their prejudice get in the way of doing the right thing. After listening to the story, the questioner has to accept that it is a Samaritan who takes care of the injured man, someone considered to be different, someone who didn't belong.

For prayer/reflection:

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. <u>Mother</u> **Teresa**

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN MY SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Luke 10:25-37

I wonder if there are people like the traveller in The Good Samaritan who need our help today? I wonder who are the people who do not belong in our local communities and town? This Phil Collins song would be a way of focussing on the homeless https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt2mbGP6vFl&feature=yo

There might be other local projects that you could have as your focus. – perhaps the refuges at Napier Barracks?

The lyrics of this song make it obvious that some people in our world suffer while others have more than enough. I wonder how it might feel to not have a home to live in? Then I wonder who your neighbour would be? I wonder where you would belong? Think about the people you might see in your village, town or city who are struggling to know they belong. I wonder if you could suggest some solutions?

Who is my neighbour activity: Make a "Who is my neighbour?" collage: using a large piece of paper with the title at the top and cut out/draw pictures/write people who Jesus tells us are our neighbours—children in Burkina Faso school, homeless, friends, family, strangers, refugees, classmates. Write "We all belong" at the bottom.

Dear God, help us to remember that everyone is worthy of belonging – not because we are alike, but because we are all of value. May we always to our best to include others, so no one is left alone. AMEN KS2: Rev John

KS1: Open the book

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

Luke 10:35-37

Recap this week's assemblies – all about the parable of the good Samaritan. Tell everyone that you are going to make three statements. Ask them to put their hands up if they agree with the statements. Hands down between each statement.

- a) I am the most important person here.
- b) I like it when people listen to me.
- c) There has been a time in my life where I have been treated unfairly. Talk about the three ideas:
- a) Tell them that they are looking at the most important person here YOU! Make sure they know that you are joking. Go on to qualify the statement, saying that before they think you are a complete big-head, each of them is also the most important person here. Each of them is also sitting next to the most important person here. We all have great value because God made us. And to appreciate others, we need to value ourselves.
- b) Say that if we like it when people listen to us, we should listen to others. Ask: 'How much time do you spend actually listening to others and putting others first?'
- c) Ask everyone to think about whether they always treat others fairly. Be honest.
 Ask: 'How do you treat others, especially people you don't get on with?'

The story in the Bible makes it clear that people (including those who are different from us) are equally valuable and that we should treat others with care and respect. Jesus told this story to illustrate what it means to keep one of God's commandments in the Bible:

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind ... Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' Luke 10:27(NCV).

Challenge the children to think about how they treat others – including those who aren't their friends or whom they don't like.

Response

1 Ask the children to think about one or two others in school whom they consider 'different' from themselves, or whom they don't value. Now ask them to think how they could show they value them or times when they could be 'a good Samaritan' to those people.

2 Encourage everyone to be quiet for a few moments to think about this, and decide to do something about it today. Pray and ask for God's help to do this.



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Gospel – Jesus brings good news

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Song ideas: Living waters: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LA9UfBEHciY

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS THAT JESUS BRINGS?

John 4:1-26

Vf3rqnoG5c

Today, we are going to explore an encounter in the Bible between Jesus and a woman at a well. It will help us to think about how we know we are loved, and also how we can help others feel known, accepted and loved. Watch the story of the Woman at the Well https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6

Throughout the gospels, Jesus is shown as challenging ideas about 'us' and 'them'—in our episode for the week, we have the example of the 'Jewish people' and 'Samaritans'—where people were not loved because they are seen as different. In this story, Jesus reaches out to the woman where others might have decided not to. I wonder how we might be better at including all and helping all feel loved and welcomed across the world? I wonder if we sometimes see what is different about others before we think about what is the same? I wonder if we can challenge ourselves to

The Bible verses show the importance of water in its picture of heaven – 'the water of life as a free gift'. Our need for water is the same no matter where we live – but not everyone has access to clean water

reverse our way of thinking?

Dear God, give me a better understanding of how to love others because we are all your children no matter where in the world we live and no matter what our life experiences are day by day. AMEN

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN MY SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY?

John 4:13-14

woman he met?

 Think of those projects that we support in the local community – food banks, residential homes, Burkina Faso, etc. These are all ways of sharing 'living water' and the love of God with others.

Show an image from the episode in Monday's worship. Many Christians believe that Jesus' words 'living water' refers to the unending and life-giving love of God. I wonder how Jesus showed this to the

Listen to the song 'I'll Stand by You' by The

Pretenders https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwpuBxethel
and reflect on the lyrics.

I wonder how Jesus 'stood by' the Samaritan woman? I wonder who is standing by you? I wonder who you could stand with? I wonder how our school and local communities could be even better at including all and helping all to feel loved and welcomed?

 Think about the story of the woman at the well and how her 'glass' was filled.

Look again at the idea that every bit of love we receive in a day fills our glass a bit more. Every bit of love we give fills the glass of someone else a bit more.

You might give a picture of a water container to pupils who can write a list of their ideas starting at the bottom and filling up the container – perhaps they come add some ideas in the morning and come back to it at the end of the day to reflect on what they have given or received to fill the container during the day.

Running water: The story of the Woman at the Well uses
water as a symbol for love. Perhaps going forward, every
time you use running water (to wash your hands, to make a
drink, to brush your teeth etc.), you could reflect on this
story and consider how you are loved, accepted and
known. This is also a way to reflect on the blessing of
having access to clean, running water which is not enjoyed
by many of our sisters and brothers across the world.

KS2: Open the book

KS1: Mary Jayne (TBC)

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME? Revelation 22:1,17

Close your eyes and think about a moment you felt really loved. Where were you? What happened? What led to you having this feeling?

Think about a moment when you have felt the opposite – perhaps you felt a little bit left out, unwelcome or unloved. (Get a tall glass ¾ full of water, a jug of water and something to catch overflowing water.)

Remind the children of the story they heard on Monday.

In this story, we meet a woman at a well whose name we're not told. To understand this story a little bit more, there are a few things we need to know about her (as you say each of these, tip a little water out so the glass is empty at the end):

- People didn't want to talk to her because of some mistakes she had made in the past. She was lonely, because others in her community didn't welcome her.
- Water was usually collected from the well at the cooler parts of the day, in the morning and evening. This woman probably went at midday to avoid others. People were often mean to her and made her feel unloved.
- She was a Samaritan Jewish people at that time believed Samaritans should be avoided. She was often ignored. Because of all of these things, the woman name to the well each day feeling empty (show the empty glass) unloved, unknown and unwelcome.

This day, though, was different. This day, she met Jesus by the well, sitting there in the midday sun. For her, this encounter was full of surprises! (After mentioning each of these, fill the glass by a quarter):

- Jesus looked and spoke to her; nobody usually speaks to her! She felt acknowledged.
- This Jewish person was speaking to her a Samaritan! She felt welcomed.
- Jesus knew the woman who she was, all that she had been through, her past experiences and choices. She felt known and accepted. Little by little, during the conversation at the well, the woman started to feel more whole (show the glass of water ¾ full). She felt welcomed, loved, accepted. But Jesus said something else when looking at the water in the well.

Jesus said to her, "Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again. Whoever drinks the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give them will become a well of life that lasts forever."

Jesus realised that this woman was looking for something deeper than water from the well this day. She was looking to be loved.

Jesus was offering her this 'living water' – the feeling and knowledge that whatever happened in life, He loved her and that love would never stop. This love is like a never-ending stream of water – one that continues and will never end (pour water into the glass until it is full to the brim or overflowing).





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Gospel – Jesus brings good news

Monday Tuesday Wednesday

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WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS THAT JESUS BRINGS? Luke 19:1-10

I wonder if you have ever lost your way when following a map? I wonder if you have ever felt that you have lost your way on your life's journey. In the gospels, Jesus tells us that the Gospel (good news) includes a promise that when we make mistakes (and we all do), it's what we do after that makes the biggest difference. We can get back on track and put it right if we choose to.

Read the story of Zacchaeus in your Bible (Luke 19:1-10) or watch the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BjtbJFz2ug

I wonder what the people in the crowd were thinking during all of this? Jesus wanted to eat with a known sinner who had treated them all very badly! Sometimes Jesus really surprised people. Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house and Zacchaeus was so moved by Jesus and his words that he repented (an important word meaning that he changed his mind and said sorry). He knew just being sorry was not enough. He needed to repair the damage. So, he told Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor and, if he had cheated anybody, he would pay them back four times the amount. He was not just making it right, he was making it better!

I wonder if we can spend a few minutes thinking about how we can say sorry for a wrong we have done and committing to do something to repair the damage?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN MY SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY? Matthew 6:12

Use the story of Zacchaeus to try to get across the idea that we often make
judgements about people without knowing who they really are and the potential they
have.

Use a 'feely bag' to get the children to try and guess some items without seeing them. They might manage to get close on most items, but they can't see everything about them e.g. colour. We need to look properly to get all the facts and can't judge too quickly!

Retell the story of Zacchaeus by acting it out with some of the children and getting the others to join in with some sound effects and with some cheering at the end.

Emphasise that the people had made up their minds about Zacchaeus, but Jesus could see who he really was and who he had the potential to be. Zacchaeus surprised people! Tell a story from real life about a time when you really got to know someone and had to change your mind about them.

Read this verse: 'People look at the outside of a person but the Lord looks at his heart' (1 Samuel 16: 7).

In the story, Jesus was pleased. He told Zacchaeus that salvation had come to his house. That meant he had chosen the right things and could follow Jesus with peace in his heart, that he had repented and repaired his mistakes. Sometimes we have to 'climb a tree' and look at what we have been doing, even if we have been doing it a lot, and ask for help to find a way to make it right again.

This story not only tells us not to cheat people or do them harm, it also tells us what we should do if we do hurt someone and we want to repent (turn around and get back on track):

- Change your mind and say sorry (this is repentance)
- Make it right (return what was taken, repair what was broken, soothe what was injured)
- Make it better (if you can, do something that communicates that you understand you did wrong and now you want to show the opposite, doing good, generous things)

Take some time to think about how you could follow these 3 steps. Perhaps you could use a sorry box in your classroom. Write down on one side of a piece of paper what you are sorry for doing or thinking and on the other side what you are going to do to put in right. Put it in the sealed box to commit to the actions –God knows what you have said – it is your prayer to God.

Use the Lord's Prayer – focus especially on the words 'Forgive us our trespasses (sins) as we forgive those who trespass (sin) against us.' It is a constant rhythm of forgiving and being forgiven that gets us back on track.

KS1: Open the book KS2: Barney Ridgwell



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Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Song ideas:

LENT: JESUS IS TEMPTED: Matthew 4:1-11

The celebration that we are thinking about today is called Lent. It is when Christians remember a time of preparation that Jesus experienced.

For the first 30 years of his life, Jesus lived at home in Nazareth. At the age of 30, Jesus knew that he was about to start his public work. He was about to start teaching people about God and performing many amazing miracles. He knew that it wouldn't be easy and that eventually, it would lead to his death.

In preparation for this time, Jesus went off on his own into the desert. He spent 40 days and nights there, and didn't eat or drink anything. During Jesus' time in the desert, he was tempted to do several things that he knew were wrong. However, he didn't give in to temptation and didn't do anything wrong. At the end of 40 days, Jesus left the desert and began the work that he had come to earth to do. His time in the desert prepared him for this.

Lent is the period of time that leads up to Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday (the day after Shrove Tuesday, which is when it is traditional to cook pancakes). For Christians, Easter is the most important time of the year because that is when they remember Jesus' death and resurrection.

Christians want to 'be prepared' for the celebration of Easter, so they use Lent as a time to think more about God, go to special church services and pray. Lent lasts for 40 days and nights (it doesn't include Sundays), which is the same length of time that Jesus spent in the desert preparing for his work. Lent is meant to focus Christians' minds on God, but it also helps them to think of others who are not as fortunate as they are.

As part of Lent, Christians often give up something for 40 days, just like Jesus went without food in the desert. For example, people might give up chocolate, smoking, watching TV and so on. In recent years, there has been a move towards starting something positive during Lent instead of giving something up. Examples would be tidying your room, saying something encouraging to someone every day, making your bed or doing homework without complaining!

Dear Lord, Thank you that in the business of life, there are times to stop and think.

Help us never to be so busy that we don't have time to be peaceful and silent. Thank you for times such as Lent that remind us to think about you and to consider what we can do to help others.

Please help us always to 'be prepared' to help other people.

Amen.

EXPLORING SOME LENT QUESTIONS FOR MY LIFE Matthew 4:1-11

Remind pupils of the story of Jesus being tempted (video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mc-x4qKY6Wc and relate the questions and activities below to the story – they can be adapted for different ages/stages:

Build a tower: Use Giant Jenga blocks or smaller ones to see how high people will go.

Talk about: I wonder how you decide what is risky to do and what is safe?

Sand art: Create a collage of a desert scene involving sand, glue, small stones, dead twigs etc

Talk about: I wonder what gives you strength to

survive hard times?

Cupcakes: decorate with icing.

Talk about: I wonder what temptations you find

hard to resist?

Big world jigsaw: as a group.

Talk about: I wonder how you would go about rescuing the world from the mess we get it into?

Prayer: Write a prayer on a blossom-shape and hang

it on a special prayer tree.

Talk about: I wonder who you want to ask God to

give strength to at the moment?

God of justice, give me the strength to do what I know is right. Lead me to help others and to encourage those I meet to do the same, so that all people may flourish. AMEN

KS2: Open the book

KS1: RR

LENT: A TIME FOR THINKING

Matthew 6:12

It is Ash Wednesday during half term. Talk to the children about Ash Wednesday as the first day of Lent which is a time of thinking about God and focussing more on Him instead of the 'stuff' around us. Ash Wednesday is a day when we say sorry to God and think about our lives. I wonder what it means to say sorry and why we might want to do that, especially to people we love? I wonder how saying sorry helps? Encourage the children to think of things they might want to say sorry to God for and give them time to do this.

Introduce the liturgy below to the children so that they know what they will be doing. Invite more ideas to add from pupils.

You will need: Ashes mixed with oil (or black paint), a large or small cross shape/s, a bowl of water, a candle.

Say the words in italics and invite the children to join in the bold type words. (As they say their line, encourage them to dip their finger in the ash mixture and make the sign of the cross or a fingerprint on a large shape.

Thank you, Lord that you love us and hear us when we pray We are sorry for things we have done that have hurt you and others. We have not loved you or others as much as we could Lord, we are sorry We have not helped others as Jesus helped us Lord, we are sorry

We have been impatient Lord, we are sorry We have been angry Lord, we are sorry

We have been jealous of others Lord, we are sorry

We have told lies Lord, we are sorry

(Light a candle)

Hear us and help us, Lord

Work through us so that we can share your goodness and love in the world

Show us the joy and new life that Jesus brings.



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