

# Lent & Easter Resources 2024

As we get ready for Easter we need to prepare. This preparation time is known as Lent. Just like spring, when increased light and warmth cause new plants to grow, Lent is a time of new growth and new beginnings. We are encouraged to prepare for Easter by thinking about how we could be more like Jesus. For example, if we have fallen out with someone, during Lent we try to change the situation by forgiving or asking for forgiveness. During Lent we try to make life better for others. **Missio Ireland** is a special charity that asks children to help change the lives of children who are living in poverty and fear. We ask them to do this through prayer and to share whatever they can, no matter how little, to help their brothers and sisters in need. This is how they live out the charity's motto '*children helping children.*'

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (14<sup>th</sup> February this year). It is modelled on the forty days and forty nights that Jesus spent in the desert. It is a special time of prayer, fasting and sharing. We encourage children to enter the spirit of Lent at home, in school and in their parishes by carrying out the three Lenten promises – Pray, Fast, Give.



## What's Included?

To help children and their families, our resources include:

- a prayer service for each week of Lent
- a Lenten Calendar of Kindness with activities to carry out each day
- a prayer service for Easter Sunday
- our Easter colouring competition for children

All of our resources have been prepared in black and white for ease of printing. We invite parents, guardians and teachers to pray with their children during these sacred days and to join in prayer when Mass and other ceremonies during Holy Week are being held.

Missio Ireland is the Pope's official charity for overseas mission. We're part of a worldwide network of 120 offices, under the coordination of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Rome. We are the Holy Father's chosen instrument for sharing the Gospel and building the Church throughout the world. If you'd like to learn more, you can contact us at:

Missio Ireland, 64 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6.

T: 01 4972035

E: [info@missio.ie](mailto:info@missio.ie)

W: [www.missio.ie](http://www.missio.ie)

# Lent Prayer Service Week 1

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus,  
As we start our Lenten journey this year, help us to open our hearts and minds to hear your voice in new ways. Water the seeds of faith to prepare us to help bring Your kingdom here on Earth. Even in challenging times, help us to proclaim the Good News and stand as Your witness at all times and in all things, and in all places.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (1: 9-15)  
In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved with you I am well pleased."  
And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.  
Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** Lent is a time of preparation before Easter when we fast and pray as we remember Jesus and the sacrifices He made for us. We ask God to help us during the forty days of Lent to be kind and helpful to all we meet.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Mission Prayer:** We pray the children's Mission Prayer together.

May all children

In the world

Share love

Share friendship and live

In the peace

Of God's love,

Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Draw a picture of something you will give up for Lent. Draw another picture of a way that you will show kindness and love during Lent. Talk to your family or class about your pictures.

# Lent Prayer Service Week 2

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus,  
We stand in awe of You! Sometimes life is tough and Your plan for us is not clear. We choose to follow Your instruction to listen to Jesus more. Let us be transformed by Your light, so that those we encounter will draw closer to You.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (9: 2-9)  
Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and went up on a high mountain, where they could be alone. There in front of the disciples, Jesus was completely changed. And his clothes became much whiter than any bleach on earth could make them. Then Moses and Elijah were there talking with Jesus.  
The shadow of a cloud passed over and covered them. From the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, and I love him. Listen to what he says!" At once the disciples looked around, but they saw only Jesus.  
As Jesus and his disciples were coming down the mountain, he told them not to say a word about what they had seen, until the Son of Man had been raised from death. So, they kept it to themselves. But they wondered what he meant by the words "raised from death."

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** We ask for forgiveness for the times we have sinned during this season of Lent. May we also remember to forgive others for their mistakes.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Mission Prayer:** We pray the children's Mission Prayer together.

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love,  
Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Visit your local church and look at the stained glass windows. Design your own stained glass window using crayons and markers.

# Lent Prayer Service Week 3

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus,  
Help us to see the things we need to change in our lives to be more like You. Give us courage to act justly, love tenderly and to walk humbly.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (2: 13-22)  
Jesus went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Passover. Inside the temple, he saw people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons. And there were others changing money for the people. Jesus made a long whip and chased the cattle and the sheep out of the temple. He also knocked over the money tables, spilling the coins on the ground. He said to those selling pigeons, "Get them out of here! Stop using God's house as a marketplace!" The Jews who were there said to Jesus, "What gives you the right to do this? What sign can you give us?" Jesus answered them, "Tear down this temple, and I will raise it up in three days!" The Jews said, "It took us forty-six years to build this temple! And you think that you can raise it up in three days?"  
But the temple Jesus was talking about was his body. And later when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed him.

## **The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** We pray for strength and courage as we try our best to keep up good habits during Lent. May Jesus help us not to give up.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Mission Prayer:**

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love,  
Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Surprise someone you know with a random act of kindness this week.

# Lent Prayer Service Week 4

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** God of love,  
Thank you for your unending love that we experience as your sons and daughters. We know that you loved us so much that you were prepared to give your only son so that we could have life everlasting. Reveal how love could become a common language for us all to understand one another and to share together.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (3: 16-17)

Jesus told Nicodemus:

“God so loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never die. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people, He sent him to save them!”

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** May we remember how lucky we are and the many gifts we receive. Thank you, Jesus, for our families, friends and so much more.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Mission Prayer:** We pray the children’s Mission Prayer together.

May all children

In the world

Share love

Share friendship and live

In the peace

Of God’s love,

Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Pray for a different loved one each day this week that they may feel God’s love.

# Lent Prayer Service Week 5

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** God of the Present moment,  
Help us to see You through Your word with others today. Draw us closer to You so that we will hear Your voice and recommit ourselves to serve and follow You.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (12: 24-25)  
Jesus said to his disciples:  
“I tell you for certain that a grain of wheat that falls on the ground will never be more than one grain unless it dies. But if it dies, it will produce lots of wheat.  
“If you love your life, you will lose it. If you give it up in this world, you will be given eternal life.  
“if you serve me, you must go with me. My servants will be with me wherever I am. If you serve me, my father will honour you.

## **The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** May Lent remind us to always strive to be the best people we can be. May we always try our best and work hard even when we find things difficult.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Mission Prayer:**

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God’s love,  
Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Visit your church and look at the Stations of the Cross. Draw one of the Stations.

# Lent Prayer Service Week 6

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** As we remember the events of Palm Sunday and the Passion of Christ, we are reminded to welcome Jesus into our hearts and choose to follow You. We thank you for your promises. Our hope is in You and You will renew our strength. We will soar on wings like eagles. We will run and not grow weary. We will walk and not be faint. Help us to fix our sight on You and the hope of the resurrection.  
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Reader:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (11: 1-10)  
When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them,  
“Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting  
Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!

## **The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Reflection:** Lord Jesus, today we remember your entry into Jerusalem when the people waved palm branches and sang Hosanna in welcome. As we prepare for Holy Week, we welcome you into our home and into our hearts as we say together ‘Hosanna in the highest!’

## **Mission Prayer:**

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God’s love,  
Now and forever. **Amen.**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Activity:** Make a cross out of branches from the garden in preparation for Good Friday.

# Easter Sunday

**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Prayer:** God our Father, through our prayers, fasting and acts of kindness this Lent, help us to share your love with the world. Teach us how to bring the good news of your love to everyone, everywhere.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Gospel:** A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (28:1-10)

After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. Suddenly, there was a violent earthquake: an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men. The angel spoke to the women. 'You must not be afraid.' 'I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly now, and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!' Remember what I have told you.' So they left the tomb in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Peace be with you.' They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. 'Do not be afraid,' Jesus said to them. 'Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**Prayer:** Today's prayer is called a Litany. One person leads and the rest reply.

Leader: This is the day the Lord has made.

Leader: God's love has no end.

Leader: God has raised us up.

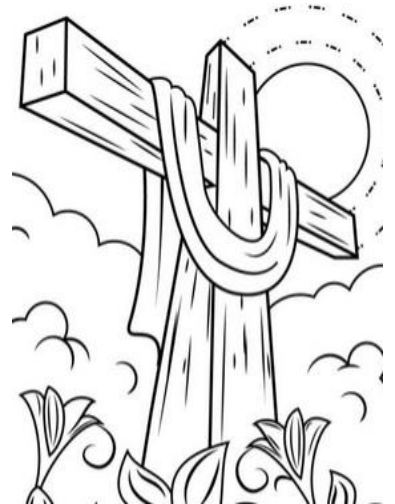
Leader: And given us the gift of new life.

**All: Alleluia, alleluia!**

**All: Alleluia, alleluia!**

**All: Alleluia, alleluia!**

**All: Alleluia, alleluia!**



**Sign of the Cross:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**



