



ACTIVITIES FOR LENT

There are many other ways to have the entire family observe Lent. Below are brief descriptions of several, along with several links to get more information and tools if you are interested in the specific activity. We encourage you pick at least one activity to do with family or friends. It will make this Lent season a special one!

Lent in a Bag

Try using small bags (cloth, paper or ziplock) with symbols of the season to help the family practice Lent at home. You can either choose one night or the week to pick out a symbol as a starting point for conversation or use it for your own devotion time for your own reflection. Items in the bag include sand, rock, wooden figure, and candle. To learn more, go to buildfaith.org/lent-in-a-bag/.

Make Paper Prayer Chains

Similar to the chains that kids use at school to count the 100th day of school, these are also a great way to observe Lent. You can create blank strips and have the kids fill out their own prayers each day or use pre-printed ones found at freekidscrafts.com/lenten-prayer-chain/.

40 Days of Sacred Family Conversations

This is a great way to invited families to spend a few minutes together in sacred conversation each Sunday night during Lent. Each week contains a meaningful question like “my favorite thing about you is” or “I felt really proud of you when...”. These conversation kits can be found at leanne-hadley.com/holy-days-lent-easter.

Easter Tree

Use a tree branch “potted” in plaster of paris and sprayed white. This is what you hang Easter ornaments on. Whatever framework you use for the Jesse Tree could be used as well.

Start twelve days before Easter and read the Scripture that precedes the hanging of the ornaments for that day.

- Palm trees/small branches (Matthew 21:1-11)
- Perfume sample bottles (John 12:2-8)
- “Bread” made from salt dough & small chalices (Matt. 26:17-19)
- 30 silver coins (Matthew 27:3)
- Wooden cross (John 19:17)
- Crown of thorns (John 19:2)

Easter Tree (continued)

- Patches of burlap (John 19:23)
- 3 nails (John 19:18, 37; John 20:25-29)
- Pieces of natural sponge (Matthew 27:34)
- Balls of cinnamon dough (John 19:40)
- "Round" stone (John 20:1)
- Strips of white linen (John 20:6-7)

The Jellybean Prayer Jar

Turn the Easter jelly bean prayer into a jelly bean jar. Here's the traditional Easter jelly bean prayer:

Red is for the blood Christ gave, Green is for the palm's cool shade,
Yellow is for God's light so bright, Orange is for prayers at twilight,
Black is for sweet rest at night, White is for the Grace of Christ,
Purple is for His days of sorrow, Pink is for each new tomorrow.

Each day, the kids earn jelly beans of a certain color for certain things witnessed. They get to collect their jelly beans earned in their own jars, until Easter when they get to eat them.

RED - for sacrifices made, including letting your brother go first for something, or giving something up so that someone else would benefit.

GREEN - for good deeds, like bringing someone else's dishes to the kitchen, or tidying up the living room.

YELLOW - for sharing God's light through kindness shown to others - a little bit different than good deeds but there could be overlap - for things like complimenting someone, sharing, helping, etc.

ORANGE - for each bedtime prayer said.

BLACK - for going to bed without a fuss.

WHITE - these are reserved for Easter morning. The kids don't earn white jelly beans, but on Easter morning, their jars are topped up with white jelly beans, representing the grace of God.

PURPLE - for apologizing when they hurt someone (physically or for hurting feelings).

PINK - for forgiving someone (whether they apologized to you or not).

Homemade Resurrection Eggs

While you can purchase a kit online, Resurrection Eggs are easy to make at home.

Materials:

An empty egg carton

12 plastic eggs

11 story starters, as described below

Instructions:

An egg carton holds 12 eggs, right? So let's go with 12 parts to our story. Number your eggs from 1 to 12.

For each egg, there is a Bible verse to help in the understanding of the story of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

For each verse or theme, there is an object that would fit into the Easter egg. You can make felt objects, printing off pictures of the items or finding a small object for each one around the house or at a craft store.

Objects for each egg:

A tiny plastic donkey – Jesus rode to Jerusalem on a donkey.
(Matthew 21:1-11)

A tiny perfume bottle or piece of cotton soaked in perfume – Mary poured perfume on Jesus' feet. (John 12:2-8)

A tiny loaf of bread, dinner plate, or fork – The Last Supper
(Matthew 26:17-19)

3 pieces of silver (3 nickels, dimes, or quarters would be great) – Judas betrays Jesus (Matthew 27:3)

A cross (Can't find a small one? Make one from toothpicks.) – Jesus carries his cross to the site of the crucifixion. (John 19:17)

A crown of thorns (Make need to be creative here. Check out the bead section at the craft store.) – Jesus crowned king of the Jews.
(John 19:2-4, Mark 15:17)

Dice – Soldiers divide up Jesus' clothes. (John 19:23)

Nail – Jesus was nailed to the cross.
(John 19:18,37 & John 20:25-29)

Sponge – They give Jesus a sponge soaked in vinegar to drink.
(John 19:28-30)

Spices (Consider using whole cloves are small and fragrant.) –
Jesus' body is prepared for burial. (John 19:40)

A stone – They covered Jesus' tomb with a great stone.
(Matthew 27:59-60)

{The last egg should be empty} – The tomb was empty. He has risen! (Matthew 28:6)

Place the eggs into an empty egg carton.
Decorate the carton.

To use the eggs:

You can either count backwards 12 days from Easter, and plan ahead so that you can open one egg each day, or simply open the carton and tell the whole story at once, using each object as a reminder of that part of the story.

If you focus on one egg a day, you can talk about the image, read the verses, and re-tell the story as you've learned it so far. Begin and end with a prayer.

