

## MARFAM LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILIES AT HOME .

**An Activity package.** From MARFAM for R30. Tel 0825521275, [toni@marfam.org.za](mailto:toni@marfam.org.za). [www.marfam.org.za](http://www.marfam.org.za)

- STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR FAMILIES - leaflet R10
- A FAMILY PRAYER MEAL – activity sheet
- A FAMILY RECONCILIATION SERVICE – activity sheet
- REMEMBERING OUR BAPTISM – suggestions
- CHILDREN’S BOOKLET – GOD’S PLAN OF LOVE – booklet to read and colour. R20 . *A parish can have a colouring in competition.*
- Picture of the Passion story journey.

### **Suggestions: FAMILY ACTIVITIES for Holy Week and Easter.**

1. Read or tell the **Easter story** in appropriate simplified form.
2. Make **Palm Crosses** or join in making crosses for the parish. Get yours blessed too.
3. **Pray STATIONS OF THE CROSS for Families** at home or select a few linking the events on Jesus’ journey with our own lives.
4. **Veneration of the Cross with children.** As is done in parishes have a crucifix covered with a purple cloth and uncover it piece by piece expressing sorrow for our sins and thanking Jesus for his sacrifice.
5. **Revisiting our baptism.** Compare birth and baptism. Look at old christening photographs , remember godparents, make a recommitment of our own faith. Read the Apostles Creed.
6. **Easter eggs.** Talk about new life and easter eggs. If you have chocolate moulds, make eggs, bunnies and chickens. Draw faces on white chocolate eggs. Draw and colour in pictures.
7. **An Easter Garden.** Using all kinds of materials, edible and otherwise, make a garden on a tray showing the way from the cross to the empty tomb. Decorate.
8. **Google and visit websites** for many ideas remembering the religious aspects.
9. Organise an **Easter egg hunt**, possibly with scripture or liturgical clues.
10. Play **Easter bingo.** Google and download. Do Easter word puzzles.
11. **Sing** Easter songs.
12. **Listen** to music e.g. parts of Handel’s Messiah, Bach St John’s or St Matthew’s passion, Stainer’s Crucifixion, Jenkins Stabat mater, Godspell, Jesus Christ Superstar, depending on the ages of family members.

SundaySchoolKids.com Eggs for Older kids to adults



SundaySchoolKids.com Eggs for Older kids to adults



## SIGN UP FOR MARFAM THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

NAME	TEL	EMAIL

# FAMILY PRAYER MEAL



This is a chance to deepen our awareness that when we are together sharing a meal as a family God is present with us in our little Church of the Home. This format is based on the Jewish weekly Sabbath meal and can be used at different times during the year, also during Holy Week. It could be celebrated to end a family fast day or with a simple soup and bread meal as a sacrifice. Give money saved to the poor.

## **REQUIREMENTS:**

For the prayer part: Bread or matzos, wine or grape juice, a candle, writing material.

For the meal: Family's choice.

## **THE PRAYER TIME.**

All begin by making the sign of the Cross.

The leader holds up the piece of bread and says:

*BLESSED ARE YOU LORD, GOD OF THE UNIVERSE. THANKS TO YOUR GOODNESS WE ARE GATHERED HERE AND HAVE THIS BREAD TO SHARE. BY SHARING THIS MEAL MAY WE BE UNITED IN LOVE AND READY TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.*

The leader breaks up the bread and shares it with all present and then continues, holding up the wine or grape juice:

*BLESSED ARE YOUR LORD, GOD OF THE UNIVERSE. THANKS TO YOUR GOODNESS WE ARE GATHERED HERE AND HAVE THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE TO SHARE. MAY WE WHO SHARE KNOW THE JOY OF YOUR PRESENCE AND SHARE THIS JOY WITH OTHERS.*

Everyone has a sip. A family member then lights the candle and all are invited to offer a short prayer. These may be prayers of praise, thanksgiving or intercession for a special need for the family.

After the prayers the leader continues:

*AT THE LAST SUPPER OF JESUS WITH HIS FRIENDS HE WASHED THEIR FEET AS A SIGN OF SERVICE. WE ARE ASKED TO SHOW A SIGN OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO SERVE EACH OTHER IN MEMORY OF HIM. LET EACH PERSON MAKE A SIGN OF THEIR PARTICULAR COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE FAMILY AT THIS TIME. (If this is done together with the PROMISE BRANCH let the promises be hung on the branch)*

To conclude all join hands and the leader says:

*GOD OUR FATHER, LOOK KINDLY ON OUR FAMILY. MAY WE WHO ARE GATHERED TOGETHER AT THIS TABLE, ONE DAY BE REUNITED WITH THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE DIED BEFORE US AS WE GATHER TOGETHER IN THE JOY OF YOUR KINGDOM. AMEN.*

After the prayer time enjoy the prepared food together.

# RECONCILIATION IN THE FAMILY - A SIMPLE SERVICE



## INTRODUCTION

The Our Father is probably the most well-known and well-loved prayer. When prayed together at home it can also be used as an opportunity to reflect on our relationships. The saying 'WE HURT THE MOST THOSE WE LOVE THE MOST' is true of family life. We can reflect and share on the petitions in the Our Father and use these as an opportunity for being reconciled with God and with each other. We sin against God by neglecting or disobeying his commands but also by the way we hurt each other and we can ask forgiveness of God and of each other.

This type of Reconciliation moment can be held in all kinds of families and does not take the place of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. However, it can be a very useful preparation for Catholics receiving the sacrament later. The format below can obviously be adapted to suit the family's particular needs.

The Our Father is a communal prayer, we say OUR Father, not MY Father, and when we pray it, we join together with Jesus and each other in whatever group we find ourselves. In reflection of this kind however, it is necessary to think mainly about myself and speak for myself because while I am a member of a group, such as a family, I am ultimately responsible to God only for myself, my life and how I have lived it in relationship with others.

In Matthew's gospel the Our Father is included in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray do not to use a lot of meaningless words as the pagans do. Your Father already knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray,"

## MAKING PEACE WITH GOD AND WITH EACH OTHER

As appropriate begin with the Sign of the Cross and a song e.g. Praise him, in the morning, praise him in the noontime..... when the sun goes down.

### REFLECTION AND SHARING ON THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE OUR FATHER.

**OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN - HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME**, or "may your name be praised" by everyone. Do we give praise to God, our Creator for his goodness and for the gift of ourselves and each other? Practise doing so by having each one share an example of the greatness of God in themselves and their own lives.

**YOUR KINGDOM COME.** What kind of kingdom? What kind of king? God's Kingdom is one where love, justice, truth, peace and freedom are lived out with Jesus as our King. What am I doing to build such a kingdom in my and my family's lives?

**YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN.** Heaven is a perfect place because God's will is done completely. How often do I do what I want rather than what God wants, and what effects does that have on others?

**GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD.** This also means, give us all the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter and love. How far do I trust God to provide those for me? How well do I do my bit to provide for others or how frantically do I rush about and neglect the family in doing so?

**FORGIVE US OUR SINS AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US.** I am literally saying, forgive me in the same way I forgive others. Do I forgive or hold a grudge? Who do I need to forgive and for what?

**SAVE US FROM THE TIME OF TRIAL AND DELIVER US FROM EVIL.** This is a statement of belief in God's supreme power over everything, good and evil and of his care for us in our need. Do I trust God enough?

### RECONCILIATION

Spend some time in reflection and sharing. Then in being reconciled with God and with each other we pray, "I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned, through my own fault, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do; and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters to pray for me to the Lord our God."

Then simply ask the different members of the family for forgiveness for the particular hurts caused. Listen carefully and if you are willing to forgive, say the words "I forgive you" or show your forgiveness by a sign e.g. a hug or kiss.

Finally celebrate! Sing, dance, eat and be merry, just as the Forgiving Father threw a big party for the Prodigal Son when he returned.

**FOR THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY ARE YOURS, NOW AND FOR EVER. AMEN.**