

# Taking Faith Home

March 4, 2012

## Scripture Verse for this Week:

Romans 4:25 (NCV)

“Jesus was given to die for our sins, and he was raised from the dead to make us right with God.”

- Say at mealtime, read at bedtime, and try to commit to memory

## Mealtime Prayer:

Thank you, God, for you are good – you call, you guide, you feed.  
Help us to share from all we have with those who are in need. Amen.

## **Our Four Keys to Passing on the Faith**

### Caring Conversation:

- When is it easy to follow Jesus? When is it hard?
- Jesus said that if we want to be his followers, we need to forget about ourselves and put him first (Mark 8:34). What do you think this means?
- How do other people know that you are a follower of Jesus?

### Devotional Practices:

Set aside any mail and take note of any phone calls you receive during the day. At your evening meals or before bedtime each night, gather together and pray for those people, organizations or concerns that the mail and phone calls represent.

### Rituals and Traditions:

Making pretzels is a Lenten tradition. Pretzels are shaped like arms folded in prayer, and can remind us to pray to God for our needs and the needs of others. Use the following recipe to make pretzels (the recipe lists the amount of ingredients per person):

*Have each person sprinkle ½ tsp. of yeast into 3 tbs. of warm water. Stir to dissolve. Add ½ tsp. of sugar, ½ cup of flour and 2 tbs. of grated cheese. Stir, and then knead until smooth. Cut the dough into four pieces and roll into a snake shape. Shape the four pieces like pretzels, and then brush them with a beaten egg. Sprinkle with coarse ground salt. Bake on a baking sheet at 425 degrees Fahrenheit (220 degrees Celsius) for 15 minutes.*

Prayer is another traditional Lenten discipline. Here are some suggestions to foster prayer in your home during Lent:

- Teach your children the Lord’s Prayer and Luther’s Morning and Evening Prayers.
- Buy a beautifully scripted prayer and hang it on a wall in your home.
- Keep a prayer jar or put up a whiteboard for special prayer intentions and requests.
- Have everyone in your household take turns praying for one of the other household members each night for a whole week.
- Pray each day for people who are in the news.

### Service:

Make pretzels to give away (see the recipe below)! Let those you give them to know that you are praying for them ... and then don’t forget to do so!

# Taking Faith Home

March 11, 2012

**Scripture Verse for this Week:**

1 Corinthians 3:16 (CEV)

“All of you surely know that you are God’s temple and that his Spirit lives in you.”

- Say at mealtime, read at bedtime, and try to commit to memory

**Mealtime Prayer:**

For all we eat and all we wear, for daily bread and loving care, we thank you, God. Amen.

## Our Four Keys to Passing on the Faith

**Caring Conversation:**

- What makes you feel angry? Why?
- Jesus became angry when he saw that the temple was being used as a marketplace. Why do you think he felt that way?
- What stops you from worshipping God? What helps you?

**Devotional Practices:**

Exodus 20 tells the story of how God gave us the Ten Commandments. They tell us how God wants us to live. In your home devotional time this week, focus on the Ten Commandments, two at a time. Talk about what each one means, and pray for God’s help to keep them. Try to memorize them.

Monday: I am the Lord your God: You shall have no other gods. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Tuesday: Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Honor your father and your mother.

Wednesday: You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery.

Thursday: You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Friday: You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his manservant or his maidservant or his cattle or anything that is your neighbor’s.

**Rituals and Traditions:**

The temple was a sacred place for God’s Old Testament people. Talk together about what are sacred places or items for your household, through which you are reminded of God’s presence. Design a sacred place especially for Lent: decorate an area in your home with a cross, candles and various items, symbols or pictures associated with Lent (you may wish to use lots of purple, the church color for Lent).

**Service:**

On Easter Sunday, we give gifts to each other (often Easter eggs) as a symbol of the gift of new life God gives to us through Jesus. Choose some people beyond your household to whom to give small Easter gifts this year. Purchase or make what you need, and prepare Easter cards or gift tags.

# Taking Faith Home

March 18, 2012

## **Scripture Verse for this Week:**

Ephesians 2:8 (CEV)

“You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve. This is God’s gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own.”

- Say at mealtime, read at bedtime, and try to commit to memory

## **Mealtime Prayer:**

Each meal we eat is a reminder of your love. Thank you, God! Amen.

## **Our Four Keys to Passing on the Faith**

### **Caring Conversation:**

- Share about a time when you felt really loved. What happened to make you feel that way?
- The Bible tells us that God is love. How has God shown his love for the world?
- In what ways do you experience God’s love for you?

### **Devotional Practices:**

To help you think about God’s love this week, draw and cut out a large heart shape from a sheet of poster paper. Attach a piece of ribbon or string so that the heart can be strung up on a wall of your home. As you go through the week, spend time answering this question: “Today God showed me love by....” Write all your household responses on the heart and watch as it fills up with signs of God’s care for you!

### **Rituals and Traditions:**

The cross is the ultimate sign of God’s heartfelt love for the world. Through the cross of Jesus, God cleans away our sins. During this week, spend some time carving crosses and hearts from soft bars of soap. Draw cross and heart shapes on soap bars (one per bar) and carefully carve away excess soap using table knives (save the soap chips and add water to make liquid hand soap). Use your heart and cross-shaped soaps as a reminder of the cleansing love of God!

### **Service:**

Make this “SHMILY” (See-How-Much-I-Love-You) week in your home. Make 10 smiley-face paper “buttons” for each family member. Challenge each household member to give away their SHMILY’s through performing 10 acts of loving service to others in your household during the week (e.g. giving a special hug or back rub, doing a chore without being asked, giving a special compliment).

# Taking Faith Home

March 25, 2012

## Scripture Verse for this Week:

John 17:3 (CEV)

"Eternal life is to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, the one you sent. Say at mealtime, read at bedtime, and try to commit to memory

## Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, be with us as we share this meal and with us always stay. Bless us with your love and grace, each and every day. Amen.

## **Our Four Keys to Passing on the Faith**

### Caring Conversation:

- Share about a time when you felt upset or worried.
- Before Jesus' death, his heart was "troubled" (John 12:27). Could Jesus have chosen not to die? Why or why not?
- What does Jesus' gift of his life on the cross mean to you?

### Devotional Practices:

Read Psalm 51 as a home devotional litany. Consider dividing up the reading as follows:

Reader 1: verses 1-2; Reader 2: verses 3-5; Reader 3: verses 6-9;

Reader 4: verses 10-12.

At the end of each section, invite all household members to respond together with these words: "*God, create a pure heart in me.*"

### Rituals and Traditions:

Lent is a time to reflect on the life of Jesus and our own lives as his followers. Lent begins in the wilderness and journeys toward the cross and the tomb. In preparing for Holy Week and Easter, help your children experience the solemnity and importance of this season by together creating a "wilderness box."

Place these symbols into a shoebox or cardboard carton:

- Sand: to create the wilderness (Mark 1:12-13)
- Twig Crosses: as a reminder that Jesus said that any who would follow him must "*take their cross and follow me*" (Mark 8:34-35)
- Stones: symbolizing the stone tablets of the 10 Commandments or the stones of the temple that Jesus said would be destroyed (John 2:19)
- Fabric "Road" or "Path": symbolizing the journey God's Old Testament people made through the desert, and our Lenten journey
- Wheat: the symbol Jesus uses to talk about how dying brings new life (John 12:24)
- Palm or Fern Fronds: add these on Palm Sunday
- Closed Tomb: add this on Good Friday (use play-dough or modeling clay for this)
- Flowers: open the "tomb" and insert these on Easter Sunday to symbolize the new life that comes to us because of Jesus' resurrection

### Service:

This week, begin to create Easter cards to send to friends, relatives, fellow church members and neighbors. Decorate your cards with Easter symbols (e.g. crosses, butterflies, lilies).