

A photograph of a modern building interior. In the foreground, a person is seen from behind, walking up a set of dark grey stairs with a metal handrail. Above the stairs, several large, pink balloons with black polka dots are suspended. The background shows a glass-walled upper level and a dark grey wall. The overall lighting is bright and modern.

river

40 DAYS OF FAITH

LENT 2019: SURPRISED BY JESUS

Family Guide | geared towards families with young children

WEEK 3

also on
RiverNYC App

Dear River Families,

I hope you are as excited as I am about celebrating **Lent: 40 Days of Faith!** The 40 Days of Faith has always been a hallmark in our family life. It gives me and my husband a reason and room in our hectic life to be more intentional in growing our faith and deepening our connections with our children.

From my experience with **Riverkids**, storytelling has always been the children's favorite time. It is a special way for them to meet and interact with God. With this Family Guide, I would like to share this experience with you, our River parents. I invite you and your children to explore the stories in the book of Mark with wonder, curiosity and openness.

In this guide I am sharing some tips, some "wondering questions", and prayers that are designed to help us enter deeper into the story. My hope in this season is that your family will be "**Surprised by Jesus**". Jesus - who might be different from our expectations and assumptions, who speaks and shows us new ways to look at and approach our life situations, and shows us how to engage God, others, and the world around us.

Warmly,

Amelia Cunard | Riverkids Director

TIPS

As storytellers, we are the **“tour guides”** -- leading the children through the stories and training them how to engage God in every moment. We want to leave an impression rather than information so that, as the children grow up, they can feel secure in finding their own answers to the questions that will come their way.



Read the stories with anticipation. Think of the process like opening a gift box.



We have included [pauses] in the stories, so your children can have time to process with their minds and with their feelings.



Pick any wondering question or have your children ask a question. Show them that their thoughts and their sharing are valued.

Do not feel like you have to give a quick answer to questions. It's okay to say, “I don't know.” This is an ongoing conversation - it takes time to grow.



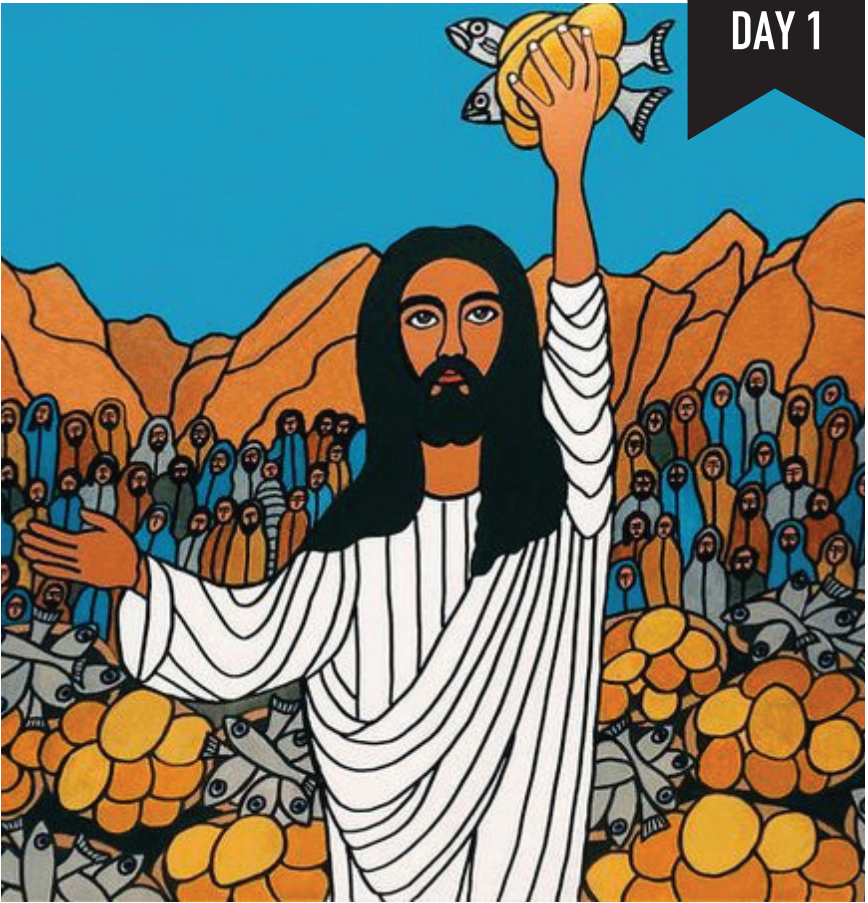
You can begin the prayer by saying “Let's close our eyes...breathe deep...in and out...quiet our minds so we can hear from God”.

For any difficult questions or feelings, invite the children to pray or ask Jesus Himself.

WEEK 3

also on
RiverNYC App

WEEK 3
DAY 1



Jesus Feeds The 5,000 Poster by EJ Lefavour.

Mark 6:30-56 (NIRV)

Jesus feeds five thousands

The apostles gathered around Jesus. They told him all they had done and taught. But many people were coming and going. So they did not even have a chance to eat. Then Jesus said to his apostles, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place. You need to get some rest.”

So they went away by themselves in a boat to a quiet place. But many people who saw them leaving recognized them. They ran from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus came ashore, he saw a large crowd. He felt deep concern for them. They were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

By that time it was late in the day. His disciples came to him. "There is nothing here," they said. "It's already very late. Send the people away. Then they can go to the nearby countryside and villages to buy something to eat."

But Jesus answered, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's pay! Should we go and spend that much on bread? Are we supposed to feed them?"

"How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. "Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five loaves and two fish."

Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of 100s and 50s. Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and gave thanks. He broke the loaves into pieces. Then he gave them to his disciples to pass around to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. All of them ate and were satisfied.

The disciples picked up 12 baskets of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of men who had eaten was 5,000.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what is the most surprising part of the story for you?

I wonder what the disciples felt when they were told to feed so many people?

I wonder how they felt after everyone had eaten and satisfied?

PRAYER

Jesus, surprise me today. Open my eyes, my mind, and my heart.

Help me see things in new ways. Help me do things in new ways.

Surprise me with your presence, kindness, and wisdom today.

WEEK 3
DAY 2



sailboat drawing by marissa

Mark 6:45-56 (NIRV)

Jesus walks on water

(*Today we are covering a different story from the adult's reading and response. We are continuing the passage from the previous day)

Right away Jesus made his disciples get into the boat. He had them go on ahead of him to Bethsaida. Then he sent the crowd away. After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was alone on land. He saw the disciples pulling hard on the oars. The wind was blowing against them. Shortly before dawn, he went out to them. He walked on the lake. When he was about to pass by them, they saw him walking on the lake. They thought he was a ghost, so they cried out. They all saw him and were terrified.

Right away Jesus said to them, "Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the boat with them. The wind died down. And they were completely amazed. They had not understood about the loaves. They were stubborn.

They went across the lake and landed at Gennesaret. There they tied up the boat. As soon as Jesus and his disciples got out, people recognized him. They ran through that whole area to bring to him those who were sick. They carried them on mats to where they heard he was. He went into the villages, the towns and the countryside. Everywhere he went, the people brought the sick to the market areas. Those who were sick begged him to let them touch just the edge of his clothes. And all who touched his clothes were healed.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder if anything in the story surprises you? and why?

I wonder what the disciples felt when they finally recognized Jesus?

I wonder how you would feel seeing Jesus in the middle of a storm?

PRAYER

Jesus, surprise me today. Open my eyes, my mind, and my heart.

Help me see things in new ways. Help me do things in new ways.

Surprise me with your presence, kindness, and wisdom today.

WEEK 3
DAY 3



Robert O. Hodgell, Christ Healing the Blind Man

Mark 7:31-37 (NIRV)

Jesus healed a man who could not hear and speak

Then Jesus left the area of Tyre and went through Sidon. He went down to the Sea of Galilee and into the area known as the Ten Cities. There some people brought a man to Jesus. The man was deaf and could hardly speak. They begged Jesus to place his hand on the man.

Jesus took the man to one side, away from the crowd. He put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. Jesus looked up to heaven. With a deep sigh, he said to the man, "Ephphatha!" That means "Be opened!" The man's ears were opened. His tongue was freed up, and he began to speak clearly.

Jesus ordered the people not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. People were really amazed. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes deaf people able to hear. And he makes those who can't speak able to talk."

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what the man felt when he was brought to Jesus?

I wonder why the people did not stop talking about Jesus?

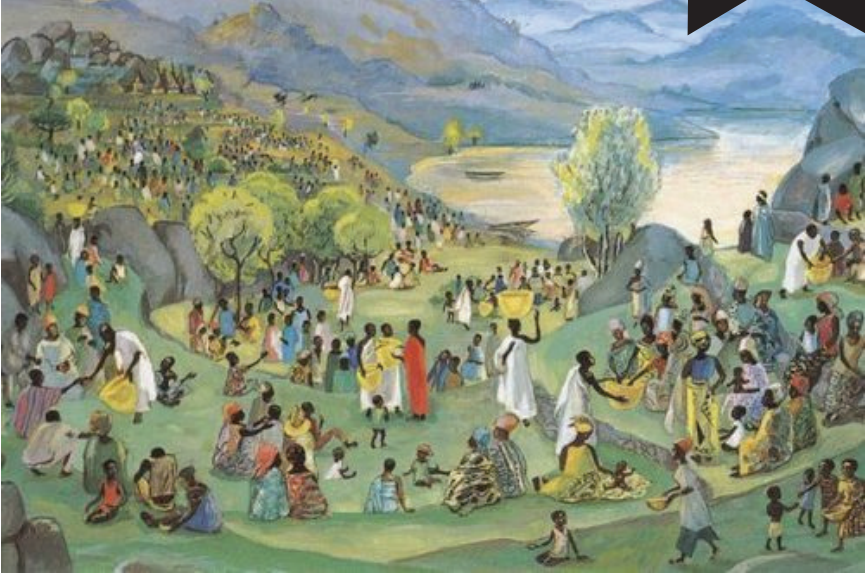
I wonder how you would feel if you received such healing or gifts from Jesus?

PRAYER

Jesus, surprise me today. Open my eyes, my mind, and my heart.

Help me see things in new ways. Help me do things in new ways.

Surprise me with your presence, kindness, and wisdom today.



Jesus Feeds, Ethiopia (artist unknown)

Mark 8:1-10 (NIRV)

Jesus feeds the four thousands

During those days another large crowd gathered. They had nothing to eat. So Jesus called for his disciples to come to him. He said, “I feel deep concern for these people. They have already been with me three days. They don’t have anything to eat. If I send them away hungry, they will become too weak on their way home. Some of them have come from far away.”

His disciples answered him. "There is nothing here," they said.

"Where can anyone get enough bread to feed them?"

"How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven," they replied.

He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. He took the seven loaves and gave thanks to God. Then he broke them and gave them to his disciples. They passed the pieces of bread around to the people. The disciples also had a few small fish. Jesus gave thanks for them too. He told the disciples to pass them around. The people ate and were satisfied. After that, the disciples picked up seven baskets of leftover pieces. About 4,000 people were there. After Jesus sent them away, he got into a boat with his disciples. He went to the area of Dalmanutha.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder why so many people kept following Jesus?

I wonder if the people were worried about being hungry or tired while Jesus was with them?

I wonder what you would do if you ever felt like you did not have enough?

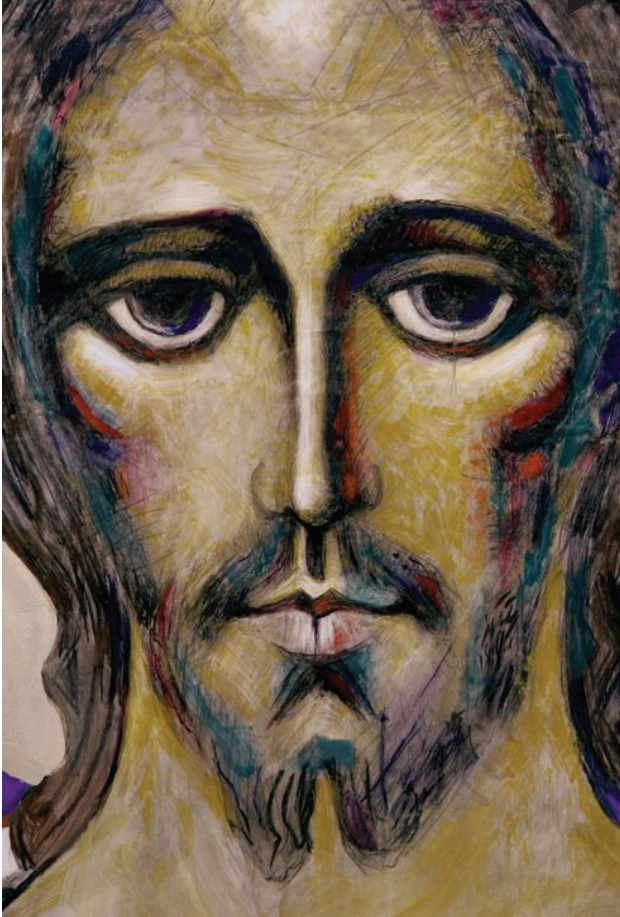
PRAYER

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WEEK 3
DAY 5



by Kiko Arguello

Mark 8:22-30 (NIRV)

Jesus heals a blind man, Jesus is the Messiah

Jesus and his disciples came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him. They begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand. Then he led him outside the village. He spit on the man's eyes and placed his hands on him. "Do you see anything?" Jesus asked.

The man looked up. He said, "I see people. They look like trees walking around."

Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened so that he could see again. He saw everything clearly. Jesus sent him home. He told him, "Don't even go into the village."

[pause]

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Still others say one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what the blind man felt when Jesus took him by the hand?

I wonder how do we let Jesus come into our situation or help you?

I wonder who you think Jesus is?

PRAYER

Jesus, surprise me today. Open my eyes, my mind, and my heart.

Help me see things in new ways. Help me do things in new ways.

Surprise me with your presence, kindness, and wisdom today.

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