

river

40 DAYS OF FAITH

LENT 2019: SURPRISED BY JESUS

WEEK 6

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.

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WEEK 6
DAY 1



by unknown artist

Mark 14:3-26 (NIRV)

A Woman Pours Perfume on Jesus, The Last Supper

Jesus was in Bethany. He was at the table in the home of Simon, who had a skin disease. A woman came with a special sealed jar. It contained very expensive perfume made out of pure nard. She broke the jar open and poured the perfume on Jesus' head.

Some of the people there became angry. They said to one another, "Why waste this perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's pay. The money could have been given to poor people." So they found fault with the woman.

"Leave her alone," Jesus said. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. You will always have poor people with you. You can help them any time you want to. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body to prepare me to be buried. What I'm about to tell you is true. What she has done will be told anywhere the good news is preached all over the world. It will be told in memory of her."

Judas Iscariot was one of the 12 disciples. He went to the chief priests to hand Jesus over to them. They were delighted to hear that he would do this. They promised to give Judas money. So he watched for the right time to hand Jesus over to them.

[pause]

It was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That was the time to sacrifice the Passover lamb. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?"

So he sent out two of his disciples. He told them, "Go into the city. A man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. He will enter a house. Say to its owner, 'The Teacher asks, "Where is my guest room? Where can I eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" He will show you a large upstairs room. It will have furniture and will be ready. Prepare for us to eat there."

The disciples left and went into the city. They found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover meal.

When evening came, Jesus arrived with the 12 disciples. While they were at the table eating, Jesus said, "What I'm about to tell you is true. One of you who is eating with me will hand me over to my enemies."

The disciples became sad. One by one they said to him, "Surely you don't mean me?" "It is one of you," Jesus replied. "It is the one who dips bread into the bowl with me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But how terrible it will be for the one who hands over the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

While they were eating, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks and broke it. He handed it to his disciples and said, "Take it. This is my body."

Then he took a cup. He gave thanks and handed it to them. All of them drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant," he said to them. "It is poured out for many. What I'm about to tell you is true. I won't drink wine with you again until the day I drink it in God's kingdom."

Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what you think about what the woman did for Jesus?

I wonder why some people did not like Jesus?

I wonder how you would feel sharing a meal with Jesus that evening?

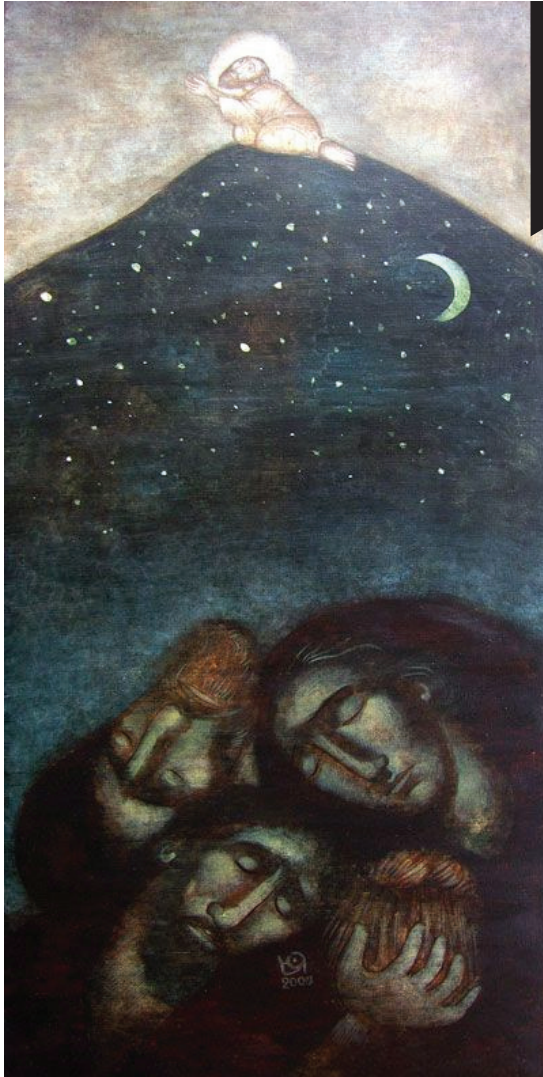
PRAYER

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 6
DAY 2



Gethsemane by Bulgarian Artist Julia Stankova

Mark 14:32-50 (NIRV)

Jesus prays in Gethsemane, Jesus is arrested

Jesus and his disciples went to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to them, “Sit here while I pray.” He took Peter, James and John along with him. He began to be very upset and troubled. “My soul is very sad. I feel close to death,” he said to them. “Stay here. Keep watch.”

He went a little farther. Then he fell to the ground. He prayed that, if possible, the hour might pass by him. “Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup of suffering

away from me. But let what you want be done, not what I want.”

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray. Then you won’t fall into sin when you are tempted. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

Once more Jesus went away and prayed the same thing. Then he came back. Again he found them sleeping. They couldn’t keep their eyes open. They did not know what to say to him.

Jesus returned the third time. He said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look! The Son of Man is about to be handed over to sinners. Get up! Let us go! Here comes the one who is handing me over to them!”

[pause]

Just as Jesus was speaking, Judas appeared. He was one of the 12 disciples. A crowd was with him. They were carrying swords and clubs. The chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders had sent them.

Judas, who was going to hand Jesus over, had arranged a signal with them. “The one I kiss is the man,” he said. “Arrest him and have the guards lead him away.” So Judas went to Jesus at once. Judas said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed Jesus. The men grabbed Jesus and arrested him. Then one of those standing nearby pulled his sword out. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.

“Am I leading a band of armed men against you?” asked Jesus. “Do you have to come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you. I taught in the temple courtyard, and you didn’t arrest me. But the Scriptures must come true.” Then everyone left him and ran away.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder why Jesus wanted His disciples to stay awake and keep watch?

I wonder what Jesus meant by saying “The spirit is willing, but the body is weak?”

I wonder what you would do if you saw Jesus being taken away?

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 6
DAY 3



1937 Dorothy P Lathrop Rooster Apostle Peter Denial

Mark 14:53-72 (NIRV)

Jesus is taken to the Sanhedrin, Peter says he does not know Jesus

The crowd took Jesus to the high priest. All the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the law came together. Not too far away, Peter followed Jesus. He went right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards. He warmed himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for something to use against Jesus. They wanted to put him to death. But they did not find any proof. Many witnesses lied about him. But their stories did not agree.

Then some of them stood up. Here is what those false witnesses said about him. "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made by human hands. In three days I will build another temple,

not made by human hands.’” But what they said did not agree.

Then the high priest stood up in front of them. He asked Jesus, “Aren’t you going to answer? What are these charges these men are bringing against you?” But Jesus remained silent. He gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah? Are you the Son of the Blessed One?” “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One. You will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.”

The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. “You have heard him say a very evil thing against God. What do you think?”

They all found him guilty and said he must die. Then some began to spit at him. They blindfolded him. They hit him with their fists. They said, “Prophesy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

[pause]

Peter was below in the courtyard. One of the high priest’s female servants came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him.

“You also were with Jesus, that Nazarene,” she said.

But Peter said he had not been with him. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said. He went out to the entrance to the courtyard.

The servant saw him there. She said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” Again he said he was not.

After a little while, those standing nearby said to Peter, “You must be one of them. You are from Galilee.”

Then Peter began to curse. He said to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about!”

Right away the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had spoken to him. “The rooster will crow twice,” he had said. “Before it does, you will say three times that you don’t know me.” Peter broke down and cried.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what made the priests and teachers of the law dislike Jesus?

I wonder why Peter denied knowing Jesus?

I wonder what you would say if someone asked you about 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.

WEEK 6
DAY 4



Passion by Bruno Wollbrück Verlag

Mark 15:1-15 (NIRV)

Jesus is brought to Pilate

It was very early in the morning. The chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they tied Jesus up and led him away. Then they handed him over to Pilate.

“Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate.

“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

The chief priests brought many charges against him. So Pilate asked him again, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they charge you with." But Jesus still did not reply. Pilate was amazed.

It was the usual practice at the Passover Feast to let one prisoner go free. The people could choose the one they wanted. A man named Barabbas was in prison. He was there with some other people who had fought against the country's rulers. They had committed murder while they were fighting against the rulers. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

"Do you want me to let the king of the Jews go free?" asked Pilate. He knew that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they wanted to get their own way. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd. So the crowd asked Pilate to let Barabbas go free instead.

"Then what should I do with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them.

"Crucify him!" the crowd shouted.

"Why? What wrong has he done?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted even louder, "Crucify him!"

Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd. So he let Barabbas go free. He ordered that Jesus be whipped. Then he handed him over to be nailed to a cross.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder how Jesus felt in this story?

I wonder why Jesus did not defend himself?

I wonder how you feel about the story today?

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.



by Eric Gill

Mark 15:21-47 (NIRV)

Jesus dies and is buried

A man named Simon was passing by. He was from Cyrene. He was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Simon was on his way in from the country. The soldiers forced him to carry the cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha. The word Golgotha means the Place of the Skull. Then they gave him wine mixed with spices. But he did not take it. They nailed him to the cross. Then they divided up his clothes. They cast lots to see what each of them would get.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. They wrote out the charge against him. It read, **the king of the jews.**

They crucified with him two rebels against Rome. One was on his right and one was on his left. Those who passed by shouted at Jesus and made fun of him. They shook their heads and said, "So you are going to destroy the temple and build it again in three days? Then come down from the cross! Save yourself!" In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law made fun of him among themselves. "He saved others," they said. "But he can't save himself! Let this

Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross! When we see that, we will believe.”
Those who were being crucified with Jesus also made fun of him.

[pause]

At noon, darkness covered the whole land. It lasted three hours. At three o'clock in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” This means “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” (Psalm 22:1)

Some of those standing nearby heard Jesus cry out. They said, “Listen! He's calling for Elijah.” Someone ran and filled a sponge with wine vinegar. He put it on a stick. He offered it to Jesus to drink. “Leave him alone,” he said. “Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

With a loud cry, Jesus took his last breath.

The temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. A Roman commander was standing there in front of Jesus. He saw how Jesus died. Then he said, “This man was surely the Son of God!”

Not very far away, some women were watching. Mary Magdalene was among them. Mary, the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, was also there. So was Salome. In Galilee these women had followed Jesus. They had taken care of his needs. Many other women were also there. They had come up with him to Jerusalem.

[pause]

It was the day before the Sabbath. That day was called Preparation Day. As evening approached, Joseph went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Joseph was from the town of Arimathea. He was a leading member of the Jewish Council. He was waiting for God's kingdom. Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead. So he called for the Roman commander. He asked him if Jesus had already died. The commander said it was true. So Pilate gave the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought some linen cloth. He took down the body and wrapped it in the linen. He put it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where Jesus' body had been placed.

WONDERING QUESTIONS

I wonder what Jesus felt on the cross?

I wonder why Jesus did not just come down from the cross?

I wonder how you feel about today's story?

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.

riverkids@rivernyc.org
www.rivernyc.org

