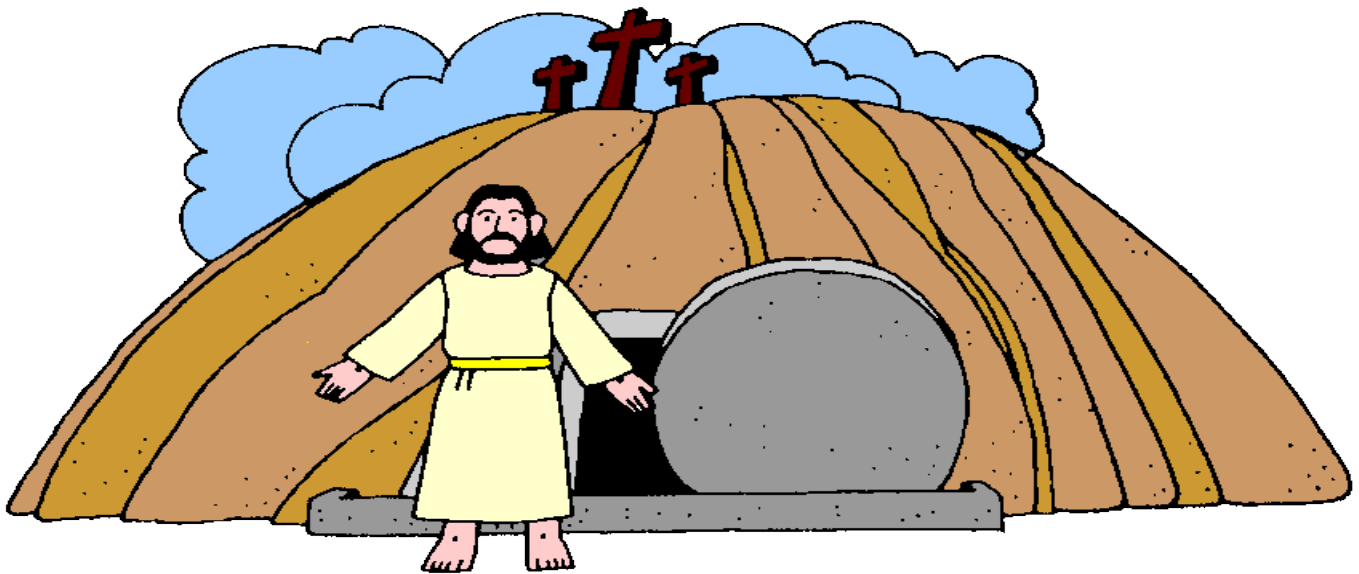


A JOURNEY WITH JESUS

Ask the children if they know what special event is happening in a few weeks' time (Easter). Ask if they know the name we give to the weeks leading up to Easter (Lent). Explain to them that Lent is a time of journey. For example, we journey from the dark and cold days of winter to the lighter and warmer days of spring during this time. We also follow Jesus in His Journey, which, as we will find out in the coming weeks, had some cold and dark days too (most notably Holy Thursday and Good Friday). Jesus made the greatest sacrifice for us by dying on the cross, but His journey didn't end there. It continued to the joy of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday and beyond that to Pentecost where His light and love were felt by people once more, bringing them in from the cold and out of darkness. His light and love continue to be felt by all of us to this day and during Lent, we are asked to remember the journey He made, which helps us to appreciate the strength of His love for us. We can continue to bask in that love if we try to live like Jesus and replicate all the good things that He said and did, while He was with us here on earth.



GROWING IN FAITH

Just as spring is a time when the increased light and warmth helps new plants to grow, our journey with Jesus through Lent to Easter Sunday every year brings new light and warmth into our lives and helps us to grow in faith. How does it do that? Well during Lent we are asked to share in His journey in a number of ways. We are asked to PRAY, meaning that we perhaps go to an extra Mass and pray more often. We are asked to FAST, meaning that we give up something (that could even mean our time to help others). And we are asked to take part in the practice of ALMSGIVING, which is another way of saying we are asked to give to charity and generally do good for others. If we do all of these things then we will grow in faith because we are sharing God's love by our example and fulfilling His plan for us to become His messengers here on earth.

Why not use some of our activity sheets to better understand the Lenten practices of FASTING, PRAYER and ALMSGIVING? You could also embark on a symbolic journey in your schools and raise money at the same time for Missio Scotland by supporting our Mile for Mission fundraising initiative!

HEAVEN'S JOURNEY

Heaven Ngulube is a Zambian girl who went to a primary school just outside the big city of Lusaka. Although she is 15 in this photo (left), she's only just finished primary school! That's because children there finish primary school a bit later than we do here. Like boys and girls here, Heaven has aspirations of what she wants to work as in future, but like many of us, she would have to go to secondary school and, perhaps, university to realise those aspirations. However, the nearest secondary school to where she lives was many miles away, so her journey would have been very long and they only accepted a small number of pupils into the school too, so it didn't look like she would be able to fulfil her dreams. However, thanks to prayers and support for Missio Scotland a new secondary school was built nearer her home, called St Columba's and her journey to school is much shorter. It also means that many girls and boys like her can study hard, get a good education and have a good job and quality of life in future. Our PRAYERS and ALMSGIVING can help someone else in their life journey!

