

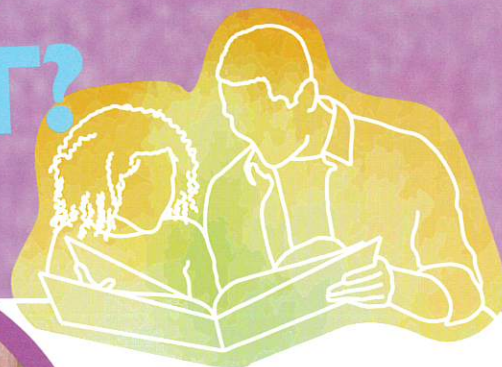
Growing Together

Inspired by the Christian Faith

WHAT IS LENT?

MAKING SPACE FOR GOD

Read together



this modern version of a traditional Jewish story....



The adults were at their wits end. Their home was just too small for everyone to fit in. There was so little space they could barely breathe. One day they were so tired and fed up that a wise friend said;

"I have been thinking about your problem. When you get home, make your house look beautiful by bringing in all your plant pots and stop the foxes from disturbing your sleep by keeping the wheelie bin inside. Put the trampoline indoors so the children can play, and bring your bikes in from the rain so you don't have to sit on a wet saddle."

The adults were a bit confused, but they were willing to try anything that might help. It didn't take long for things to get worse. By the next day, things were terrible.

The adults phoned their friend in despair, "What have you done to us? There is soil and water everywhere."

So the friend said, "Well, put the flower pots back outside."

The next day they rang again, "The smell from the bin is atrocious."

So the friend said, "Umm...then pop the bin back outside."

The next day they rang for the third time, "The children are always jumping on the trampoline, they're squealing and shouting, and we're covered in bruises from bumping into the bikes."

"Oh dear," said the friend, "why not put the bikes and the trampoline back outside?"

The next day the adults went to find their wise friend, full of excitement. "Wow" they said, "our home is lovely, there's so no soil, there's no smell and the children are outside playing on the trampoline. We have a great home."



Did you know



Christians use the **forty days of Lent** to consider what they squash into their lives and what gets squeezed out. They use this time to make sure there is room for God in their lives by praying, reading the Bible, sitting still and listening.

Mary Wesley, the mother of a famous church leader, found a great way of finding peace to pray; she would sit in the middle of her busy kitchen with her apron over her head, so everyone knew not to disturb her.

Shrove Tuesday is traditionally the day Christians would have prepared to make life more simple during Lent. They would use up all the fancy food in the house by making it into pancakes. Ingredients like eggs would then not be used until after Easter.

Create & make



A Lent paper chain

Simply write something on each link that you have noticed in the day, for example seeing buds on the trees, the taste of a favourite food, a new experience or choose a colour to match your feelings about the day.

You will need:

- strips of paper 2 cm by 15 cm
- a glue stick, tape or stapler
- pens or crayons

1. To make the first "link." All you need to do is to overlap the ends of the strip tape, glue, or staple them together to create a ring.
2. Thread the next day's strip of paper through the centre of the loop and fasten the ends as before.
3. Keep adding links each day.



Courageous Advocacy



Bravely making the world better

If as a household you were able to make space/use time differently, what would you like to do? How might people benefit? For example, you could play a game together, go for a walk or read chapters from a book together.

Prayer space ideas



Is there a place in your house, like in the story, where you've been meaning to tidy up and sort things out for a while? Can you find time to tidy it and put something there to mark it as special, like a favourite cushion or cuddly toy? Then you could use the space to sit and be still and talk to God. You may need play some music or close your eyes to show that you are praying, so you're not disturbed.

Family Fun



Dig deep in the cupboards and see if you can find a game you had forgotten about or haven't played for a long time. Can you invite another household to join your game?

Idea for Pre-schoolers



Create calm moments, allowing time just to be ... for example listen to gentle music together or blow bubbles you can watch together.

