



Exploring Easter Stations of the Cross resource: Notes for Churches and Schools



Introduction

Because of the current and ongoing restrictions on social gathering associated with the Coronavirus pandemic, this flexible resource is designed to be used in a variety of ways by churches and schools. We are delighted that we have been given permission by Imaginor to use the artwork of Nebiyu Assafa, and hope that you find them a helpful stimulus for exploring the Easter story in more depth.

You could:

- prepare and deliver bags of resources to families at home, to help them engage with the Easter story
- use the videos (available soon) as part of collective worships, online or gathered services and groups
- Use the pictures and wondering questions as part of a reflective trail – outside or inside
- Put the craft instructions on your website/facebook page and encourage families to post their creations
- Provide your local school with resources to create a prayer space and print them copies of the 'Reflect and Respond' Sheets

The Easter story has been divided into seven sessions which can be delivered over days or weeks or all together. If you are short of time you could just pick out the key elements of the Easter narrative – the Last Supper, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection.

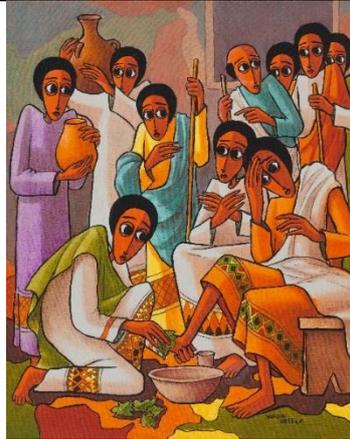
Some are concerned about covering the Crucifixion with children and it is important to carefully consider the language that we use. Death is however, a part of life and we can build emotional resilience in children by not shying away from talking about it, and not using too many euphemisms or metaphors. The pictures used have been chosen because they do indicate some of the terribleness of the event, but do not focus on the gore and horror of it. If this raises issues with the children, do refer to our resources on Bereavement and Loss.

The tables below give an outline of the theme for each session and the resources available. **Words in Green** indicate resources you can download from our webpages. Unfortunately we are only able to upload Pdf files but if you would like originals to amend for your context please [email Carolyn Edwards](mailto:carolyn.edwards@yorkdiocese.org).

For each session the following resources are suggested:

 suitable for use in school	 suitable for use in church	 suitable for use at home
<p>Look - Box Instructions: Put a few objects related to the session in a box. These can be used as an introduction to the session – you could ask participants to guess what the story might be about. They can also be used as part of a reflective activity or prayer station</p>		
<p>Picture story: A short summary of the story with pictures. On powerpoint for online and as a sheet for distribution</p>		
<p>Peter's story: short videos where the Easter story is imagined from Peter's perspective. This set of stories has been written specially for the Diocese and can be used freely with no copyright concerns. There is a printed version for you to read as part of a collective worship or service, or send home, and a video of the story being told which you can download or stream</p>		
<p>Dynamic Dan video: Dynamic Dan uses magic and comedy to encourage thought about the significance of the story, and raises a big question for reflection. This question is also on the Reflect, Engage and Reflect and Respond sheets</p>		
<p>Reflect: An opportunity to wonder about the story using the artwork of Nebiyu Assafa as a stimulus. Downloadable sheets include a larger version of the picture, Talk and Think</p>		
		
<p>Engage: Activities, information and prayer ideas to encourage engagement with the story and faith. Downloadable sheets include: Listen, Talk, Think, Make, Pray and Play</p>		
<p>Craft Instructions: simple instructions on how to make something related to the theme of the story</p>		
		
<p>Reflect and Respond: questions for wondering and an opportunity to consider how new understandings might impact your values and behaviour. Downloadable sheets include: Listen, Read – a summary of the story, Talk, Think, Respond</p>		

Session One - Serve - Jesus washes the disciples' feet



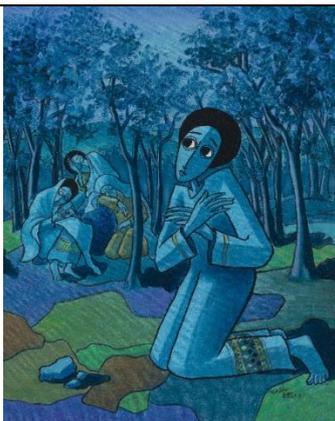
Look	Items for box – jug and bowl of water, towel, sandal
Read	John 13:1-20
Listen	Peter's story - Peter doesn't want Jesus to wash his feet but Jesus is insistent that all the disciples need to learn the importance of serving others
Talk	What you do to show other people that you love them?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Make a simple clay/plasticine bowl like the one in the picture. Resources required: orange sized ball of air-dry clay or several strips of plasticine
Play	Play a simple memory game. The first person says 'I am going to serve...' and names another person in the group and what they could do for them e.g. 'I am going to serve Bob by brushing his hair'. The named person then responds introducing a new person's name and adding another element of service. 'I am going to serve Tilly by brushing her hair, and making her a sandwich'. Keep going until everyone has had a turn or you run out of ideas
Do	Talk about how you can put your ideas for showing love into action
Pray	Hands and feet prayer
Respond (resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)	<i>Theme: thinking of others</i> <i>Equipment: love heart sweets</i> The disciples were important to Jesus. Jesus wanted to show the disciples how important it was to serve one another with love by washing their feet. Think about the important people in your life. Now think of one person who you are especially grateful for. Maybe a family member or a close friend or even someone in this room now. If you want to, take a sweet and say a silent thank you prayer for them as you eat it. Maybe you could think of one thing you could do this week to help them.

Session Two - Feast – Jesus eats with his friends



Look	Items for box - Tablecloth, table setting, chalice and paton
Read	Matthew 26:17-30 Lion Storyteller Bible – An Important Meal
Listen	Peter’s Story – Peter enjoys feasting with Jesus and his friend, but then Jesus does something very strange
Talk	Who would you like to share your last ever meal with?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Make a communion cup out of silver foil. Resources required: 14cmx14cm square of kitchen foil, small coin
Play	Make flat bread
Do	Hold a simple Passover meal as described in the Journey Through the Bible family calendar
Pray	Remembering and thanking God for all that he has given us
Respond <i>(resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)</i>	Theme: Friendship Equipment: Pipe cleaners The English word ‘companion’ comes from the Latin phrase ‘com panis’ which literally means ‘with bread’. During the last supper, the night before Jesus was killed, Jesus broke bread with his companions, his disciples, his best friends! Who are your best friends? Who is really important to you? If you want to, you can make a model of them out of the pipe cleaners as a way of saying thank you to God for them.

Session Three - Fearful – the Garden of Gethsemane



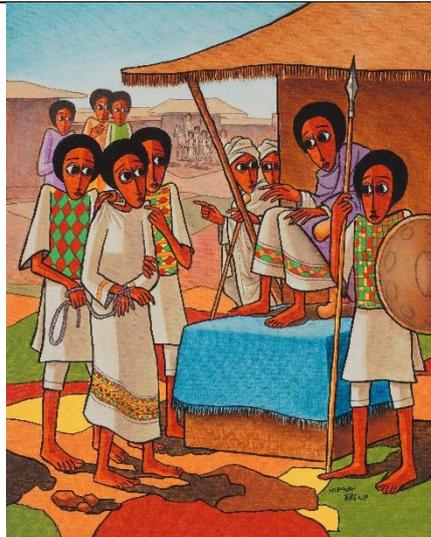
Look	Items for box – question marks, candle, Bible quote, sword
Read	Mark 14:32-48
Listen	Peter’s Story – Peter sleeps when he is supposed to be watching and praying
Talk	What are you most afraid of?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Tree of hopes, fears and promises. Resources required: downloaded sheet, pens or pencils from writing or drawing
Play	Sleeping disciples
Do	One account of this story says that one of the disciples cut off a soldier’s ear, but that Jesus put it back on again and healed it completely. Luke 22:45-53. Have a go at acting out the story taking it in turns to play the different parts of the soldiers and the disciples and talk about what they might have been feeling
Pray	Trusting God with the things we are frightened about
Respond <i>(resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)</i>	<p>Theme: Questions <i>Equipment: pieces of cardboard and felt-tip pens; optional - string, pegs, green fabric to create a ‘gardeny’ area for the activity. Hang the strings and put the pegs nearby.</i> Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Jesus was worried about what was going to happen to him, and he prayed a ‘Big Question’ prayer to God. We all have big questions about life. Christians believe that God is OK with our questions, even our angry, painful ones. If you want to, you can write a big question prayer onto a bit of cardboard and peg onto the string if available.</p> <p>Theme: Help <i>Equipment: small pot of soil, plant markers or lolly sticks</i> All of us need help sometimes. Just before he was arrested, when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, he asked God to help him. What do you need help with? If you want to, you can write or draw your thoughts or prayers for help on to a stick and plant it in the garden.</p>

Session Four - Betrayed – Peter denies Jesus



Look	Items for box – cockerel, matches, blanket
Read	Luke 22:54-65
Listen	Peter's Story – Peter denies that he knows Jesus even though he said he wouldn't
Talk	Have you ever let someone you love down? How did it feel?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Folded paper cockerel. Resources required: printed sheet, scissors, sellotape, glue or staples
Play	Blindfold game – see if you can recognise people from their voice
Do	Explore forgiveness with the picnic on the beach story
Pray	Forgiving and being forgiven
Respond <i>(resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)</i>	<p>Theme: Broken friendships Equipment: paper people Friends sometimes argue – that is normal, but when friends say or do mean things and hurt each other, then don't apologise and sort things out, the friendship can get broken. Do you know someone whose friendship with someone else has broken? (Maybe it's you? Maybe it's someone else?) Write or draw the two people's initials onto a paper person. If you want to, pin the paper-people to the wall as a thought or prayer for them to forgive each other.</p> <p>Theme: Reconciliation Equipment: a collection of zips When people argue and fight, they get separated from each other. They're not together anymore. Have you argued with someone recently? Do you know people who don't get on well together? Zips are clever. Zips bring two sides together. Reconciliation means bringing two sides together. Pick up a zip and think about the people that you want to bring back together. If you want to, you can say a quiet prayer for the people you're thinking of as you do up the zip. This is a reconciliation prayer</p>

Session Five - Innocent – Jesus is put on trial



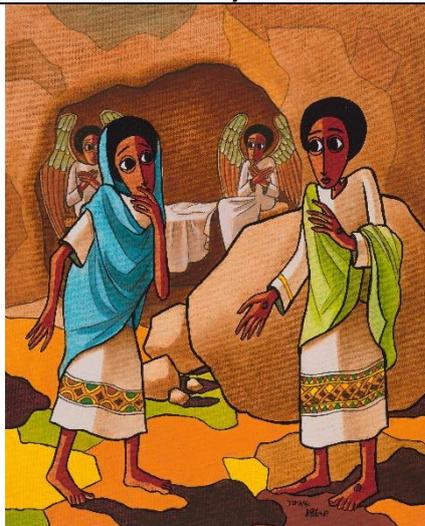
Look	Items for box – map of world, bowl of water, outline of hands, St Teresa of Avila prayer
Read	Matthew 27:11-26
Listen	Peter's Story – Peter hears about what happened to Jesus at Pilate's house
Talk	What is the most unjust thing happening in the world at the moment?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Paper crown of thorns. Resources required: brown paper, sellotape or staples
Play	statues
Do	Work out how we can use our power for good
Pray	Praying for justice around the world
Respond (resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)	Theme: Justice Equipment: piece of paper shaped to look like weights. If in the classroom a set of scales with weights or a picture of some scales weighted down on one side. You could also include stories of injustice in our world using examples from Christian Aid or Unicef Some people are treated unfairly. Scales are often used as a symbol of justice. Look at the scales, one side is weighted down with things that aren't fair. If you want to on a piece of paper write a thought, prayer or action that you could do to help bring fairness to the world. Together will you all be able to balance the scales with your thoughts, prayers and actions?

Session Six - Sadness – Jesus dies on the cross



Look	Items for box – cross, red ribbons, dice, nails, crown of thorns
Read	Luke 23:26-49 Lion Storyteller Bible – A Dreadful Day
Listen	Peter’s Story – Peter watches in horror as Jesus dies on the cross
Talk	What is the saddest thing that has happened in your life?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Make a prayer die. Resources required: printed sheet, scissors, glue or double sided tape
Play	Dice game
Do	Make and/or decorate a cross
Pray	Dice prayers
Respond <i>(resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)</i>	<p>Theme: Worries Equipment: some paper crosses The Romans forced Jesus to carry his heavy cross through the streets and then up the hill called Golgotha. Sometimes our problems and fears feel heavy. Christians believe that God wants to help. What are you worried about? What are you finding difficult to carry? If you want to, you can write your worry onto a paper-cross and ask God to help you carry it.</p> <p>Theme: Forgiveness Equipment: Water, small container, stones. Set Up: Place the container with water near the stones. If this activity is being done individually or at home, include instructions to fill a small bowl with water. On the cross, Jesus cried out, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do’. Even as he was dying he asked God to forgive those who had put him to death. Sometimes bad things happen, people hurt us and it is hard to let go of the pain. Sometimes it feels heavy inside us, like a stone. Think for a moment – is there anyone you need to forgive? If you want to, take a stone and gently drop it into the water as a step of forgiveness.</p>

Session Seven - Joy – Jesus is alive!



Look	Items for box – large stone, white cloths
Read	John 20:1-23 Lion Storyteller Bible – A Happy Day
Listen	Peter's Story – Peter sees for himself what Mary has told him – Jesus is really alive
Talk	What is the best news you have ever heard?
Think	Which bit of the picture is your favourite? Which bit of the picture is the most surprising? Which bit of the picture would you change to show your own understanding of the story?
Make	Micro corner yoghurt pot Easter garden Resources required: corner yoghurt pot, cotton wool or soil, mustard or cress seeds, black pens or paper
Play	Racing to the tomb
Do	Make picture of an angel with moving wings
Pray	JOY prayers
Respond <i>(resources from Prayer Spaces in Schools)</i>	<i>Theme: Hopes and Dreams</i> <i>Equipment: Scratch cards e.g. www.bakerross.co.uk/scratch-art-doodle-sheets-1</i> <i>Set Up: Scratch cards can be cut into halves or quarters. Something to scratch with</i> After Jesus died, his body was put into a tomb. Jesus' friends were afraid and confused; it was a dark time. It felt like all their hopes and dreams had died with Jesus. However, three days later, the tomb was empty and Jesus was alive! We all have hopes and dreams, things that seem impossible, but we hold onto our hopes. If you want to, you can scratch a thought or prayer or a picture about your hope or dreams onto the scratch card.