

Week 1: Devotion

Bible Story: Read Matthew 4:1-11.

Weekly Focus: Desert Times

Within our faith journey we experience times when we struggle or feel really alone. These can be described as “desert times” because, like the dry desert, we feel like we don’t have what we need to thrive or, even at times, survive. This isn’t because we have done anything wrong. It is because we are human and these times are a part of life.

We begin Lent by remembering we are human. In Genesis 3:19 it is written, “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” On Ash Wednesday many Christians mark their foreheads with ashes in the shape of a cross. This is a way of remembering that we are human, filled with all the good and bad things in life, including desert times.

For Jesus, his time in the desert followed his baptism. We are told that Jesus went into the wilderness and fasted for forty days. During this time, he learned about himself, his faith, and his relationship with God in new ways. This week, as we begin our Lenten journey, you are invited to explore the “desert” parts of your life as a way of making room to encounter God in new ways.

Thinking Questions:

- As you begin your Lenten journey, what are you excited about?
- What are you unsure (or nervous or not excited) about?
- What is one way you think that you might change by the end of this journey?

Week 1: Daily Spiritual Practices

Wednesday, February 14th

- Read Weekly Devotion #1 and answer Thinking Questions.
- If possible, attend an Ash Wednesday Service in your community.

Thursday, February 15th

- Connect/Share: Take time with a parent or grandparent or as a family to talk about ways you can fast this Lenten season. Maybe you will work together to complete the Weekly Devotions and Daily Spiritual Practices in this Devotion Box or set aside intentional family time to pray and be together.
- Whatever you chose, write it down in your journal and post it in a place you will see it each day (like your bathroom mirror, the refrigerator, or family calendar).

Friday, February 16th

- Find the puzzle piece labeled #1.
- Read Genesis 3:19.
- Think about the good things that dirt or ashes provides in our world as well as the not so great things about dirt. Draw them or symbols for them on your puzzle piece.
- Save your puzzle piece, as we will continue to put the puzzle together each week throughout our study.

Saturday, February 17th

- Prayer: Set a timer for five minutes. During this time, talk to God about things you are struggling with. End your prayer asking God for what you need to face these struggles.

Sunday, February 18th

- Mini-Feast Envelope #1