



All Saints West Dulwich Journey to Jerusalem

“When the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” Luke 9.51

During Lent this year, we are invited to accompany Christ as he makes his final journey to Jerusalem. The gospels tell us that Jesus moved from place to place. As he travelled, he said and did amazing things. He met many people and changed their lives through the encounter. He attracted big crowds and entered Jerusalem in a triumphal procession. This brought him into conflict with the authorities and so he was crucified. The people abandoned him.

By tradition, Lent is a time when we prepare ourselves to stay with Christ through Holy week so that we do not abandon him, but accompany him. The preface to the Eucharistic prayer includes these words:

‘in these forty days, you lead us into the desert of repentance
That through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline
We may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again.’

To help us grow in grace, people sometimes give up chocolate or alcohol or something else. Whilst this is good and helpful, its even better if we also take something on like setting aside some time to pray. Some people like to say the Lord’s prayer every day at a particular time.

This year, families are being asked to accompany Jesus on his journey for a 24 hour period. This journey will begin from SmAll Saints on Friday 19th February which is just after Ash Wednesday when Lent starts. It will end at SmAll Saints on Friday 26th March which is just before Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week.

The idea is that you walk with Christ for part of the way. You receive him into your company from another family. This gives you the opportunity to think about what you might say to Christ, and to wonder what he might say to you.

This also gives you the opportunity to pray for the family you receive Jesus from, the one you pass him onto and for your own family as well as for someone else in the congregation. At this time, people need our prayers, and this may also enable us to feel more connected with one another.

You will need:

A donkey , perhaps from the Nativity set or you may have another one

A Jesus figure. This might be:

- A lego or Happy land figure which you wrap in a bit of white cloth
- Joseph from the Nativity set
- One you make yourself, be creative

The backdrop:

- Draw, paint, colour a roadway scene on some card
- Cut out some green hills and stick them on a sky blue background.
- Or you may have a better idea

What to do:

Arrange a time for the handover with the person/family who is 'bringing' Jesus to you virtually.

Set up the scene with the backdrop, Jesus and the donkey. You might want to add some photos of yourselves and people you want to pray for.

When you receive Jesus, you might like to ask the family what it felt like to accompany Jesus and what they want to pray for.

When you have had a chat, light a candle and say a prayer. You can pray for each other in words you choose yourself or if you prefer you can say this:

God of companionship,
We give you thanks that you are with us
Always and everywhere.
You know us and love us and invite us
to get to know you better each day.
Hear us now as we pray in particular for
Names of the family who hand over,
The family who receive,
Other members of the congregation
Any particular concerns.
Help us to grow in grace and learn
to be your people once again
Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour
Amen.

