



Diocese of Bristol

Families growing faith at home

Church@Home is a fantastic all-age resource that has been created to encourage and help families enjoy a time of worship, explore the Bible, pray together and grow in their faith in the comfort of their own homes.

Church@Home provides a fun, engaging and easy-to-follow session every Sunday using a Bible reading selected from the Church of England Lectionary. Each session lasts approximately twenty minutes and provides age-related material for toddlers to teenagers to accommodate everyone in the family. Thought-provoking questions, fun activities and crafts bring the Bible story to life as well as creative prayer ideas to help families focus, learn and grow in their faith together. Additional teaching and craft suggestions are also provided for families with very young children.

Church@Home can also be used as a fun way to help families connect with other families on Sunday mornings too during this time of distancing. Invite everyone to begin **Church@Home** at the same time and perhaps set up a WhatsApp group where families can share what they have done, or discuss the topic further together.

If your family or families in your church are using **Church@Home** please let us know. We would like to keep in contact, find out how you are doing as well as hear how **Church@Home** is helping families grow in their faith, so that we can share and inspire others during this time of distancing.

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Thank you 



Sunday 28th February 2021
2nd Sunday of Lent

All in for Jesus

Mark 8:31-38

Time to focus...

Find a place where the family can all sit comfortably - around the table, on the lounge floor etc. As you gather, if possible, light a candle to mark the beginning of your worship time. Quietly stare at the candle, watching the flames flicker and glow.

Set the scene...

Have you seen a stained glass window - you might have one in your church? Have fun searching online for beautiful stained glass windows and choosing your favourites.

Watch the story...

This week's reading - [Mark 8:31-38](#) - has been animated by CartoonBible.

Explore the story...

Stained glass windows in churches often tell the story of Jesus' life. Each window is made of many small pieces of coloured glass that fit together to form the picture. When light shines through the windows the colours glow. Have you ever thought about how stained glass windows are made? It is a difficult process. Working with glass is not only difficult, but dangerous. Experienced craftsmen require extreme temperatures to make and mould glass. They need to wear safety glasses to protect their eyes at all times, and many special tools are needed such as glass cutters, glass grinders, and pliers. Glass is also a very fragile material. Glass needs to be handled very carefully so that it doesn't break and cut their hands. Even though working with stained glass is difficult, it is worth the effort because the end result is a beautiful, inspiring piece of art that helps onlookers think about God.

The Bible reading today teaches us that following Jesus is a difficult thing to do. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (8:34). Jesus is explaining that to follow him is like carrying a huge, heavy cross. Choosing to follow Jesus is exciting; however, there may be times when you have difficulty making the right choices and doing the right thing. You may get discouraged. Others may make fun of you. You might think it is just too hard to do, but it is worth the effort. In much the same way that stained glass is beautiful and inspiring, so too will your life be beautiful and inspiring to others when you show them God's love. Just as light comes gleaming through stained glass, God's light comes from within you shining out for others to see.

End with a prayer...

Praise God that he is still calling people into his kingdom. Pray for one another, that you would be Christ-like examples to those you live with and those you meet. Amen.



Sunday 28th February 2021
2nd Sunday of Lent

All in for Jesus

Creative ideas / toddlers to teenagers

0-5s...

Craft activity: You will need thin pieces of paper - decorate and glue them back and forth in a criss-cross effect to make a cross. Or just glue strips of paper together and form a cross on a piece of paper. Write today's Bible verse on the cross paper.

Fun activity: Have fun colouring in the stained glass [window](#) on the next page. Or, why not have a go designing your own stained glass window >>>

5-11s...

Worship: Enjoy learning the moves to "[I have decided](#)"

Craft activity: You will need A4 paper and a newspaper. Trace and then cut out a cross out of the news print. Glue onto A4 paper, decorate and write; "Good News! Take up your cross and follow me".

Fun activity: Have fun colouring in the stained glass [window](#) on the next page. Or, why not have a go designing your own stained glass window >>>



11-18s...

- 1) What can't you live without, even for a few hours?
- 2) What does it mean to deny yourself of something?
- 3) What does it mean to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

+ Ask God to help you wholeheartedly follow Jesus.

> Try having a screen free day this week to spend time with God.

Jesus called the crowd to him and said; "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" - Mark 8:34

