

FAMILY DEVOTIONS for EASTER

● **Palm Sunday—Read aloud Mark 11:1-11.** Make palm-leaf cookies. Cut frozen cookie dough into 2 X 1/2-inch strips. Place aluminum foil on a cookie sheet and spray it with nonstick cooking spray. Roll the cookie strips and shape them into an outline of a palm leaf on the foil. Close all edges in the outline. Crush green candies in a bag with a hammer, and sprinkle to fill in the cookie center. Bake at 375 degrees for about eight minutes. Contrast the sweetness of the cookies with the harshness of breaking the candies with a hammer. Tell your children that this was a sweet day for Jesus, but he knew that soon he would be broken—or would die—for our sins.

● **Monday—Read aloud Mark 11:15-18.** Tell your children that this area of the temple was the place non-Jews could come to pray, but it had become a dirty, noisy, unworshipful place. Together, decorate a worshipful space in your home for Easter Week. Include a Bible, candles, and an area to display the items you'll use this week. You can review these items at the beginning of each devotion. A small, bare tree branch laced with white Christmas lights makes a nice backdrop. Light the candles or turn on the lights only during devotions to keep it special and meaningful.

● **Tuesday—Read aloud Mark 14:3-9.** This woman gave Jesus a gift that was very precious. We can give gifts that come from our heart, too. As each child shares something he or she can do to honor Jesus, spray perfume into the air or on the child. Decorate a beautiful piece of paper and form a cylinder around the perfume bottle for display at your family worship space.

● **Wednesday—Read aloud Matthew 26:14-16.** You'll need 30 dimes. Tell kids that Judas betrayed Jesus for about 120 days wages. Let the kids count the dimes and place them at your family worship space. Ask, "Was Jesus' life on earth worth more than 30 pieces of silver? Why or why not? What was the true value of Jesus' life to our family?"

● **Thursday—Read aloud John 13:1-5.** Jesus washed feet to show his love. Have a bowl, a bar of soap, and paper towels ready. Take turns washing each other's hands and drying them as you express love to each other. Display the soap at your family worship space.

● **Friday—Read aloud Mark 15:21-39.** You'll need two horseshoe or carpenter's nails, light gauge wire, and a shoelace for each child. Help children lay their nails across each other like a cross, then start wrapping the wire around the point where the nails intersect to bind the nails into a cross. Crisscross the wire in the center. Have the kids recall an event of the Crucifixion with each wrap. Wrap more wire around the top and make a loop to hold the shoelace.

● **Saturday—Read aloud Mark 15:42-47.** Take turns wrapping each other in toilet paper just as Jesus may've looked when prepared for burial. Talk about how the disciples might've felt when all their hopes seemed destroyed when Jesus died. Ask, "How would you have felt if you had been there when Jesus died? What would you have done?"

Talk about how the burial isn't the end of the story, but that it was a very sad day for Jesus' friends.

● **Sunday—Read aloud Luke 24:1-9.** You'll need cupcakes and a trick re-lighting candle. Light it and talk about how Jesus came to be the light of the world. On Saturday, it looked like the light had been blown out. Blow out the candle and wait in silence while the flame is gone. When the flame comes back, celebrate! Point out that nothing can ever snuff out Jesus, the light of the world.