

## A DIY activity for Holy week - Let's build Easter Gardens

April 12<sup>th</sup> is Easter day!

In this (*Holy*) week we have the opportunity to think about the lead up to the great celebration of hope brought to us all through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

As we are all at home this year, we could spend time creating our own, simple, Easter Garden during the next seven days, – using the activity to help us to reflect on the story of Jesus' journey to the cross, and the utter power of God at work in our world as he brought Jesus from death to life ....conquering the uncontrollable!



Feel free to adapt the basic activities outlines here to suit *your* skills, the resources you have to hand and your imagination!

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**Monday April 6<sup>th</sup>:** Lay the foundations.

**Activity:**

Find a tray or a plant pot or a large plant saucer to use as the 'garden'.

Use compost or soil or torn up newspaper to line the garden floor.

**Reflect:**

The story of Jesus at the cross and resurrected traces all the way back in Scripture to the very beginning of God's creation. He made this world, and us, in his image.

God himself laid the foundations for our hope of relationship with him beyond human sinfulness right from the beginning.

Jesus was there at the beginning and always part of God's foundation of life. (read John 1) The word was with God and the word was God. He became flesh and lived amongst us.

**Pray:** Thank you that you live in my life and home Lord. Help me to see you and to share you with the people I talk with this week. Amen

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**Tuesday April 7<sup>th</sup>:** The Tomb

**Activity:**

Use Cardboard or small stones to construct a tomb-like structure in the garden ready. Leave the front open.

**Reflect:**

Death is painful. There's a darkness and tomb-like feeling to it. Yet at the same time death is a prelude to something more, even though we don't fully know what that will be like.

What is there in your life that you would want to see die away? A habit, a pain, a temptation? Offering this to God today, trusting that his love is a shelter and that death is part of the transformational way that God brings new life into our lives.

**Pray:** Lord, help me to trust into the tomb aspects of my life that need to be transformed and made new by your forgiveness and love. Thank you that you are a safe shelter. Amen

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**Wednesday April 8<sup>th</sup>:** Plant the garden

**Activity:**

Add character and interest into your garden. eg Twigs or bread ties for trees, rocks to sit on, maybe moss or green card/felt as a grass. A shallow dish with water, a tin foil waste bin.

**Reflect:**

Even the garden of gethsemane had a gardener – that's who Mary thought she saw on Easter Sunday!

There were people around Jesus as he lived through this week, journeying to his death. Read Mark 15:21-47 and note the various people who tended to Jesus like a gardener tends to the garden.

Who can you tend for, in Jesus name, today?

**Pray** for those who are tending to the needs of people suffering and dying at the moment.

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**Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup>:** Outside the garden

**Activity:**

Next to your garden add the symbols of Jesus' last supper.

A wine glass or stone goblet, some bread, a small pot of water and a cloth. A bottle of essential oil.

**Reflect:**

Jesus lived in relationship with others. He shared food and wine, he served by washing the disciple's dusty feet.

There was oil to tend wounds and to add a new fragrance into a room filled with people. It would bless those who experienced it.

Read Isaiah 61: 1-3, and think about how Jesus transforms ordinary bread, wine, oil into holy blessings.

As we lament our physical separation from people we love, let's also allow that pain to become a sacrificial thanksgiving. Let's offer praise for the love we experience from each person who loves us. Let the

**Pray:** Help us to be signs and symbols of your love to our friends and neighbours, bringing blessing and transforming pain through our love. Amen

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**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> GOOD FRIDAY:** The cross and the stone

**Activity:**

Make 3 crosses out of twigs or a drinking straw, lolly sticks or a stick that holds up one of your house plants.

Place them near the garden (remember Jesus wasn't crucified in the garden of Gethsemane).

Add thorns from a rose bush, or staples/drawing pins and a piece of (purple) cloth.

Place a stone or piece of card across the open tomb.

**Reflect:**

Read Luke 23: 26-56 Imagine yourself as one of the characters at the scene. The others being crucified, Mary, a crowd member, Peter or one of the disciples. A Roman guard, or Joseph.

What did this moment feel like?

Hebrews 12:2 in The Good News Bible says – *'Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right side of God's throne'*

**Pray:** Offer to God your feelings about Jesus' death. Allow yourself to feel the pain of the scene and ask God's spirit to help you see afresh all that Jesus has done for you.

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**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April:** Pause – to take in the scene.

**Reflect:** What would have been going on in the emotions of those who loved Jesus? What memories of him would they have been re-running in their minds and conversation?

Imagine yourself sitting on a stone in the garden, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you afresh about all that Jesus has done for you.

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**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April:** New life! Flowers and empty tomb

**Activity**

Roll back the tomb

Sing a song of praise

Decorate your cross in bright paper or with petals and flowers

**Reflect**

'He is risen, He is risen indeed!'

What does it mean to you today, in your home and life setting, that Jesus is alive in this world and in your life?

Share with someone you meet with today, on the phone or email, Zoom, Skype or FB, the words of your favourite song of Easter praise. Tell them why you love it!

Eat your Easter eggs ☺

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