

# Good Friday Cross

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Help children explore the events of Good Friday and Easter by making a cross that includes their personal touch.

## For

Young Family

## Season

Spring

## Needed

Bible, 22" x 28" white poster board, red tempera paint, disposable foil pie pan or foam plate, paper towels, masking tape, newspapers or old vinyl table cloth, painting smocks



## Prepare in Advance

- Mark your Bible to Luke 23:32-47 and 1 Peter 1:3-5.
- Cut two pieces from the poster board: 4" x 28" and 4" x 15". Position the two pieces to form a cross. Tape it together on the back side.
- Make a "pad" of folded paper towels and place it in a disposable foil pie pan or foam plate. Pour a thin layer of red tempera paint on the paper towel pad.
- Protect a work area with newspapers or an old vinyl tablecloth.
- If desired, have family members put on painting smocks (old shirts).

## Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

*Dear God, help us to learn more about the cross. Amen.*

2. Place the cross on a protected work area. Invite family members to tell about other crosses they have seen, perhaps in jewelry, around the house, at church, or in a book. Explain that the cross is important to Christians because of what Jesus did on Good Friday. Read aloud Luke 23:32-47 from your Bible, or see the text at the end of this activity. Encourage family members to tell what this reading causes them to wonder about.
3. Work together to personalize your family's cross. Have each person press one hand on the paint pad and then make a handprint on the cross. Repeat until the cross is covered with your handprints. (Add paint to the paper towel pad as needed.) As soon as you finish, have everyone walk to a sink without touching anything and wash off the paint.
4. Return to look at your cross. Wonder together about the following questions:
  - Why do you think we made red handprints and not another color?
  - Why did you think Jesus died on a cross?
  - What do we celebrate on Easter Sunday?
5. Ask someone to read aloud 1 Peter 1:3-5 from your Bible, or see the text at the end of this activity. In language that is appropriate for the ages of your family members and for your own faith tradition, discuss the good news of Easter—forgiveness, new life, belonging to the body of Christ, God's love that never ends.
6. Display the cross in your home. You may want to gather near it for bedtime prayers during Lent and Holy Week.



### **Luke 23:32-47**

<sup>32</sup> Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup> And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup> And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. <sup>35</sup> And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine <sup>37</sup> and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" <sup>38</sup> There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

<sup>44</sup> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, <sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. <sup>47</sup> Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!"

### **1 Peter 1:3-5**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

