Holy Week 2022
Wait! Walk! Wonder!

'When the days drew near for him to be taken up [Jesus] set his face to go to Jerusalem.' By this decision he indicated that he was going up to Jerusalem prepared to die there. (CCC557)

DERRY DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL CENTRE

Holy Week 2022
Wait! Walk! Wonder!

Wait with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Walk with Jesus as he carries his Cross

Wonder at the Great Act of Love by Jesus for Us

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Background for Teachers

Holy Week is the most sacred and important week of the year. This week the Church travels a profound journey-a journey when Jesus experiences intense suffering-a suffering that will bring him to death. His suffering is a physical suffering but it is more than that. Jesus suffers rejection, denial and deep humiliation this week. He is ridiculed-laughed at and rendered powerless in the eyes of the authorities and indeed most of the crowd. The journey of Holy Week is the journey of Jesus but it is our journey too-Jesus invites us to go on the journey with him, to not allow him to take this journey on his own.

Many of us have experience of accompanying a family member, a loved one on their journey to death. In Holy Week Jesus asks us, his family, to accompany him on his journey to death. He asks us to be with him at the Last Supper where he will say the things he wants to say to us before he dies, where he will do the things he wants us to do. He will do this by giving us the gift of himself in the Eucharist, by washing our feet, by giving us an example so, 'that you may copy what I have done to you.' (Jn 13:15) He will do this by asking us to stay awake and keep watch with him in the garden of Gethsemane. The need of the dying person is to have people with him. Jesus asks us to do just that for him, by staying at the altar of repose after the Mass on Holy Thursday-to stay with our brother- our saviour-in his weakness and anguish.

On Good Friday he asks us to be with him at to celebrate his passion and death. He invites us to be with him at this most profound and holy time when our saviour dies for us and we wait through Good Friday and Holy Saturday, just as we sit at wakes with our loved ones, until the Easter Vigil and the resurrection.

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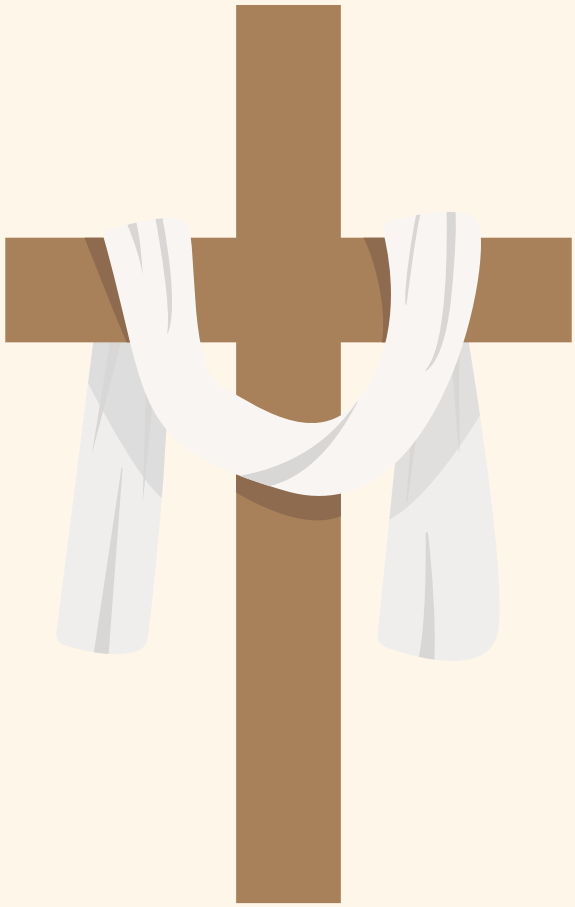
At the Easter Vigil we are invited to be part of the most important night of the year. It is the key night in the story of our faith, the night of the Resurrection. It is not an event from the past we remember. The resurrection happens now. Because of the Easter Vigil we can sit at the death bed of a loved one and endure their funeral, not in despair, but with great hope. This hope is a hope born of Jesus' death, a death that did not end in death but in life. We share in the joy of Jesus' resurrection now.

We are called through Holy Week to journey with Jesus, to accompany him faithfully through the pain to the joy. When we enter fully into Holy Week we realise more and more that it is not only Jesus' journey but our journey too-our joys-our sorrows-our needs-our gifts are all tied up in the mystery of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We share his death so as to share his resurrection.

'We bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this day he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus.' The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; handed on as fundamental by Tradition; established by the documents of the New Testament; and preached as an essential past of the Paschal mystery along with the cross:



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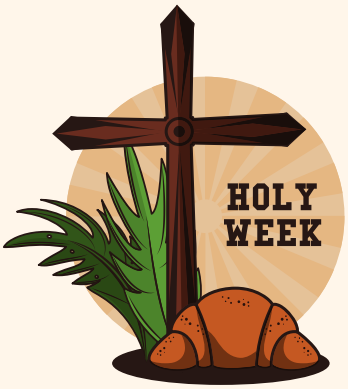

Prayer Meditation

Light a Candle

Say a short prayer-Holy Spirit, open my heart and mind to listen and prepare to be with Jesus in this very special week, Holy Week, Amen.

Begin with a Stillness Exercise

Leader
Sit up straight, with your back resting against the chair...Put your feet flat on the floor and loosely place your hands on your lap...(pause)

Still your body...(pause)

Listen to your breath as it flows in and out of your lungs...(pause)

Feel your breath as it enters your nose...(pause)

Feel your breath as it travels all the way to your lungs, bringing life to every part of your body...(pause)

Feel your breath as it leaves your body, as it gently flows out of your nose...(pause)

Listen to your breath for a while as it gets slower and slower...(pause)

Close your eyes...(pause)

As you breathe in and out become aware that God is in every breath you take...

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Leader: This week is the most special week in the whole year for all of us who belong to Jesus. It is even more important than Christmas! This week your friend Jesus needs you to be with him in a very special way. It is a difficult week for him and we need to stay close to love him, to care for him, to comfort him.

WAIT

Imagine it is night. You are in a garden... it is very dark... every now and again the clouds separate, the moon appears and you can see some trees and bushes... some rock... you are tired... it has been a very strange few days... think about them... you walked with joy into Jerusalem as your friend Jesus rode on a donkey and the people shouted Hosanna! Hosanna to the King!

This evening you sat with Jesus and his twelve friends in an upstairs room... but the atmosphere was different... quiet... confusing... Jesus spoke of having to go away, to suffer, of someone among you letting him down... what could this mean...

Jesus also talked about the things he needed you to do when he was no longer with you... he blessed and broke bread and wine and said this me I am giving as a gift to you to help you tell everyone about God's love for them....

And he washed the feet of the apostles and yours... that was a bit strange... Peter struggled with it... but Jesus said we must serve others, this was why he did it...

And now he has invited you, Peter, James and John to come away to this garden whilst he prays to God the Father... the others have fallen asleep... can you stay awake... this time is a very difficult time for Jesus... he knows what God is asking of him... that he will suffer... and die...can you WAIT with your friend Jesus in his time of need....

TALK to Jesus now... tell him you will wait with him... care for him...love him as he faces the dark night and the difficult days ahead.

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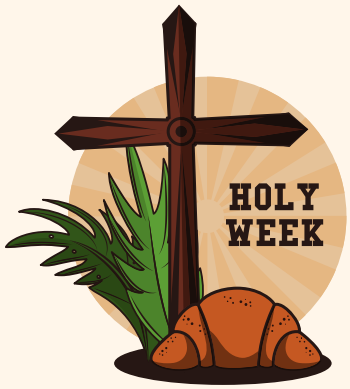

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WALK

Listen... what can you hear... shouts.... crucify him... crucify him...who can the crowd mean...look carefully... can you see who they are shouting about... you think to yourself...no...that can't be right... but it is... the man they are shouting about... tired... a crown of thorns on his head... being given a large... wooden cross to carry... the man is your loving friend Jesus... how does this make you feel... what do we normally feel when friends are in trouble... we want to help them... to comfort them... to love them... to let them know that they are not on their own... can you do that this week for Jesus... can you walk with him on the way to Calvary where he will die because of his great love for us....I thin you can... it might be hard... but deep inside you you know you will find the strength... God is within you and you want to help his Son....

WALK now with Jesus.... tell him you will be with him all the way... be like Simon of Cyrene.... help Jesus to carry his cross... don't be afraid....look at Mary as she meets her beautiful son... she looks at him with love... with care...you can do the same... look at Veronica who sees Jesus needs his face wiped, to help him feel better, to give him strength to carry on...as Jesus falls three times because of the heaviness of his Cross... carried out of love for each one of us.... help him get back up...smile at him...tell him how much you love him...

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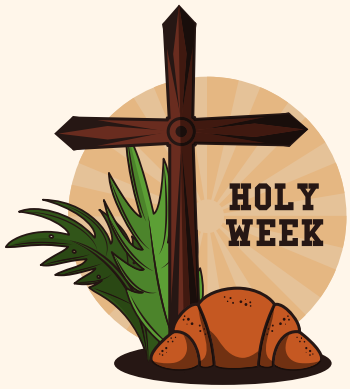

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WONDER

Can you hear someone calling your name... can you see who it is... can you see where they are... you are on a hill... you are tired... you have walked all the way with Jesus...and then some soldiers pushed you back... there it is again... someone is calling your name... and they are waving at you to come to the top...climb the last few steps now of the hill... can you see him now... it is John... Jesus' beloved disciple... he is not on his own... he has his arm tenderly around the shoulders of Mary, the mother of Jesus, your mother too...there are other women too... they are looking upwards... what are they looking at... who are they looking at...look up now yourself... see your beloved friend Jesus nailed to the Cross...it isn't easy to look at him this way...but you know he needs you very much at this time...he is doing this for you... for everyone... he is doing what God the Father has asked him too... he is doing this out of love...for all of the world...

Take a moment now and WONDER at this great act of love by Jesus...
Tell Jesus how this makes you feel...
Tell Jesus you will spend some time with him on Good Friday... let him know he will not be on his own...

Say together: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

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Prayer Time for Younger Children

Display the Poster Wait!Walk!Wonder on a Whiteboard
Invite the children to look at it quietly, to think about their special friend Jesus and tell them they are going to think about loving Jesus even more this week as we remember what he did for us.

Leader: This week is the most special week in the whole year for all of us who belong to Jesus. It is even more important than Christmas! This week your friend Jesus needs you to be with him in a very special way. It is a difficult week for him and we need to stay close to love him, to care for him, to comfort him.

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Leader
Sit up straight, with your back resting against the chair…Put your feet flat on the floor and loosely place your hands on your lap…(pause)

Be very quiet… be very still…breathe in thr mouth and out through your nose…and again…When you breathe in this time rem l is with you always…

Close your eyes…(pause)

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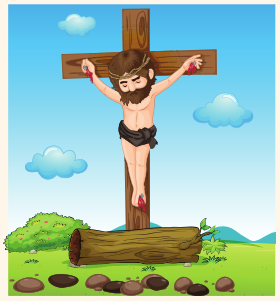

Prayer Time for Younger Children

WAIT

Ask the children to think about waiting, how hard it can be... help them to imagine that Jesus has asked them to come with him and wait in the Garden of Gethsemane... he has asked them because he knows he has a very difficult time ahead and he needs them beside him... to love and care for him... invite them to talk to Jesus now about how they can help him...how they can wait with him this week...

WALK

Ask the children now to imagine they are with Jesus as he carries his cross...Jesus is tired...the cross is heavy... he needs help to carry it...ask them could they help Jesus carry the cross...invite them now to talk to Jesus...to tell him they love him..

WONDER

Ask the children to imagine they are climbing a hill... it is steep...they are tired...when they get to the top of the hill they can see Jesus on the cross...his mother Mary is beside him...his friend John is there too... they are there to show Jesus how much they love him... ask the children if they can go and stand beside Mary and John... can they look up in WONDER at what Jesus is doing for them...for everyone...he dies on the cross because he LOVES us all so much... invite them now to tell Jesus what they think about his great gift of Love...

When they are ready, invite them to open their eyes and say together: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.