



Christian Education Bulletin Insert March, 2002

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An Easter Garden

This must be started at the beginning of March if you use real grass seed. Put some potting soil in a shallow tray, such as a large baking tin, a new cat litter box, or an old baby bath, mounding the soil to make some 'hills' in one corner. Sow with the seed and water often. Once the grass begins to grow, add some small plants and stones to make an attractive garden. In a second corner place some larger stones to form a rock 'tomb'. On the 'hills' place three crosses made of twigs or popsicle sticks. Use the garden to tell the story of the Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane and the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

St. Patrick's Day, March 17

Try to find a book on St. Patrick. Your Public Library will probably have several, or you may wish to purchase Tomie dePaola's "Patrick, patron saint of Ireland." (ISBN 0-8234-1077-3) Once you have the book it might become a family tradition to read it every year. Read the following verse from the hymn, "St. Patrick's Breastplate" with children:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Encourage children to say each phrase one at a time and try to add to it to make it their own prayer. E.g. Christ be with me when I go to school, Christ within me when I'm scared . . . Christ in quiet when I go to bed . . . Christ in hearts of Mom, Dad, Grandma, Grandpa . . . and all that love me.

Make some St Patrick's Day place mats. Cut rectangles about 30 X

24 cm. from heavy paper, or fabric which does not fray easily. Cut three hearts from green felt or fun foam for each mat. Each heart needs to be about 7 cm high. Arrange the hearts with the points meeting to form a shamrock shape, and glue them in place in the middle of each mat. Make a stem from the same material. Talk about how St Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about the Trinity.

Hot Cross Buns

There was once a monk who had been a baker before he had entered the monastery. One Lent, he grew very sad when he saw some poor families in his city living on the streets and going hungry. He knew that it was hard for Easter to be a happy time for them because they had so little, so he decided to help. Just before Easter, he made spicy raisin buns and decorated them with a cross as a reminder of the special season. He gave them to the poor families.

Make your own hot cross buns. Maybe a family member can show you how. If not, buy some frozen bread dough, add some cinnamon and raisins and follow the directions to make buns. When they have cooled a bit, make a white frosting cross on top of each one.

An Easter Tree

Last year I suggested many ways of decorating eggs to hang on an Easter 'tree', a bare branch 'planted' in a large flower pot. This year you might like to decorate your tree with butterflies instead. Butterflies emerge from 'dead' looking cocoons, and are another symbol of the resurrection. Make a simple cardboard pattern of a butterfly, or ask an adult to draw one for you, and use the pattern to cut out several butterflies from white paper. Colour the wings brightly with crayons or markers. Another way to make coloured butterflies is to cut them out of coffee filters. Have some small foil baking cases ready with different colours of food colouring diluted a little with water. Use Q tips to dab different colours onto your butterflies, or a dropper to drop small amounts onto the filter paper. New colours will form as the food colouring mixes. Remember to protect your clothes if you do this as food colouring stains!

For Fun

What do angels say when the answer the phone?
Hello!