

Countdown to Easter

(passed on to me by Gloria Trivett from the Parish of Kingston, and passed on to her by Eleanor Dryden, a layreader from Westfield)

For less than \$1.50 per child, you can give each one in your Sunday School a memorable Countdown to Easter. Purchase 11 of the small hollow openable plastic eggs for each child. At two local dollar stores these were priced at \$1 for 12, or \$2.50 for 30. Number them 1 to 11 with a permanent marker. Fill each one as listed below and present them in an Easter basket to each child on Sunday, March 18 so that one may be opened each day beginning with #11 on March 20, and finishing with #1 on Easter Sunday. Include in each egg a short description of the symbolism behind the contents and the appropriate Bible verse. It would be very quick to type these on a computer and make multiple copies. You can also make the printing smaller so that everything fits onto a small piece of paper.

- Day 11 3 dimes to symbolize the 30 pieces of silver received by Judas for betraying Jesus. Mt 26:14-16
- Day 10 A toy soldier or a picture of a soldier to symbolize the one who arrested Jesus. Lk 22: 52-54.
- Day 9 A "feather" to symbolize the rooster that crowed three times. Lk 22:61
- Day 8 A die or a pair of dice to symbolize the "lots that were cast" for the clothes of Jesus. Jn 19:23,24.
- Day 7 A "thorn" to symbolize the "crown of thorns" that Jesus wore. Mk 15:17.
- Day 6 A "sponge" (cut one up) to symbolize the sponge that was dipped in vinegar when Jesus said, "I thirst." Jn 19:28,29.
- Day 5 A "piece of cloth" to symbolize the cloth in which Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus' body. Mk 15:46.
- Day 4 A piece of black paper or cloth to symbolize the "shadow of darkness" that covered the whole earth. Mt 15:33.
- Day 3 - Good Friday A "cross." Jn 19:17.
- Day 2 A "rock" to symbolize the stone which sealed Jesus tomb. Mk 15:46b.
- Day 1- Easter Day Leave the egg empty to symbolize that Jesus had risen and the tomb was empty. Mk 16:6.

Beyond Curriculum

The curriculum we use is a guide only as to what to do each week in our Church Schools. The curriculum is only as good as the teacher who teaches it and should be adapted to fit the needs of each particular group of children. Usually there are many more activities in the curriculum for each week than we can possibly fit in to the time we have. It is up to each teacher to choose activities which will best suit his/her group. Do we have mostly active boys who have a hard time sitting still? Choose games and activities which involve getting up and moving around. Do we have children who never seem to stop talking? Choose discussions, drama etc. Is our group "crafty"? Choose appropriately.

Through all that we do we should also aim at instilling confidence in our children and stimulating and encouraging them to explore further. This can often be accomplished through good questioning. There are several different types of questions. We should use a mixture but it is the later ones on the list which will linger in a child's mind and keep him/her thinking.

- † Knowledge questions ask for factual information - Which disciple betrayed Jesus?
- † Comprehension questions ask for an explanation or summary to show understanding - Why did Judas betray Jesus?
- † Application questions ask a child to apply what they have learned in a new way - Make a list of the things the disciples would have needed for the Passover meal.
- † Analysis This requires a child to break a story down into its parts in his/her mind. E.g. If we were to act this story out, what scenes would we need? What characters?
- † Synthesis Requires originality and imagination. If Judas had not betrayed Jesus, what do you think might have happened? If Judas had told one of the other disciples what he was going to do, what might the conversation might have sounded like?
- † Evaluation questions require judgment. E.g. Imagine you could talk to Jesus after the Passover supper. Ask him why he didn't stop Judas from leaving. What does he say?

For Fun received from Susan Webb of Rothesay. A little boy is overheard praying: Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am!