

Dear student,

This month we are looking at the symbol of the cross. The cross is perhaps that most common and best known symbol of the Christian church. In your bible, please turn to Mark and read Chapter 14 verses 27-72, and all of Chapter 15.

This story is often referred to as the Passion of Jesus. The word passion has come to mean strong emotion, zeal, or sexual desire, but the word passion comes from the Latin word *passio* which means suffering. Over the centuries, this word has gained broader meanings (thanks to Jesse Sheidlower and Samantha Schad of the *Oxford English Dictionary* for help with the definitions). The suffering of Jesus is central to Christianity.

There is a lot going on. There is the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter. There is the mock trial, torturing and suffering of Jesus. There is the death and burial of Jesus. The grief of the women and the fear of the disciples. Then there is the angel and the appearance of Jesus.

Have you ever been betrayed? Have you ever done something to hurt a friend? What happened?

Jesus is first tried in front of the Sanhedrin. These are the religious leaders. Do you think Jesus' trial was fair? Have you ever been unjustly accused of something? How did you defend yourself? What do you think of Jesus' response?

Pilate was the Roman leader in charge of the city of Jerusalem. He found Jesus innocent of any crimes. How often do people get falsely accused and charged? The mob takes charge. Have you ever been part of a group that got carried away?

Jesus suffered. As a person, how do you relate to someone who has suffered? Have you suffered? If you were God, would you allow yourself to suffer? What does Jesus' suffering tell us about the nature of humans?

Angels are always telling people to not be afraid or alarmed. The women didn't tell anyone because they were afraid. They did eventually because we know the story. How do you think Jesus' friends felt seeing him?

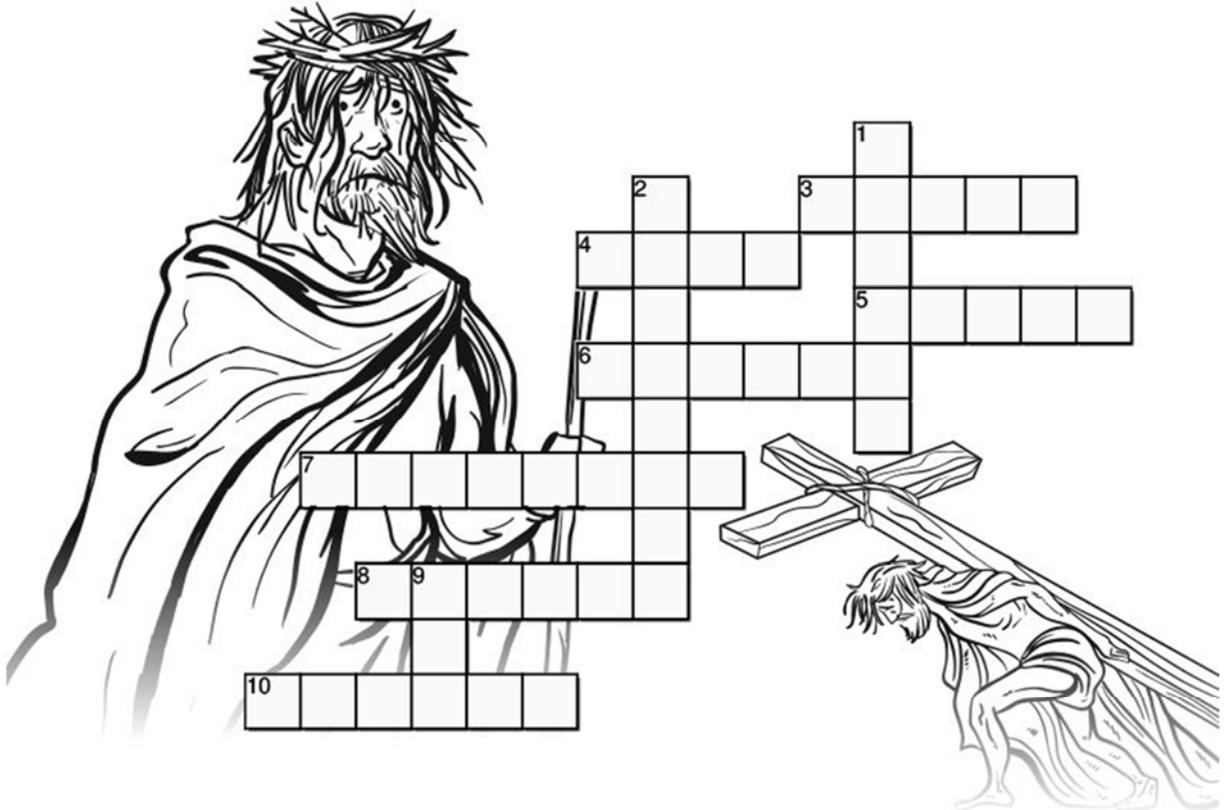
Do you think the words and actions of Jesus help you in your life today? Do you think the cross, the reminder of Jesus' suffering, is a good symbol?

Easter is when we celebrate Jesus being risen from the dead. Every time we see an empty cross, we are reminded that death did not win. God raised Jesus and life and love won! Easter is celebrated for 50 days. How will you celebrate?

In the packet is a crossword puzzle. The crossword references multiple books in the Bible that have the Passion of Jesus. If you are curious, you can read all the stories and see what the differences are and what is the same. There is also a sand cross for you to fill for fun.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

**Matthew 26:1-27:55,
Mark 14:22-15:40;
Luke 22:1-23:56; John 18:1-19:37**



Across

3. The disciple who betrayed Jesus was _____.
4. Jesus died for the _____ of everyone in the world
5. Who denied knowing Jesus?
6. What was the Roman leader's name?
7. Jesus was crucified on a hill called _____, which means 'Hill of the Skull.'
8. Jesus _____ the injured soldier.
10. Jesus told his disciples that one of them would _____ him.

Down

1. During the festival of Passover, Jesus and his disciples had their last _____ together.
2. Jesus's last words were 'It is _____.'
9. When Peter was trying to protect Jesus from the soldiers he cut off the _____ of one soldier.

