

# Lent Family Experience Ideas



**This year, we want to invite you and your family to come together to experience a little of what it might have felt like leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus. During this time, Jesus took his last moments on earth to teach his disciples some important virtues: Humility, thankfulness, God's love for them, and how to treat others with love the way Jesus did on earth.**

**There is very little prep and is completely Kid-friendly.**

**As you take part in these activities, we pray that your family would experience a beautiful glimpse of God's love and blessings.**

- 1. Have a foot washing ceremony - Read John 13:1-5 and talk about what Jesus did, how dirty the**

disciples' feet must have been from walking around in the desert in sandals, and why it was important that He humbled Himself before the people who were His followers. Then once the serious conversation is over, set out water to wash your kids' feet. You could either take turns washing each other's feet or Mom or Dad could do everyone's as a sign of, "I am the servant leader of this household, and I will humble myself before all of you, my followers."

2. **Clean up** – Thousands of years ago, Christians spent Maundy Thursday sweeping and cleaning their homes. It was symbolic of the soul cleansing that Jesus did for all of us in His sacrifice on the cross, and it also helped to prepare for the solemnity of the Holy weekend which started the following day on Good Friday. You and your family can observe the holiday by doing a bit of spring cleaning, or just a quick clean up before dinner.

### 3. Recreating the Last Supper – *Kid friendly SURPRISE*

**Eat ice cream sundaes** - You read that right, [ice cream](#). This is a way to connect the Last Supper that Jesus had with his disciples'. During this time, he spoke about God's love and calling for his people.

Materials needed (feel free to substitute as you see fit):

- Mini marshmallows
- nuts or semi sweet [chocolate chips](#)
- Brightly colored sprinkles
- A sweet syrup topping such as chocolate, [hot fudge](#), butterscotch, or caramel ▪
- Fruit: banana pieces, strawberries, blueberries, or another fruit
- Shredded coconut
- M&Ms
- Whipped cream
- A carton of [vanilla ice cream](#) (enough for the whole family to enjoy a sundae)

Put each food item on the table in a small bowl, but keep the [ice cream](#) in the freezer for now. Your family should sit around the table and say something like the following (feel free to modify as you see fit):

Say:

- *We are so busy with our own things that it's easy to forget what God has done for each of us and our family. Let's see how these foods can remind us of God's love and how he's touched our family.*
- *Pass around the bowl and ask each person to take one. Let's each eat a marshmallow. They are soft and squishy like a baby. When I remember you as a baby, I always thank God for you. Let me tell you why. Then tell a short story about each child and how he or she has blessed your family. Let your spouse and kids share stories about each other if they want.*
  
- *Pass around the nuts or chocolate chips and ask each person to take one. These aren't very sweet, are they?*

{If using nuts - *Nuts aren't usually sweet. They often taste bitter, and most nuts grow with a hard shell.* If using chocolate - *Chocolate isn't always soft and sweet; sometimes it's actually hard and bitter.*} *Let's think about some hard or bitter things that have happened in our family.* Then share a short story about a difficult event and how God helped you through it. Ask your family to share their own short stories.

- Pass around the bowl of sprinkles. *Pick your favorite color of sprinkles out of the bowl. Sprinkles are fun and remind me of a party. What's something that has happened in our family that was fun? How did God help it to happen?* Let each family member share a story about a fun family time and how they saw God's presence during that time.
- Pass around a bowl with the syrup topping in it. *Dip your finger in the syrup and taste it. These toppings cover ice cream just like God's love covers our family.* Share a brief story of a time when you felt God's love bringing peace or comfort to your family, and invite each member of your family to share the same.
- Pass around the fruit and invite each family member to enjoy a piece. *Fruit is a healthy snack to eat. God has helped to bring good health to our family, too.* Then remember and share different times that God brought healing to your family.
- Pass around the bowl of shredded coconut and invite everyone to enjoy a pinch. *Coconut reminds me of snow and winter, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus. I'm thankful to God for sending his Son, but sometimes I forget to thank God for that gift. What's something you want to thank God for?* Wait while each family member responds.
- Pass around the bowl of M&Ms and ask each person to take a few of his or her favorite color and look at it (don't eat yet). *Turn your candy upside down and imagine instead of M&M it says W&W. That can remind us of Wants and Wishes. God has given our family so many things that we've wanted and wished for, things that go way beyond what we actually need.* Then eat your candy and tell a brief story of something you wanted for the family and how God provided, and invite your family members to share their own stories.
- Squirt a dollop of whipped cream onto each family's index finger and invite them to eat it. *God's love for us is as sweet as this whipped cream.* Then share a story about how God's love has sweetened your life and let your family members share their stories as well.
- *Now, it would be a shame to have all of these yummy toppings and no ice cream, right?* Surprise your family with ice cream whatever flavor you prefer. Before you eat, offer a prayer of thanks for your family, for your blessings, and for God's love. Before you pray, invite your family members to offer their own prayers out loud, and then you can follow up and close with your own prayer.