



The United States Association of
The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd®

Ash Wednesday

Praying the Psalms and Jerusalem

Jerusalem serves as a map for the soul's journey in the Psalms.

If we look at a map of Jerusalem, we see that it is surrounded by higher hills like the Mount of Olives and is the basis for: *"As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people"* (Psalm 125:2). As we begin the Season of Lent, can you think about and name the ways your family been surrounded by God?

In Psalm 125, the mountains are something that never moves. What is one way God's love has been like a 'steady mountain' for our family this year, even when other things were changing?

Jerusalem is famous for its Gates (like the Jaffa Gate or the Damascus Gate). These gates help us know that God's city is meant to be open to everyone, inviting people from every corner of the earth to enter. How can we welcome others to our home and our neighborhood with kindness?

The Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134)

There are 15 psalms historically sung by pilgrims as they "ascended" (or climbed) the physical hills toward Jerusalem for major festivals. Are there prayers you like to pray when you walk?

What prayers will we pray as a family as we journey toward the great feast of Easter?



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First Week of Lent

Psalms 19 and 23

David began his life as a shepherd, which taught him that God provides for all the sheep's needs (Ps 23).

What is one way God has "provided for the needs" for our family this week?

David wrote that the heavens "declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19). What is one simple thing outside our window or in our yard that is "declaring" something amazing about God today?

Is there something special you want God to know or something you need His help with today? In the quiet of your heart, speak to Him today.



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Second Week of Lent

Jerusalem

We read about the City of Jerusalem in the Holy Bible. The stones, the dust, and the hills of Jerusalem also tell the story of Jesus.

What does the "ground" of our home—our garden, our messy playroom, our kitchen table—tell people about how we love God?

If our family's home was a "little Jerusalem," what could we do today to make it feel even more full of *Shalom* (the word shalom means peace in Hebrew) for each other?

Go find a smooth, flat rock in your yard or at a park. Find one that is nice to hold in your hand. When David was a small boy, he knew that God was strong, like a mighty rock. Jesus is called a "Living Stone."¹ If this stone could talk, what is a happy story it would tell about God helping our family this week? Place your rock in a basket on your family prayer table.

¹ 1 Peter 2:4-5



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Third Week of Lent

The Psalms

As a young shepherd boy, King David wrote prayers of praise to God. We call these prayers The Psalms. There are 150 psalms in the Holy Bible.

As a family, discuss: What words do you use to praise God?

When we pray the Psalms, we are joining a "great parade" of people who have been singing these same words in Jerusalem for thousands of years. It's like a giant family songbook that never ends! Does your family have a favorite song about God? Make a list of your family's songs and sing them during Lent.

David wrote 73 of the 150 Psalms as letters to God. Start a "Family Psalm" this week. Every night, one person adds one thing they want to praise God for. By Sunday, you will have your own family song of joy!



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Fourth Week of Lent

Jerusalem: The City of David

Jerusalem is the capital city, where King David established his throne, a site God specifically chose for His "presence and Name to dwell" (Psalm 132)

The name of God dwells in your home especially whenever it is spoken, prayed, or sung.
Write the name of God on a prayer card and decorate it for your prayer table.

As a family, say, pray, and sing His name often this week.

Jerusalem was a place to say 'Thank you' to God. What is one thing you want to thank Him for right now? Take a moment to thank Him quietly in your heart.



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Fifth Week of Lent

The Psalms and Jerusalem

One of the psalms of David speaks of joy and prays for peace in Jerusalem (Psalm 122)

Jerusalem is a "home" where everyone is welcome. A place where everyone will know Joy and Peace. Imagine if you were a child in the streets of Jerusalem when Jesus visited, what sounds of joy would you hear?

The Psalm asks us to 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem'. Can our family ask God to bring peace to one person or place we know that is feeling sad or worried today?

Is there something special you want God to know or something you need His help with today? In the quiet of your heart, speak to Him today.