



Week 1 - February 21

Jesus Teaches
About Commitment
Mark 8:31-38

Key Verse: Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power
of God for the salvation of everyone who believes:
first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Activity: Focus on Jesus

Jesus tells us in our theme verse (Mark 8:31-38) that following him takes commitment. Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." We can't allow our things to be more important to than Jesus. Holding on to them makes it difficult to follow Jesus. When we're willing to lay down our things that seem important to take up the cross, we take the first step in doing our part to commit to follow Jesus. With just a little folding and one simple tear, you can lay down the things that keep you from focusing on Jesus!

Materials: Cross sheets (several included)
Colored pencils or markers

Instructions:

- Lay one Cross sheet on the table in front of you, print side up, with the dots at the bottom.
- Write JESUS in the center box.
- In each corner of the paper, write down (or draw pictures of) things that you want, need, hope to get, or think are cool - video games, movies, snacks, toys, sports, television, playing with friends, etc.
- Fold the top of the paper down, so the edge of the paper meets the dots.
- Fold the paper in half like a book (the dots will be hidden).

- Open the paper up (you'll see the dots again) - fold each top corner to meet the center fold.
- Fold the paper in half like a books (the dots will be hidden again).
- Flip the folded paper so the point is facing you (the open edges should be at the top).
- At the top of the paper (the open edge) measure about one inch from the fold and start tearing straight down (it will get harder to tear as you go down the paper, so tear little by little).
- Let the loose paper fall to the table or floor and unfold the paper - you made a cross with JESUS at the center!
- Pick up the loose pieces of paper and unfold them - these are the things that make you lose focus on Jesus - throw them away, and hang your cross where you can see it every day. Remember to stay focused on Jesus every day!

Activity: Lenten Sacrifice Mice

One way to stay focused on Jesus is to show kindness to others. During Lent, when you share an act of kindness with someone, tie a knot in this mouse's tail. By Easter, your mouse will have a short, knotty tail! This mouse will be a reminder to be kind to others every day!

Materials: Mouse sheet (included)
 Yarn (included)
 Colored pencils or markers
 Scissors
 Paper punch
 Glue

Instructions:

- Decorate the mouse with colored pencils or markers.
 - Cut out the mouse and the rectangle stand.
 - Punch (or poke) a hole at the back end of the mouse.
 - Fold the stand in half on the dotted line - the stand should sit up like a tent.
 - Glue the mouse to one side of the stand, lining up the bottoms.
 - Push one end of the yarn through the hole in the mouse and tie it around the back end of the mouse - you should now have a stand-up mouse with a long tail.
 - Keep your mouse where it can remind you to share kindness with others - don't forget to tie a knot in the tail each time you are kind to others! Challenge yourself to make the tail SHORT and KNOTTY by Easter!!
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The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

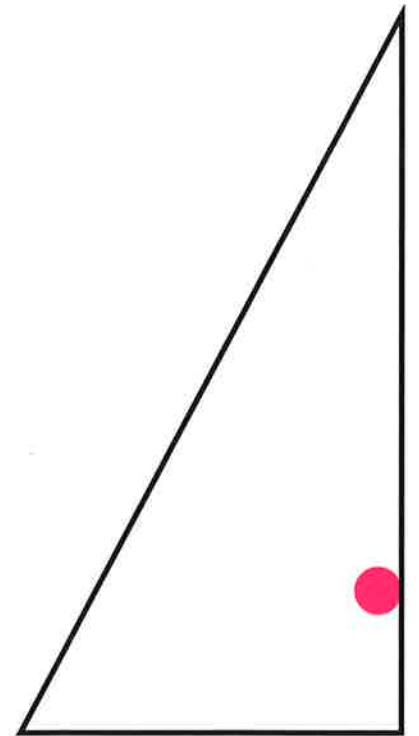
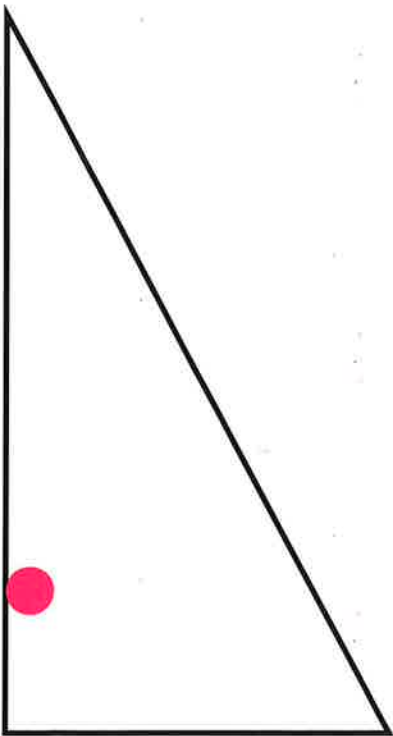
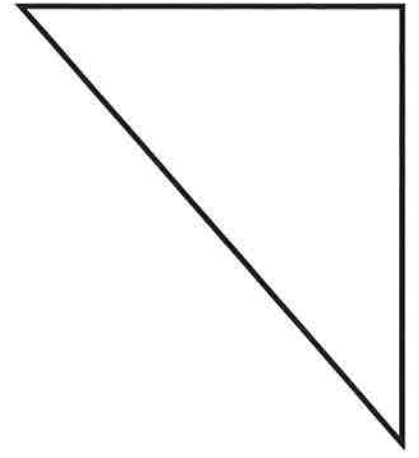
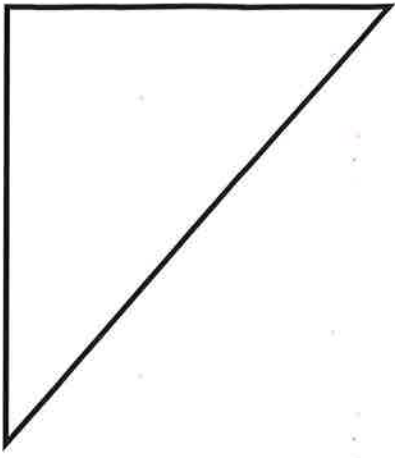
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

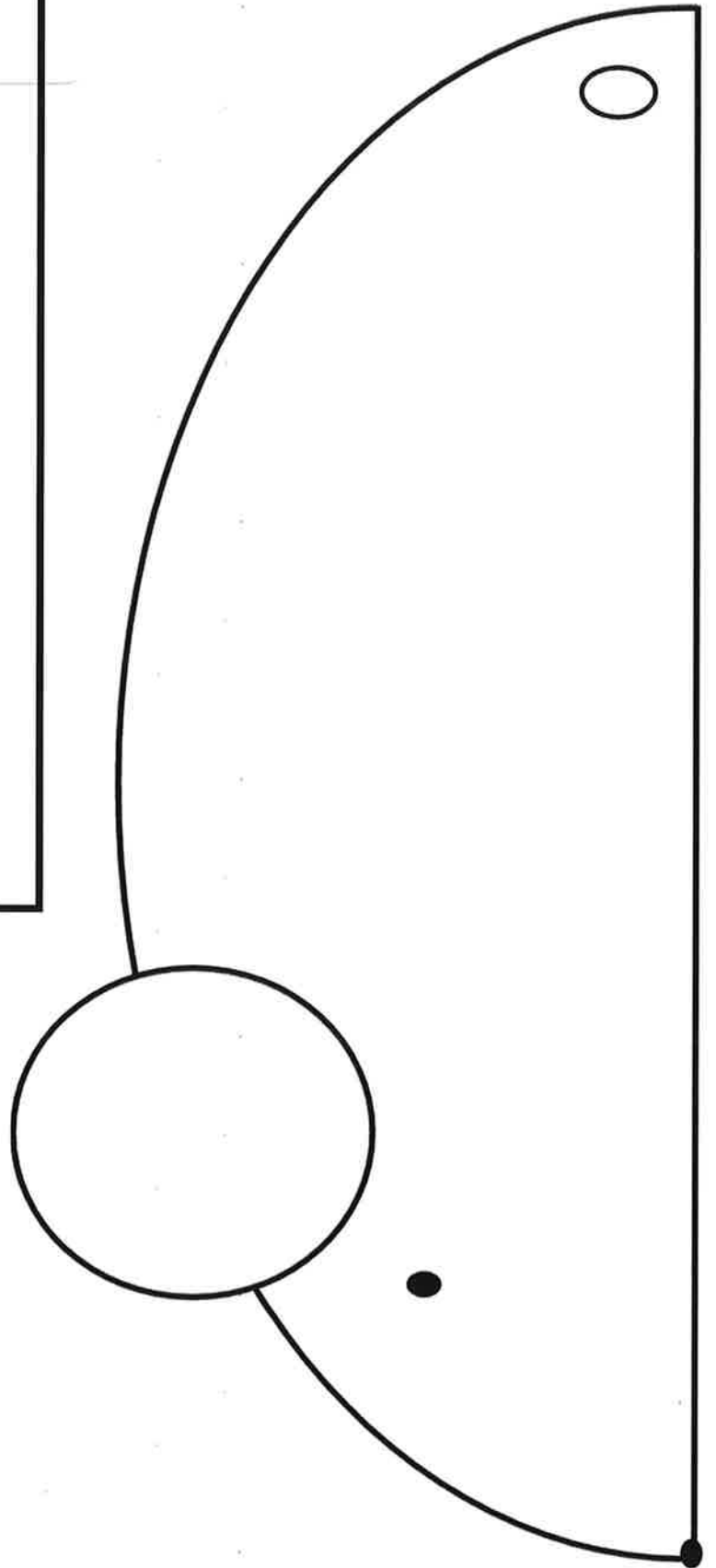
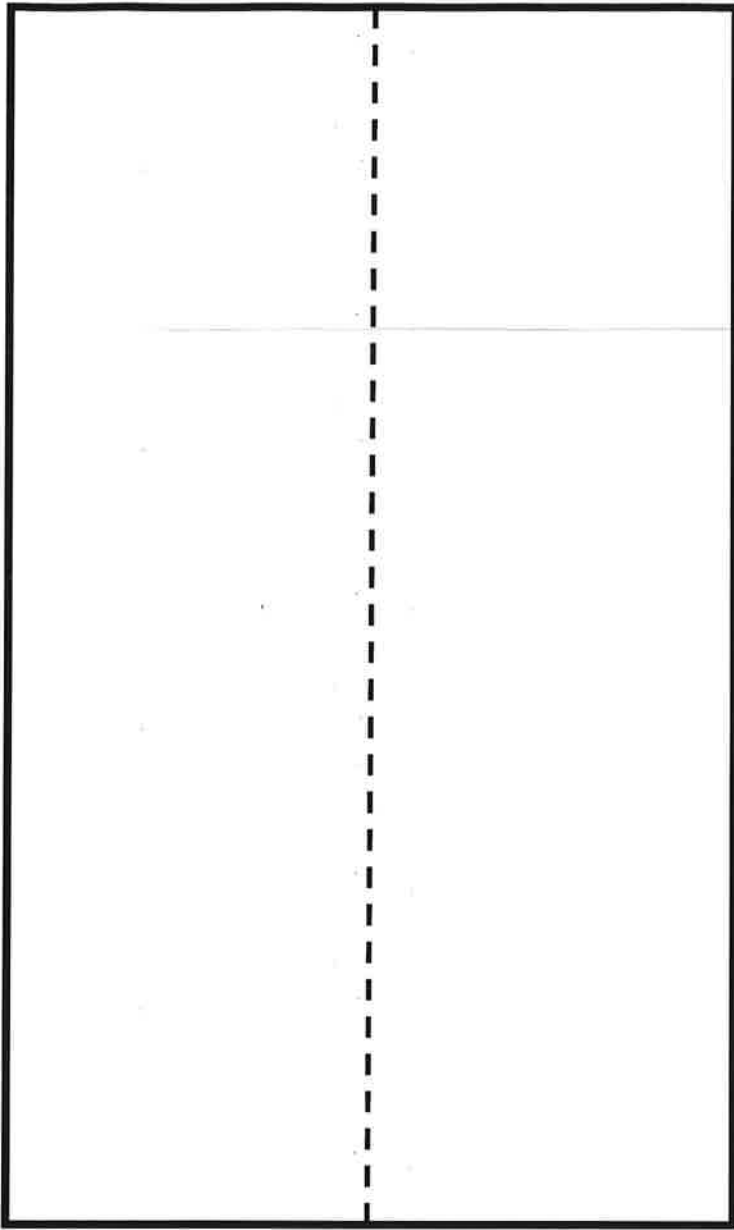
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

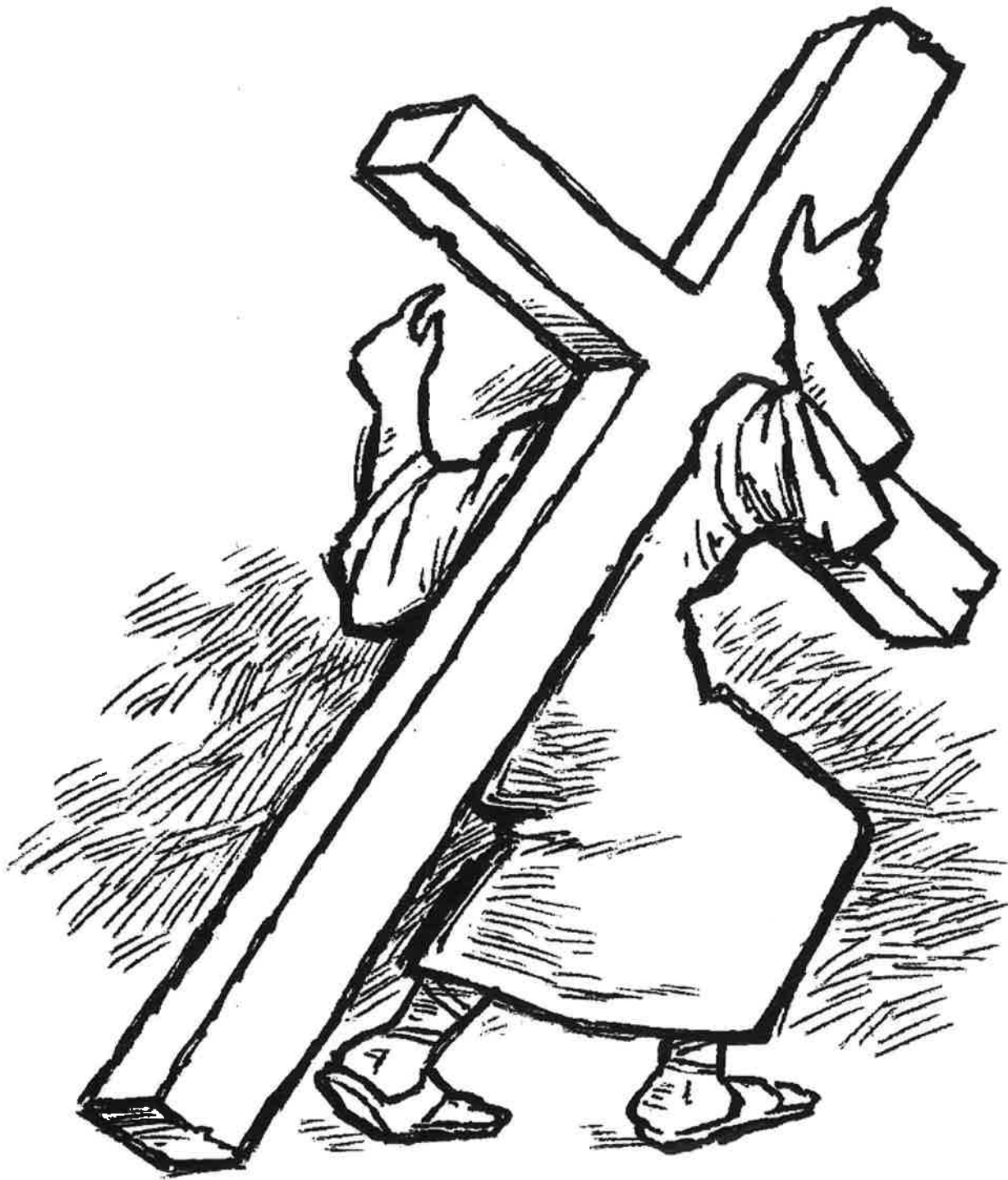
Prayer

Thank you, God! We know that Jesus loved us so much he was willing to take up his cross and suffer for us.
Help us be willing to take up our own cross and focus on Jesus. Thank you, God, for giving us strength and joy even when following you is hard to do!

In Jesus' name, Amen!







Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said:
"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take
up their cross and follow me."

Mark 8:34 (NIV)

Take Up Your Cross

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Mark 8:34b (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
T	L	R	W	C	M	H	Q	K	D	G	P	S	Z	B	E	I	U	Y	J	A	V	O	X	N	F

1. 10-16-25-19 _____
2. 20-16-13-18-13 _____
3. 13-21-22-16 _____
4. 4-23-3-2-10 _____
5. 13-18-26-26-16-3 _____
6. 2-17-26-16 _____
7. 13-23-18-2 _____
8. 11-21-17-25 _____
9. 1-21-9-16 _____
10. 7-17-6-13-16-2-26 _____
11. 1-16-21-5-7 _____
12. 5-3-23-13-13 _____
13. 26-23-2-2-23-4 _____
14. 2-23-13-16 _____
15. 26-23-3-26-16-17-1 _____

SAVE	TAKE	SOUL	DENY	HIMSELF
WORLD	CROSS	FOLLOW	JESUS	LOSE
FORFEIT	GAIN	TEACH	LIFE	SUFFER

Take Up Your Cross

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world,
yet forfeit his soul? Mark 8:36

Based on Mark 8:34-37

Take up
your cross



AND FOLLOW ME

V M H E O S O D F W C N E X A
K Z H W S L H V E O H R J W Y
U Z T C O W I B Q N R O O T H
A C L I O R V F D G Y F L W N
V S D L L P L E E S X Y E E D
B K L E N R A D I E G M G I D
D O L Z V Y R S O U L Y A C T
F L W Z W D Q I X Z I R I R G
H Y Z J R U D C M V X G N O O
V I R D I S C I P L E S B S S
Z I M F L Y D E X J R E S S P
E W H S V K V P G F S C T P E
O I L P E A J M K O O G U X L
E I X P S L A J L S O W N C X
F R Z I E Q F Z A E O D T C W

FORFEIT
WORLD
SAVE
CROSS

WHOLE
LOSE
GOOD
DISCIPLES

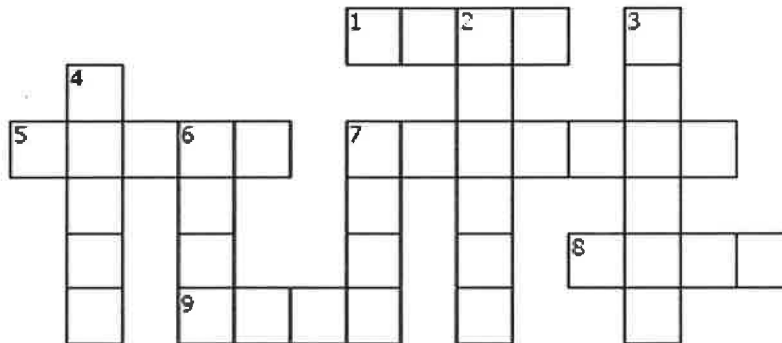
GAIN
FOLLOW
HIMSELF
LIFE

DENY
GOSPEL
SOUL
CROWD

Take Up Your Cross

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world,
yet forfeit his soul? Mark 8:36

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ACROSS

1. The period between birth and death
5. The object upon which Jesus was crucified
7. To care about what you want without thinking of others
8. To refuse to allow yourself something
9. To no longer have something because it has been taken away

DOWN

2. To be guided by someone else; to go behind
3. The teachings of Jesus and the Apostles
4. A large number of people gathered together
6. The part of a person that continues to live after a person dies
7. To keep someone or something safe from harm

FOLLOW	CROWD	SELFISH	LIFE	SOUL
GOSPEL	LOSE	SAVE	CROSS	DENY