



On your marks

The season of Lent begins and ends with the cross. On Ash Wednesday there is the tradition of receiving the cross of ashes on the forehead to mark the beginning of a six-week period of prayer and reflection before Easter; and on Good Friday, we finally come to the cross of history on the hill outside Jerusalem where Jesus died.

The following outline would provide a link to further work during Lent on crosses that are found in the *Barnabas* book [A-cross the World](#).

This idea could be used in a variety of ways:

as material for a Sunday group session with children for Mothering Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent

as a resource for a special event with children and adults during the week

as part of a special Lenten display.

Get set

You will need a copy of [A-cross the World](#) from *Barnabas*. This book has information and creative ideas based on 40 different crosses from around the world. It also includes ideas for all-age worship, study sessions, games, outlines for special events, collective worship in school and also for R.E. lessons.

Go!

1. **Mothering Sunday- Lent 4** - The Jerusalem Cross

Key Theme: *Caring*

Use the ideas for games and icebreakers on the cross from Pages 107 -112 of *A-cross the World*. N.B. There are also further ideas for some crafts that could serve as Mothering Sunday gifts on page 120 -122 of *A-cross the World*.

2. The story of the Jerusalem Cross reminds us of the 'mother diocese' of the Christian Church worldwide, namely that of Jerusalem and the Middle-East. This is where the story of Jesus started and spread. See the information and craft ideas for this cross on pages 38-39 of *A-cross the World*.
3. The Bible parable for this is that of the 'Sheep and the Goats' (Matthew 25:31 -46). This particular parable of Jesus must surely have shocked those who first heard it. He insists that how we treat others - whoever they may be - is the benchmark for how we have truly responded to God.

On a day when we remember how mothers and others have cared for us, we are challenged to care



for all people in the same way, as followers of Jesus Christ.

4. I wonder who are the really needy people today for whom we should care like this? I wonder if the children might like to re-write this story including examples of people in trouble or in need about whom they know. Who is it today, for whom we should be caring as the way to serve God?
5. Each child could make the crosses individually or perhaps there could be one large version made co-operatively by the children and which can then be brought into church for display, building up to the events of Holy Week and Easter morning.
6. For this session there are a number of possible ideas for prayers, both formal and creative, in *A-cross the World*- see pages 113 -119 and pages 123 -128.