

A close-up photograph of a metal sieve resting on a wooden surface. The sieve is partially filled with a fine, white powder, likely flour. The wooden surface is also covered with a layer of the same powder. In the center of the powder, the word "LENT" is spelled out using four wooden letters. The letters are light brown and have a slightly rough, natural texture. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the wood and the fine particles of the powder.

**An invitation to bake through**

**LENT**

# 1. Palm Sunday

Thousands of people were gathering in Jerusalem, Israel's capital city, for the Passover Party. The Passover Party happened once every year, celebrating the time long ago when God had chosen a man to free his people from the Egyptians. When Jesus came to Jerusalem riding a donkey, he was given a king's welcome! People made a road for him through the crowds, placing palm leaves and even their own coats on the ground before him. The people shouted their party songs even louder: "Hosanna! Save us!" Many were wondering if Jesus was going to be their new leader, freeing them from the Romans who were ruling their country. (For more of the story, check out Mark 11:4-10)

So let's make some gingerbread men and/or some donkey poo! If you don't have any gingerbread men cookie cutters, you could use a round cookie cutter to make the crowd's faces.

## Gingerbread Men

350g flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tbsp ground ginger  
1 tbsp ground cinnamon  
100 g butter  
175g brown sugar  
1 egg, beaten  
4 tbsp golden syrup  
Icing and decorations (optional)



Set oven to 180°C and prepare a baking sheet with baking paper.

- Cut up the butter and melt in a saucepan over a low heat.
- Add the brown sugar and golden syrup and stir into the butter until the mixture is smooth.
- Remove from heat to cool.
- In a large bowl, sift the flour and add the ginger, cinnamon and baking soda.
- Stir in the beaten egg to the dry mix.
- Add in the buttery mixture and stir until combined.
- Knead it gently until it forms a dough.
- Roll out the dough to ¼ inch thick. Cut out the men with a cookie cutter and place on the prepared baking sheets.
- Bake for 8-12 minutes.
- Allow to cool thoroughly (they harden as they cool) before adding any decorations.
- *I wonder why some of the people were excited about Jesus? I wonder how the Romans were feeling during the Passover Party? What are your feelings towards Jesus?*

## Chocolate Truffles

200g dark chocolate (finely chopped) or dark chocolate chips  
½ cup double cream  
Coating: cocoa powder/ chocolate sprinkles/ crushed cereal/ desiccated coconut



- Heat the cream in a saucepan over a low heat until steaming.
- Take the saucepan off the heat and add the chocolate, waiting 5 minutes for it to melt.
- Whisk the cream and chocolate together until smooth and shiny.
- Pour the mixture into a tin and leave in the fridge for 30 minutes, or until firm.
- Use a tablespoon to scoop out the firm mixture and roll each scoop into a ball.
- Return the balls to the fridge while pouring your chosen coating(s) into a small bowl(s).
- Dip and roll the balls into the coating(s).
- Keep refrigerated.
- *Some people spread their cloaks on the ground for the donkey, carrying Jesus, to walk on. It was a sign of respect since cloaks, like coats, can be expensive and the people might not find their cloak again afterwards in all the busyness. Do you have a special item that you would find hard to give up or give away?*

## 2. Temple Tidy-up

Jesus visited the Temple in Jerusalem and was shocked at what it had become. The outer courtyard was filled with shops and the shop keepers were cheating people. Jesus said, "Didn't God say, 'My house will be called the house of prayer for all people,' but you have made it a den of robbers"?! And he turned over the shop-keeper's tables and stopped people from carrying things for sale through the Temple. This upset some people so much that they began to think of a way to get rid of Jesus. You have the option this week of baking biscuits that look like coins or making pretzels to remind us of the purpose of the Temple. (For more of the story, check out Mark 11:15-18)

### Shortbread Rounds

1 cup soft butter  
½ cup icing sugar  
2 cups flour



Set oven to 180°C and prepare a baking sheet with baking paper.

- Cream the butter and sugar in a large bowl.
- Add the flour and combine until the mixture forms a dough. It will crumble at first but keep mixing until it forms into a ball in your hands.
- Dust a flat surface and rolling pin with flour or icing sugar and roll out the dough to ¼ inch thick.
- Cut into rounds with a round cookie cutter and place on the prepared baking sheets.
- If you want, use a toothpick to draw coin designs into your soft biscuits.
- *The shops in the Temple were distracting people and even stopping some people from worshipping God. Worship is about noticing God. Worship recognises how big and important God is and how much we need him. Can you think of a time when you noticed this? Worship is about spending not our money but our time with God. There are lots of ways to spend time with God such as praying to him, singing to him, being still, reading your Bible, enjoying nature, doing the things you are good at, or acting in a way that pleases him. Is there anything that gets in the way of you worshipping God? How could this change?*
- Bake for 12-18 minutes or until they have turned a pale golden brown. Allow to cool.

### Pretzels

1 packet or 2½ tsp active dry yeast  
1½ cups warm water  
1 tbsp sugar  
1 tsp salt  
4 cups flour  
1 egg, beaten



- In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in water. Add the sugar and salt and mix.
- Add 3 cups of flour and combine. Add ½ to 1 cup more of flour as needed.
- Knead for 5-8 minutes until the dough is smooth and elastic.
- Roll out chunks of dough into long strips and carefully shape the dough into pretzel twists.
- *Did you know that the pretzel shape is meant to show a child crossing their arms in prayer? It was designed by a monk to encourage children to pray. Can you cross your arms over your chest with your fingers touching your shoulders? What is your favourite way to pray?*

### 3. Last Supper

Jesus' last meal was a Passover meal. Each item on the Passover plate has special meaning which links it to the Exodus – the rescue of God's people from Egypt long ago. God's people had been forced to do hard work, building all sorts of buildings for the Egyptians. Haroseth is a sweet, brownish paste made with chopped apples which reminds them of the mortar, the mud-cement, that their family had to build with when they were slaves in Egypt. God's people had to leave Egypt so quickly that God told them to make flat breads for the journey since they didn't have time to wait for the bread dough to rise. Wine is a special celebration drink, used in the Passover meal to celebrate freedom. (For more of the story of Jesus' Passover meal, check out Mark 14:22-25)

Since haroseth is made with chopped apples, you have the option of making apple blondies (pale brownies) or a sweet take on a flat bread. You might want to eat these with grape juice or any red-coloured squash using some of the suggested prayers.

#### Apple Blondies

- 1/2 cup applesauce
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 3-4 tbsp maple syrup
- 1/4 cup brown sugar



Set the oven to 180°C and line a loaf tin with baking paper.

- In a large bowl combine all the ingredients and mix well until a thick batter forms. You may need to add a bit more flour or a bit more syrup to get the right firm consistency.
- Transfer to the loaf tin and sprinkle on the brown sugar.
- Bake in the oven for 30 minutes, or until the top is golden.
- Remove from oven and allow to cool completely. Refrigerate for at least an hour before slicing.
- Blondies are meant to be fudgy in the middle, which looks a bit like the mud-cement, and you can cut them up to look like bricks. *I wonder if you can think of any ways that God has helped you? Can you think of any struggles or disappointments that you've managed to get over and rise above? Thank God for looking after you.*

#### Pancakes

- 125g flour
- Salt
- ½ pint of milk and water, mixed
- 1 egg
- Butter

Toppings: lemon juice/ sugar/ maple syrup/ bananas/ chocolate spread/ grapes



- Sift the flour and salt in a big bowl.
- Break the egg over the flour and whisk it into the flour.
- Add the watery milk bit by bit, whisking all the time until the mixture is smooth.
- Melt a little butter in a small frying pan before adding some of the batter over the base of the pan.
- When the batter appears set, flip the pancake over to cook it on the other side.
- Repeat until the batter is used up. Eat immediately or reheat in microwave.
- *As you add something sweet to your pancakes, thank God for something 'sweet' or good in your life. God wanted life to be good, but it is often mixed with tears. Add some lemon juice to your pancake (or if you don't have any just leave the pancake plain) and tell God about something 'bitter' or difficult in your life. Thank God that he is with us through both the good times and the hard times.*

## 4. Garden of Gethsemane

After the Passover meal, Jesus and his friends went to a quiet garden filled with olive trees to pray. This garden was old and tough, having been planted along the rocky slopes of a mountain. Jesus was hurting inside because he knew he must die soon. He knew that the next few days were going to be really hard for him and he had a mixture of feelings about it. He also knew that one of his closest friends had made a deal to get him captured. So Jesus prayed to God about it all and God gave him strength. He asked his friends to keep watch and to also pray, but they kept falling asleep. (For more of the story, check out Mark 14:32-43)

### Rocky Road

2 tbsp cocoa powder  
2 tbsp golden syrup  
125g butter  
2 tbsp sugar  
60g cheap biscuits  
60g desiccated coconut



Optional extras: mini marshmallows/ raisins/ nuts

Line a tin with baking paper.

- Melt the butter, golden syrup, cocoa powder and sugar together in a saucepan over a low heat to make a chocolate sauce. *Are you tempted to try it? Watch out, it's hot! I wonder if you know of any good ways to deal with temptation?*
- Crush up the biscuits into chunky pieces. *As you bash, can you think of anything that you feel angry about or upset about or annoyed at?*
- Add the biscuit crumbs and the desiccated coconut into the chocolate sauce, along with any other optional extras.
- Stir the mixture together to make a thick, stiff paste. Add more dry ingredients if too wet.
- Pour it into the tin and smooth it out into the corners. *Jesus was pouring out all his mixed feelings to God. Is there anything you would like to pray to God about right now?*
- Refrigerate for a few hours to set.
- *Jesus took time to listen to God, to wait, and to pray again. Do you find listening and waiting easy or hard? Why?*

### Peanut Butter Cheerio Clusters

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup peanut butter  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup honey  
3 cup cheerios/cereal hoops



Line a loaf tin or small baking tray with silver foil.

- Cook the peanut butter and honey in a saucepan over a medium heat, stirring constantly until completely melted and blended.
- Remove from heat and stir in cereal. Mix until evenly coated.
- Place mixture in prepared tin and press into place.
- *Judas had agreed to help trap Jesus for 30 silver coins. Money had tempted him to do something he later wished he hadn't. When he realised his mistake he even tried to give the money back. Why can saying sorry feel such a hard thing to do?*
- Refrigerate for 1 hour before cutting into squares or bars.

## 5. Good Friday

Jesus' death was a big event. Lots of strange things happened when Jesus died like the day becoming dark for three hours. A Roman centurion standing by the cross even began to wonder whether Jesus could be God. Usually on the day we remember Jesus dying we eat hot cross buns. They are called hot cross buns because they are marked on the top with a cross, reminding us that Jesus died by being hung on a cross. The buns are made from bread dough and filled with raisins, reminding us of what Jesus had said at the Last Supper about the bread being like his body and the wine being like his blood. The dough is also filled with spices since Jesus' dead body was covered in spices at his burial. Below is an easier alternative to hot cross buns, as well as the option of making a tasty sun. (For more of the story, check out Mark 15:31-39)

### Hot Cross Cookies

200g soft butter  
100g light brown sugar  
1 egg  
250g plain flour  
1 tbsp cinnamon  
2 tsp baking powder  
100g sultanas or raisins  
Icing sugar/ icing pen/ fondant icing/ white chocolate



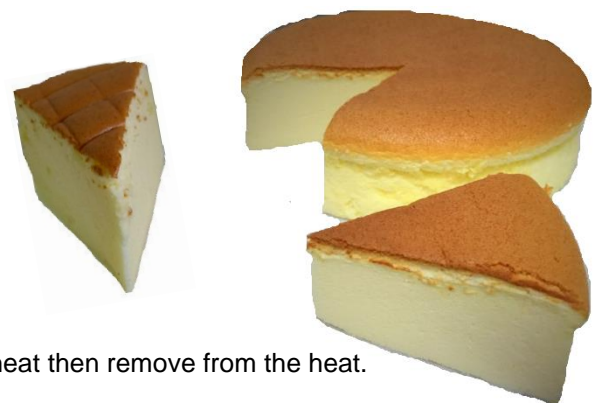
Set the oven to 180°C and line a baking tray with baking paper.

- In a large bowl beat together the butter, sugar and egg until smooth.
- Add the flour, cinnamon and baking powder, then combine to make a dough.
- Add the sultanas and combine.
- Roll lumps of dough into balls. Flatten these onto the trays, leaving enough space between each for them to expand.
- Bake for 10 minutes or until golden.
- Allow cookies to cool before marking them with a cross.
- *When you see or write a cross sign – x – what could it mean? We use crosses as a sign for love or to show a kiss. We use crosses as a sign of adding and multiplying. Crosses are used when we get an answer wrong and crosses are also the sign on ambulances and hospitals, the place people go to get better. A cross can show where there's treasure. It might sound strange to call the day that Jesus died 'Good' but many good things happened because of Jesus' death (including the fact that three days later he beat death and rose to life!). Can you use some of the ideas we've just mentioned to explain why Jesus' death on a cross turned out to be a good thing? Why did Jesus die?*

### Easy Soufflé Cheesecake

100g white chocolate  
100g cream cheese  
3 eggs

Set the oven to 180°C and prepare a round baking tin.



- Separate the egg yolks from the egg whites into two bowls.
- Carefully melt the white chocolate in a saucepan on a low heat then remove from the heat.
- Whip the egg whites until firm peaks form.
- Add the cream cheese to the melted chocolate and stir until combined.
- Add the egg yolks to the cheesy chocolate and mix well.
- Bit by bit add the stiff egg whites to the mixture and gently blend.
- Pour the mixture into the round tin and place the round tin in a larger baking tin. Pour boiling water into the larger baking tin so that the water surrounds the round tin.
- Bake in the oven for 20 minutes then switch off the oven, leaving the cake inside for a further 20 minutes.
- *Darkness is often linked to bad and light is often linked to good. Jesus died to save us from darkness. He wants us to live as children of light. As you wait for your sun-shaped cake to bake, can you think of some ways that you could be light to others? What kinds of things could you do and say to bless others today?*

## 6. Easter Sunday

When the women arrived at the place where Jesus had been buried, he was not there! Jesus had been buried in a sort of cave, and the large stone that had been in front of it had been rolled away. An angel spoke to the women saying, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was killed on the cross. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said". (For more of the story, check out Mark 16:1-7)

### Resurrection Rolls

Ready-made pastry (e.g. Jus-Rol croissant dough)  
8-16 large marshmallows  
1/2 cup butter, melted  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 tbsp cinnamon



Set the oven to 180°C and line a baking tray with baking paper.

- Combine sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl. *Smell it! Jesus' body had been covered with strong-smelling spices before being buried, to stop the body from smelling bad.*
- Roll a marshmallow in melted butter and then in the cinnamon-sugar mixture. *The marshmallow is like Jesus' body, covered with perfumes and spices.*
- Place the coated marshmallow in the middle of a square cut-out of dough, folding the dough around it until covered by the dough and pinching the seams to seal the roll. *Wrapping the marshmallow in the dough is like closing Jesus' body in the tomb.*
- Repeat the process using up the rest of the dough.
- Place rolls on the baking tray and bake for about 12 minutes (check pastry instructions).
- Allow to cool a little before opening the roll: it should be hollow inside! *When Jesus' friends visited his tomb, it was empty: Jesus' body wasn't there. Christ is risen!*

### Chocolate Easter Nests

100g chocolate (milk or dark)  
Cheap cereal (Rice Krispies/ Cornflakes/ Shreddies)  
Mini Easter eggs



- Melt the chocolate carefully in a saucepan.
- Remove from heat and add some cereal, stirring until all the cereal is coated in chocolate. Add more cereal until all the chocolate has been used up and the cereal is covered.
- Spoon the chocolatey-cereal mixture into cupcake cases and decorate with the mini eggs.
- *Do you know why we have eggs at Easter? One of the reasons is to celebrate new life. In the Spring birds are building nests for their eggs, which is a sign that new life is coming after winter. And at Easter we are celebrating that after the dark sadness of dying, Jesus came back to life. Another reason is that the shape of the egg helps us to remember the tomb that Jesus' body was put in. Usually Easter eggs are empty on the inside – just like Jesus' tomb was empty when the women visited it on Sunday. It was empty because Jesus had come back to life and is alive!*
- Refrigerate to encourage the chocolate to set quickly. Happy Easter!