FORGIVENESS

HOME SCHOOL VALUES

This term we will be focussing in school on the value FORGIVENESS. We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

TALK ABOUT FORGIVENESS TOGETHER...

Everyone makes mistakes, it's part of being human. Sometimes our mistakes hurt others and then we need to say sorry. Sometimes mistakes made by other people hurt us. When this happens we need to be able to **forgive**. **Forgiveness** can be difficult and costly but without it a new start is impossible.

Talk together about:

- A time when you needed to say sorry
- A time you didn't say sorry but wish you had
- A time when you had to **forgive** someone who had hurt or upset you
- How it feels when you are given a new start because someone has **forgiven** you

READ TOGETHER...

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Zacchaeus was a little man. He was a tax collector and had become rich by making others pay lots of money in taxes to the Romans and to him. He didn't have many friends.

When Zacchaeus heard Jesus was in town, he wanted to see him. But Zacchaeus was short and Jesus was always surrounded by a crowd. So Zacchaeus decided to run ahead of the crowd and climb a sycamore tree. From there he could watch for Jesus. As Jesus drew closer, he held his breath excitedly until Jesus stopped right beneath his tree. Jesus looked straight up at him! "Zacchaeus," said Jesus with a smile, "come on down. I want to stay at your house today!"

Zacchaeus hopped down. "You are welcome at my house, Jesus," he said with a huge grin.

But others grumbled, muttering to each other. "Why does Jesus want to go home with the rich, cheating tax collector? He isn't good enough for Jesus to come and stay at his house."

Zacchaeus heard what the people were saying about him and he wanted to put things right. He turned to Jesus and said, "Master, here and now, I promise to give half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone in taxes, I will pay them back four times that amount."

Zacchaeus wanted to turn over a new leaf because Jesus believed that everyone deserved a new start and now Zacchaeus belived it too!

Bible story based on Luke 19:2-10

THINK TOGETHER ABOUT WORDS OF WISDOM

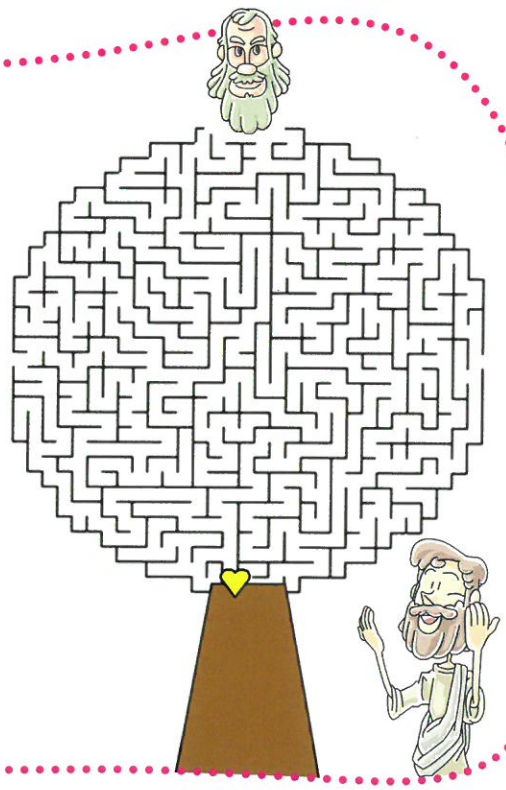
"Without **forgiveness** there is no future.... If you can **forgive**, then you can move on and even help the person you are forgiving to become a better person"

Desmond Tutu

QUIZ

Tree Maze

Help Zacchaeus find his way down from the top of the tree, to meet Jesus.



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

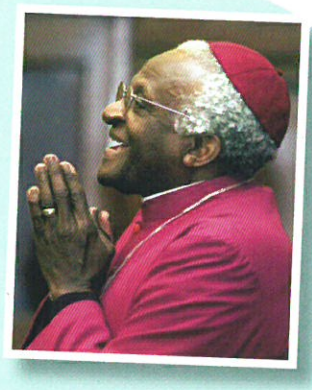
Maze

Design your own version of the maze tree in the story of Zacchaeus.

You can either draw it on paper or use other materials to create it. It's up to you! Take it to school to display in the Challenge Gallery.

HALL OF FAME

Desmond Tutu



Desmond Tutu was Archbishop of Capetown from 1986 to 1996. Throughout his life Desmond Tutu worked tirelessly against apartheid in South Africa. Apartheid was a system that treated people differently because of the colour of their skin. People who were non-white were not given the same rights in the country as white citizens. For example they had to live where the government told them to, they were not allowed to vote, had to use separate transport, go to different beaches and use separate sports facilities.

There was much violence and oppression in South Africa during the years of apartheid, and when it finally ended in 1992 some people were left feeling bitter and angry and wanting revenge. In order to give everyone a chance to talk about the things that had happened to them Desmond Tutu set up the 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission'. Many people who had behaved badly could hear from those they had hurt. There was the chance to say sorry and sometimes receive **forgiveness**. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped to provide an opportunity for a new beginning for South Africa, a chance to build what Desmond Tutu called a 'Rainbow Nation' in which everyone had the same chance in life no matter what the colour of their skin.

FASCINATING FACTS

Crosses across the world

The cross is a very special symbol for Christians it reminds them of Jesus' death on the cross whch brought **forgiveness** for the world.

Different shapes and designs of crosses reflect different traditions and communities across the world.



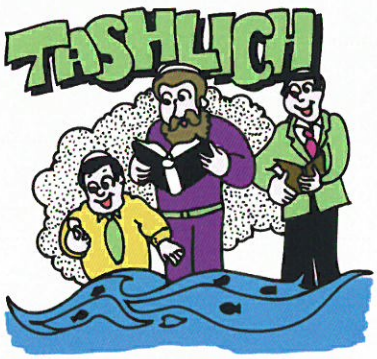
Maria Gomez was a Christian Primary School teacher in El Salvador. She angered the authorities in her country because she campaigned for the rights of poor people. Eventually she was murdered. Later a local artist was commissioned to paint a wooden cross with scenes showing her life and her work among the poor women in the rural villages of El Salvador.



The Celtic cross originates from Ireland. St Patrick described the circle on the cross as symbolising the endless love shown by Jesus. The cross is decorated with natural shapes and animals to remind us of God's creation.



The Black and White cross comes from South Africa and was designed during the time of apartheid. The Bible teaches that people are equal in God's eyes, no matter what their background or the colour of their skin.



The Jewish New Year Tradition

New Year for Jews normally falls during September. On the first afternoon of the new year, the festival of Rosh Hashanah is celebrated. Families visit a nearby stream, river or even the sea for the ritual of Tashlich (in Hebrew, the language in which the Jews' holy book the Torah was written, Tashlich means throw away).

After a celebration meal Jewish families gather left over breadcrumbs. These crumbs represent the words or deeds that each family member feels sorry about. When the crumbs have been thrown into the water, fish eat them or they are washed away. This symbolises the way that God **forgives** the bad things that people have done and washes them away so that there can be a fresh start for the New Year. During the ceremony the following words from the Torah are read aloud, "You (God) will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our transgressions into the depths of the sea." Micah 7: 19

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