**About Lent:**

*The season of Lent is a time that Christians set aside for drawing nearer to God and neighbor. Lent is observed for the 40 days, not counting Sundays, that lead up to Easter. In this season, we take on practices that form us into people shaped by the life and love of God. Join us in our Lenten Program as we draw nearer and nearer to God, and one another.*

**Draw Near in Love**:

*This Lenten season we will strive to contribute a Love Project through* ***Thousand Days of Love****. You can learn more on our website. The first 1000 days of life are most formative for a child, and we want to give every child the best opportunity to thrive.* This week, at a meal, or during a time of reflection, think about the “Let’s talk” questions below. **Use the collection jar provided to collect change this week for our campaign and bring it to church on EASTER**! Gifts can be given on line at [*https://my.episcopalrelief.org/stmarysfleeton*](https://my.episcopalrelief.org/stmarysfleeton)*.*

**WEEKLY CHALLENGE:** Our church goal is to raise $1000 to purchase a “love package” which consists of:

* Care for five moms & their newborns
* Nurture & nourishment for 12 children
* Bicycles for 3 community volunteers
* Mosquito nets & training for 10 families
* Four savings & loan group memberships.

Find examples of comparable things in our community over the next 2 weeks and take pictures of them and share to johanabaker16@gmail.com

1000 Days of Love “Let’s Talk” Questions:

*What is your favorite game to play as an adult? How about when you were a child? Share a time you remember playing that game and how it felt.*

**Week 3: Scripture for Reflection: Jesus Draws Near to the All People**

 **John 4:5-29, 39-42**

*Read and reflect on this story several times this week. You may want to use a variety of translations.*

Active Reflection:

* I wonder where you would be in this story
* Are there questions you’re carrying or wondering about from the story
* Draw the story from your viewpoint.
* Journal about your reflections

Scripture “Let’s Talk” Questions:

* What do you think the woman at the well thought when Jesus talked to her?
* When has someone surprised you with kindness?
* Do you think there are people left out in our community because they are different?
* How can we be like Jesus and not turn away from others?
* How can you share the Good News of God’s love?
* How can we truly draw near to all people through St Mary’s?

**Draw Near in Prayer:**  Prayer Bead Examen

*Examen is an ancient practice of prayer that creates space for us to examine our day, opening our hearts to God through questions. Use the questions below to guide your practice. This is an excellent way to end each day. If using the Lenten strand of prayer beads, when you come to the color, use the prompt below to guide your prayers. You also can use your fingers to count out the prompts as noted.*

Purple Bead or Pinky finger: Where did you notice God today?

Gray Bead or ring finger: What are you most thankful for today?

Tan Bead or middle finger: When were you happiest today?

Navy Bead or index finger: What was the hardest part of your day?

White Bead or thumb: How can you follow Jesus more closely tomorrow?

Cross or palm of hand: What else do you want to say to God? Close with the Lord’s prayer.

**Draw Near Notes!** Write a note to someone who…

**April 4**: does a service for you

**April5**: knows your nickname

**April 6**: works for justice

**April 7:** is a peace maker

**April 8:** someone wise

**April 9**: you once shared a great meal

**April 11**: you have seen transform

**April 12**: you have known as long as you can remember

**April 13**: is praying for you

**April 14**: you love

**April 15:** walked with you through the valley of the shadow of death

**April 16:** is waiting

**April 17**: Happy Easter! Read your note to you

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**Draw Near for Holy Week: Jesus Draws Near to The Afraid**

Scripture Luke 19: 28-40

Active Reflection:

* I wonder where you would be in this story
* Are there questions you’re carrying or wondering about from the story
* Draw the story from your viewpoint.
* Journal about your reflections

Let’s Talk Scripture Questions:

* I wonder how Jesus felt as he drew near Jerusalem
* When have you been brave when it was hard?
* How can you help when others are afraid?
* What does it feel like to you when you are afraid?
* What do you do when you feel very sad?

*Adapted from Draw Near: a Lent and Easter Guide by A Sacred Home, 2022*

*With additional materials adapted from 1000days of Love, Episcopal Relief and Development*