

## Lenten Garden

### Supplies:

- Plant saucer with a deep lip. If you use a clear saucer, you might want to line it around the edge with moss matting on the inside with the green side showing outward
- Miniature flower pot (plastic or terracotta) about 2 inches in diameter
- Gravel, Potting soil, and Small pebbles
- Larger rock that will cover the opening of the flowerpot
- Fast growing seeds such as chia or grass. You could also use sod.
- 6 thin twigs
- Hot glue

### Directions:

1. Put gravel in the bottom of the saucer to serve as drainage
2. Add potting soil about ½ way up
3. Place the flower pot on its side toward the back of the saucer and pack more soil around its sides and over the top, leaving the opening clear, making a mound at the top over the pot. This becomes the tomb.
4. Sprinkle the seeds all over the soil pressing them in lightly
5. Make a path to the opening of the pot with the pebbles.
6. Spray the soil with water to make it evenly moist. You will need to spritz it at least once a day so the seeds will sprout, but don't make it soggy or the seeds will rot.
7. Take the twigs and make 3 crosses. Attach the crossbeam twig with a drop of hot glue.
8. Place the 3 crosses on the "hill" above the flower pot
9. Place in a sunny area and keep it moist
10. On Good Friday cover the pot opening with the stone. I hide a small angel cutout inside the tomb. On Easter Sunday roll the stone away to reveal the empty tomb!

## The Teaching Points of the Lenten Garden

**Preparation and planning-** just as any garden requires thoughtful and careful planning, so does our spiritual garden. We prepare the garden with good soil for planting and decide which seeds to put in a garden and how we want it to look. We plant the seeds for our spiritual garden by preparing ourselves to grow in Christ's love and planning a discipline of activities to help us grow. To help us grow as Christians, we make our Lenten plan called a discipline. These activities should include praying, giving up something we like during Lent such as a favorite treat or activity, and charity toward others. These activities help bring us closer to God by helping us remember and honor what His Son Jesus gave up for us and by paying closer attention to the things Jesus told us to do as Christians. Our garden has 3 crosses on its hill to remind us that Jesus had to die on a cross for us.

**Work, patience and prayer-** a garden requires work to keep it growing and patience as we watch to see our garden grow. We must make sure it is watered and cared for. Just like the garden, we have to work at keeping our Lenten discipline. Lent lasts for 40 days – that is how long Jesus fasted and prayed in the desert. It's a long time. Imagine how hard that was for Jesus! It may not always be easy for us, either, but if we are patient and try our best to do the things we promised to do it will be pleasing to God. Prayer is important to keep our spiritual garden growing! A good morning prayer to sing is our Sunday School prayer "Good Morning, God!". At night say your prayers for your family, friends, and neighbors and thank God for all the good things that happened that day. If we have a tough time keeping our Lenten plans, we can always pray and talk to God, say we are sorry, ask for his help and promise to try harder. He will understand.

**Light-** Plants need sunlight to sprout and grow. Sunlight helps nourish the plants. We need the Light of Christ to nourish our souls and grow us into better Christians. Ways we can feel and share the Light of Christ is through prayer and by giving to others who need our help.

From Ash Wednesday until Good Friday, our flower pot "tomb" is just open and empty. On Good Friday we will put the big stone in front of the opening in the "tomb" in our garden to remind us that Jesus died and was buried in the tomb with a big heavy stone closing it for 3 days. For three the days after Jesus died on the cross the world was darker without His presence. On Easter Day, when we roll that stone away in our Lenten garden, we will see an empty tomb reminding us that **Christ is Risen** and once again His Light is in the world.

