

## Fourth Sunday of Lent

### The light of the world

#### INTRODUCTION

While Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration, one of the Pharisees, called Nicodemus, came to see him secretly one night. Nicodemus believed in Jesus and wanted to know more about this extraordinary man.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

#### LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 3.

#### SORRY

As we sing our sorry song, let us ask for God's forgiveness and help to make us good. Sing Sorry Song 1.

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 2.

#### GOSPEL (JOHN 3:16-21)

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "God loved the world so much that he sent his only son to be the light and to save those who believed in him. The Light of the World has come, but many turn away from it and prefer the darkness. Anyone who does wrong is afraid of the light, because their badness will be plain for all to see. The good man has nothing to fear from the light, because he is close to God."

#### DISCUSSION

Jesus is the light of the world. What happens if you switch on the light in a darkened room? The darkness disappears, and suddenly you can see everything clearly. Jesus is the light who makes us see the way to his heavenly father, and chases away the temptations which could lead us away from God.

When did Nicodemus come to see Jesus? Nicodemus came secretly at night, hoping that no one would see him. He was a Pharisee, a very religious man who studied the scriptures and kept all the commandments of the Jewish law. The other Pharisees did not like Jesus or his teachings, but

Nicodemus believed in him and was afraid the others would find out.

If we do something wrong or that we know is naughty, do we like everyone else to see what we are doing, or do we prefer to keep it a secret?

No one likes to be found out! This is what Jesus meant about people preferring the darkness and doing things out of sight, hoping no one will see. When we are good and do what is right, we have nothing to hide and don't mind being seen.

We are all children of the light. Do you remember when we received the light of Christ? At our baptism, we were given a candle as a symbol of the light we received from Christ. The love of Jesus and the flame of faith have burned in our hearts since that day. As children of the light we have nothing to fear, knowing that Jesus is always close to us on our journey through life.

#### ACTIVITY

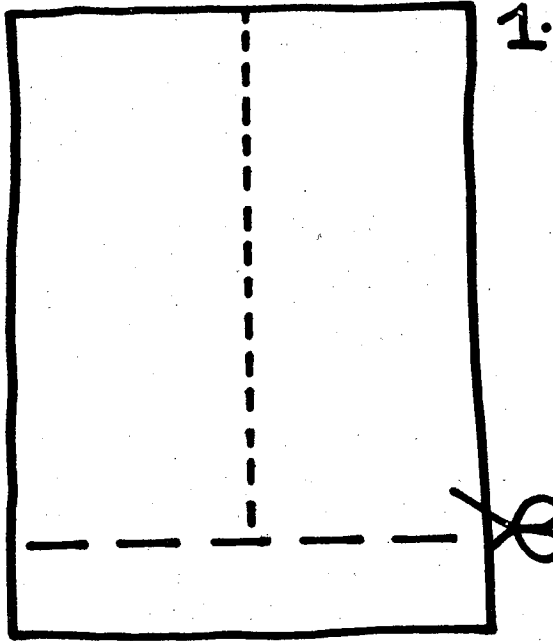
Using brightly colored rectangles of paper, help each child to make a lantern which they can carry with them into the church.

#### CREED

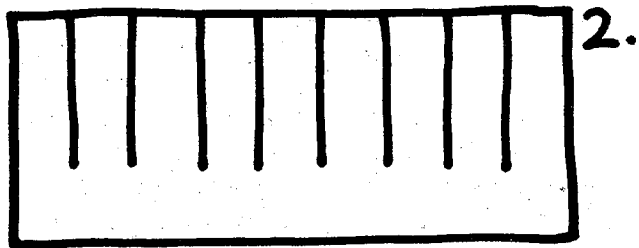
#### CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, you are the light of the world.  
You promised that  
if we stay close to you,  
we will never be lost in the darkness.  
Help us to stay with you always.

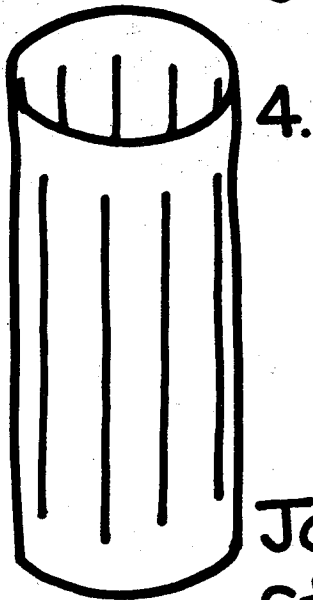
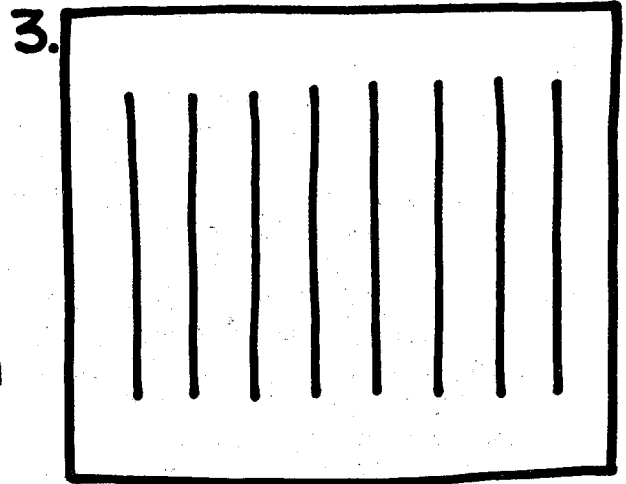
Fold



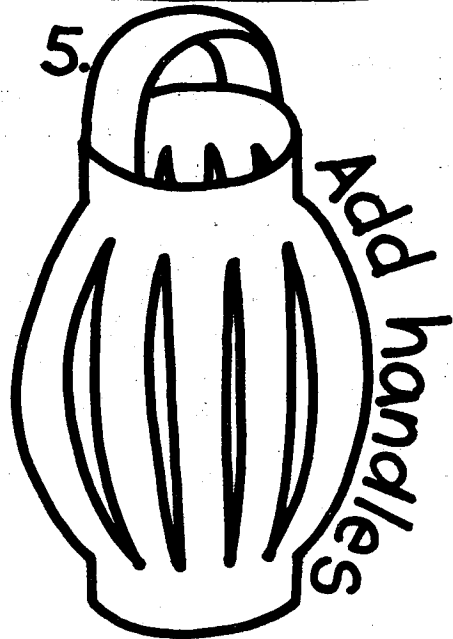
✂ cut to make handle



Cut  $\frac{3}{4}$  way through



Join and  
staple or  
glue



Add handles