

# BURYING the ALLELUIA!



*(Note to catechists and teachers: This prayer takes advance preparation. Preparation could be done two class sessions prior to Ash Wednesday, with the celebration taking place at the class session immediately prior to Ash Wednesday.)*

## PREPARATION

1. Decide if you will have the class create one large banner or a scroll with the word "Alleluia" on it, OR if you will have each student design individual banners and scrolls.
2. Gather necessary materials—paper or fabric, crayons or markers or paints, and other joyful, "Alleluia-type" materials that could be added to the banner (stickers, colorful paper scraps, streamers, etc.). Give the children time to create their banner(s) or scroll(s).

As they are doing so, remind them that Ash Wednesday is coming, and that it begins the season of Lent. Invite them to share what they know and remember about the season of Lent. Highlight the fact that because Alleluia is a song and word of joy and praise, the Church does not sing it during the quieter, simpler season of Lent.

The Church, in essence, puts the Alleluia away until it is time to celebrate the joyful season of Easter.

3. Choose a suitable container for the banner(s) or scroll(s)—a box, a treasure chest, etc.
4. If you have the luxury of doing so, choose a "tomb" for your container. This could be a locked cupboard, a corner of a closet, or a hole in the ground. If such a space/place is not available, plan to make the container a part of your Lent prayer table environment.
5. Gather bells, rhythm instruments, spoons, and anything that would make a "joyful noise"!



# *Celebrating Lent* BURYING the ALLELUIA!

## PRAYER

*(Note: It will be necessary to prepare the container and to have it already located at your place of "burial," OR—if you are going to keep your container on the classroom Lent prayer table—it should be placed on the table ahead of time.)*

1. Distribute the rhythm instruments.
2. If the class has prepared one large Alleluia banner or scroll, invite two or four children to carry it in procession.

If each child or young person has prepared a banner or scroll, invite the students to bring their banners or scrolls with them.

Form a line for procession. Appoint a leader, and tell that person where to lead the class (to the "burial place" – outside, the cupboard, the closet, the prayer table, etc.). If the class prepared one large banner or scroll, the children or youth carrying it should follow the leader of the procession.

3. Invite all to process, using the following or similar words of invitation:

**Let us go forth to say  
farewell to the Alleluia.**

**As we go, let us sing our great song  
of praise and joy.**

4. As the procession moves to the place of "burial," sing several Alleluias and use the instruments to make a joyful noise. Once at the place of "burial," give a signal for all to be silent.

5. Invite the children to quietly place their banner(s) or scroll(s) in the container you have chosen. Close or seal the container and place it in its "tomb," or on the prayer table.
6. Conclude with prayer, using the following or similar words:

**Loving God,  
as Lent nears we bury the Alleluia,  
our song of joy.**

**In the forty days of Lent to come,  
we will sing quieter songs  
and think about what we can do  
to follow you more closely.**

**Bless our Lenten days and,  
when they are done,  
bring us here again to sing  
our song of Easter joy.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

7. In silence, return to your classroom (or have the children return to their seats).

