

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

In preparation for the prayer, invite one young person to serve as the reader. Give the young person time to prepare to read aloud Luke 9:23-24. You should serve as the leader.

PRAYER

Begin by inviting each young person to choose two small twigs or pieces of wood. Have them tie these together to form a simple cross.

Gather the group around your classroom prayer table, and invite each young person to place his or her cross on the table.

Begin prayer by singing a Lenten gathering song or refrain, and then pray together the Sign of the Cross.



CONTINUE THE PRAYER

Leader: During Lent we walk with Jesus. We hope to share in the Resurrection of Easter. God's Word guides us on our journey.

Reader: *(Proclaim Luke 9:23-24)*

Leader: Jesus looked ahead to the cross he would bear. Are you willing to take up your crosses this Lent?

All: **WE ARE!**

Leader: Let us pause and take time to consider one thing we know we need to do to be more like Jesus. *(Pause for silent reflection.)*

As I call your name, please come forward.

(Name), will you take up your Lenten cross and follow Jesus?

Student: I will!

(Invite the student to take a wooden cross from the prayer table. It does not need to be the cross that he or she made.)

After each young person has come forward and taken a cross from the prayer table, conclude the prayer as follows.

Celebrate Lent: TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

Leader: Please respond, "Lord, help us follow you."

As we take up our Lenten crosses and begin our Lenten journey,
we pray –

All: **LORD, HELP US FOLLOW YOU!**

Leader: As we walk with each other, answering your call to love God and neighbor,
we pray –

All: **LORD, HELP US FOLLOW YOU!**

Leader: At home, at school, at church, and when with friends, we pray –

All: **LORD, HELP US FOLLOW YOU!**

Leader: As we walk in faith toward the joy of Easter, we pray –

All: **LORD, HELP US FOLLOW YOU!**

Leader: Loving God, you alone are our source of strength and faith.

Help us support one another as we take up our crosses, signs of our love for
Jesus, who carried his Cross because of his great love for each of us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: **AMEN.**

