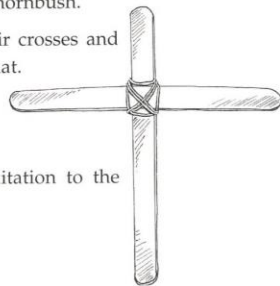


# Two Pieces of Wood

This meditation is best prayed during Holy Week.

## Preparation

- Have the children make simple, individual crosses from palm leaves, ice-cream sticks or twigs bound together with wool.
- Prepare a prayer table or mat. Cover it with a purple cloth. Place on the table/mat a large crucifix, some rocks, a large purple candle and, if available, a few sprigs of thornbush.
- Invite the children to bring their crosses and gather around the prayer table/mat.



## Meditation

Read the following guided meditation to the children.

## Relaxation Exercise

Today we are going to talk with Jesus about the meaning of the cross.

Sit tall and straight with your legs crossed.

Place your cross on the floor in front of you.

Rest your hands loosely in your lap.

Close your eyes and tell your body to relax.

Breathe deeply and slowly in and out...in and out...in and out.

## Prayer Themes and Guided Meditations for Children

Let all the stiffness go out of you.

Move your head slowly around in a circle.

Lift your shoulders up and down.

Feel comfortable and relaxed.

## Focus

Open your eyes and pick up your handmade cross.

When you see a cross, what do you think of?

*Allow the children time to respond. Remind them of the importance of the cross to Christians: Jesus died on a cross because he loves us and because he wanted to save us from our sins.*

The cross reminds us of Jesus' great love for each one of us.

Jesus' death on the cross enables us to share one day in the peace and joy of heaven.

## Ponder

Place your cross on the floor in front of you.

Now look carefully at the crucifix on the prayer table/mat.

The soldiers treated Jesus very badly.

They spat on him and laughed at him...

they made a crown of thorns and put it on his head...

they nailed him to a cross...

and they pierced his side with a spear.

When Jesus died on the cross, he endured great suffering.

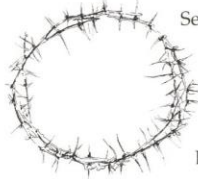
When we see a crucifix, we remember how Jesus suffered on the cross, how he suffered because he wanted to save us from sin and make it possible for us to enter heaven.



## Pray

Now close your eyes and in your imagination go into your heart or special place where Jesus is waiting alive and well.

Picture Jesus sitting beside you as your friend.



See him dressed in a long white garment.

Listen to Jesus as he tells you that he loves you.

He wants you to be happy here on earth and one day to be with him in heaven.

But the way to heaven is not always easy.

Hear Jesus tell you that the journey of life can sometimes be very difficult.

Everyone experiences disappointments, suffering, and hurt at some time in their lives.

Hear Jesus tell you that even though suffering is a part of life, such times are not forever...they do pass.

Good feelings and good times will follow bad times.

Listen to Jesus tell you that you can grow and become strong during these difficult times...if you do not let them get you down.

Jesus reminds you how he is always close to you to help you through the trials and disappointments of life.

Tell Jesus how you feel when someone disappoints you or something sad or hurtful happens to you.

Ask him to help you be strong when troubles come.

Hear Jesus tell you again that he is always beside you, in good times and in bad.

He knows what it is like to feel sadness, suffering and hurt...and he is always there to comfort you and to be your friend.

Tell Jesus you are glad he is your friend.

Remember that you can talk to him at any time about all the things that worry or hurt you.

## Conclusion

Watch Jesus now as he stands up and prepares to leave.

You might like to shake hands with him and tell him you will talk again with him sometime soon.

Leave Jesus and return to the classroom.

Concentrate again on your breathing.

Breathe in and out slowly and quietly.

Move your shoulders up and down.

Move your head slowly around in a circle.

When you are ready, open your eyes.

Pick up your handmade cross.

Look at it for a moment.

Remember that it is a sign of Jesus' love for you and a promise of help in times of trouble.

Now look again at the crucifix on the prayer table/mat.

Remember that Jesus suffered and died for us to free us from sin and make it possible for us to go to heaven.

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross for us.

*Say together the following prayer:*

*We adore you Jesus and we praise you  
because by your cross you have saved the world.*

*At another time lead the children through the Stations of the Cross.*