

# Gather

## Innovative + Interactive + Insightful Experiences for Families to Gather

*Gather* has been created to support churches and schools in offering engaging family experiences. Each gathering is meant for the whole family. All of the activities are hands-on and experiential, and the teachings connect faith to families' everyday lives. Today's families don't want more, but they do want experiences that are meaningful.

Each gathering is organized into stations. This offers directors and principals the chance to use the activities from start to finish, or to pick and choose the ones that best fit their needs. We have tried to include everything (and more!) to make this resource as streamlined for you to use as possible.

The ultimate goal is for families to have a positive experience at church or school while sharing their faith together. All of these experiences have been successfully completed with real families in all types of church and school settings.

**Welcome—we are so glad you have joined us!**

FAITH + FAMILY  
*collective*

[www.faithandfamilycollective.com](http://www.faithandfamilycollective.com)

@faithandfamilycollective

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# One Step Forward

## A Lenten Family Gathering

### BEST PRACTICES + TIPS

- + We suggest 1.5-2 hours for this event.
- + Gather a team together to help support you with this event. You will need people to help with marketing, environment, hospitality, check-in, hosting a station, set-up, and clean-up.
- + Provide hospitality—simple snacks and a welcoming environment.
- + Consider investing in your families this Lenten season! Send home a Lenten Family Activity Kit with each family for them to do together at home. This will help the message from the event live on in their homes.

*Click here to learn more:* [Lenten Family Activity Kits](#)

## PREPARATION FOR EVENT

### PREPARATION:

Each station includes a supply list and preparation tasks to be completed before the event. A station script is also provided to help the team members who will be leading the activities.

Amazon links for all supplies can be found in our Amazon Storefront:

*Click here:* [Faith + Family Collective Amazon Lists](#)

### PRAYER TABLE:

Consider creating a prayer table at the front or center of your gathering space. You may decide to include a cross/crucifix, crown of thorns, succulents, nails, purple cloth, candles, etc.

### ADDITIONAL DECOR AND SUPPLIES:

-Frames or easels for Station Names

-Lenten Family Activity Kits (optional):

*Click here to learn more:* [Lenten Family Activity Kits](#)

### STATIONS:

We recommend choosing four stations depending on your time frame, space, and number of people. We have included six stations so that you may choose based on budget, location, needs, etc.

### NAMES OF STATIONS:

1. Less is More
2. Trust in God
3. We Are Not Alone
4. Peace Be With You
5. Create in Me a Clean Heart
6. Finding God in Everything

# EVENT SCRIPT

## PREPARATION:

+Print out a Camino Card and have stickers/stamp ready at each station.

## SUPPLY LIST:

- +Camino Cards (one per family)
- +Stickers or Stamps (one per station, per family)
- +Small Token (optional)

## OPENING COMMENTS:

Welcome to Lent! We are thrilled that your family has joined us.

The Spanish word “camino” when translated to English means a road, a way, a journey.

In Spain, many people walk a camino known as the Camino de Santiago. These people are referred to as pilgrims. As they journey from one spot to another they spend time in prayer and focus on time with Jesus. It is a time of peace and thoughtfulness.

The season of Lent can also be seen as a journey: an opportunity to draw closer to Jesus. We will use this theme of “Camino” as a way for us as families to share a Lenten experience today.

You will each be given a Camino Card for your traveling today. Our journey is not a physical one, but rather a spiritual journey that happens inside ourselves. At each stop during this event you will participate in different activities and reflections as a family. Make sure to get a stamp (or sticker) at the end of every stop for your Camino Card.

*Optional:*

*At the end of our time together you will receive a small token for your participation. (You can decide on a simple token, snack, or gift that families can turn their completed cards in to receive at the end of the event. Some suggestions: trail mix and water bottle, glow-in-the-dark rosary, a medal, Lent Kit, etc.—one per family).*

## OPENING PRAYER:

*To be read by a family*

Jesus, Lent reminds us that you know what it is like to walk on this earth. To be happy, to be sad, to know moments of joy, and to suffer. As we experience this simple Camino today, may we give thanks for your journey. We are each so loved by you.  
Amen.

We will now break into stations as we continue our journey, our very own Camino. At each station you will participate in a short, hands-on activity. Please stay with your family. You will journey with a small group of families throughout the event. There is no “order” so you will start at a station and then move to the next one with your group, eventually participating in all stations.

*(Divide participants into groups of about ten families—either by last name, location in the room, etc.—and give each family a Camino Card).*

# STATION 1

## LESS IS MORE

### PREPARATION:

- +Prepare Beggars Bowl/Blessing Bowl craft and a sample.

### SUPPLY LIST:

- +Beggars Bowl (wooden bowl)
- +Bowls: wood, paper, or plastic (one per family)
- +Slips of paper (one per family)
- +Pens
- +Supplies to decorate bowls: brown/tan/white tissue paper, glue, stickers

### STATION SCRIPT:

At this stop on our Camino we will explore the idea that less can often be more. During Lent, we are encouraged to make more space inside ourselves for Jesus and for others who need us. I want to show you an image and tell you a story that can better explain what this might look like.

This is something known as a “Beggars Bowl” (show the bowl and pass it around—this can be a simple wooden bowl). In some parts of the world, in various religious communities, men and women use these bowls to help provide for their daily needs and to remind themselves to always count on Jesus and to make space for him in their lives.

Each day they take their empty bowl out to their community and ask people to fill it with food or small donations to help them survive.

When they have received just enough for what they need for that day, not one bit more, they return home and make use of everything they have been given. They then go out again with an empty bowl the next day.

We sometimes fill our lives, our bowls, so full that we forget to rely on Jesus. We begin to only count on ourselves. Our bowls can get so full with things to do and accomplish each day that we might find it hard to pray and have a short conversation with Jesus, or each other. We might even miss the people or situations that need our attention because we are too “full” already.

Our challenge is to empty our bowls a bit, so we don't forget about the things that are most important. Lent is a reminder for us to do just that. Lent says: stop, remember, make some space!

### Activity:

You will each be given a small bowl and a slip of paper. Take a few minutes with your family and decide two ways you can make more space for Jesus, or someone who needs you, in your life this Lenten season. Some suggestions: say a quick prayer in the car each morning as you drive to school, spend time visiting someone you know who is lonely, spend five minutes each day telling each other about your day with no interruptions, etc.

Then, begin to decorate your Beggars Bowl/Blessing Bowl. These are meant to be simple. They will be perfect to display in your home as a reminder to find ways to focus on Jesus and others this Lent. Each week, see if you can add a couple of intentional prayers, sacrifices, or acts of service for others.

### QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS AS YOU CREATE YOUR BEGGARS BOWL:

- +What are some ways our family can bless others this Lent?
- +What are some ways we can focus more on time with Jesus this Lent?
- +Why are we called to participate in this season of Lent each year?

Give each family a sticker/stamp for their Camino Card.

# CLOSING PRAYER EXPERIENCE

## PREPARATION:

- + Gather supplies and make a simple scene with a cross in the front or center of the room.

## SUPPLY LIST:

- +Cross or Crucifix
- +Basket
- +Paper hearts
- +Pens or sharpies
- +Tape

Today shared some spiritual practices that are always available to us, but are especially encouraged during the Lenten season. You also leave with some Lenten reminders and images to use in your home. We used the idea of a Camino, a journey, as we made stops along the way. Every Camino has a destination. Pilgrims walk to a certain ending. Our journey through Lent leads us to the Cross. As Christians this is our destination, where we experience the complete and total love Jesus has for us.

In front we have a large cross (*or a basket in front of a smaller cross*). As you approach the cross you will see cut-out hearts, pens, and tape. Write your name on a heart and attach it to the cross, or add it to the bowl in front of the cross.

As you put your name on the cross I invite you to quietly say “thank you” to Jesus for his great love and sacrifice for each and every one of us and then return to your seat. (*Make sure to have a person or two up front to help with this*). If possible, play reflective music as families come forward.

*As families are back in their seats:*

Lent brings us to the Cross, but that is not the end of the story. Three days later Jesus tells us pilgrims that he has a more perfect destination for us—a life with him forever. Jesus is raised from the dead as we celebrate him in the Easter miracle and he points us to our life in heaven where we will be forever, with him.

We encourage you to continue on your Camino this Lent, using the practices we shared today. These will help prepare you to more fully celebrate the Easter miracle!

We are so glad you joined us today! We hope this time together has been meaningful for you as a family.

## CLOSING PRAYER:

*To be read by a family*

Jesus, your Camino led you to the Cross. Help us to never forget your incredible sacrifice and the great gift you gave to us. May we continue to take one step forward and closer to you.

Amen.

Have a blessed Lent! On your way out, exchange your completed cards for a small gift, snack, etc.

# SAMPLE SCHEDULE

## ONE STEP FORWARD

### SAMPLE SCHEDULE AND TIME FRAME:

\*Please Note: We recommend doing four stations. These stations will last ten minutes each. Approximately ten families at a station, at a time. If you have a very large group, consider having two groups per station, or offering this event twice.

6:30pm:	Event Begins
6:30pm-6:35pm:	Families check-in, fellowship, and hospitality
6:35pm:	<b>Opening</b> - All families sit in chairs in the center of the room for a short introduction. Divide the group into groups of ten families (either by last name, location in the room, etc.). This will depend on how many stations you choose to do and how many families you have in attendance. One family will read the opening prayer, then everyone will move to their station.
6:45pm:	Move to first station
6:50pm:	<b>Stations Begin</b>
6:50-7:00pm:	Station #1 Families move to next station
7:05-7:15pm:	Station #2 Families move to next station
7:20-7:30pm:	Station #3 Families move to next station
7:35-7:45pm:	Station #4 Families move to closing
7:50pm-8:00pm:	<b>Closing</b> - Short closing in the center with a family reading the closing prayer.



## EVENT FLYER + NEWSLETTER/ BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

We have included an editable flyer. The flyer is editable through Canva:

<https://tinyurl.com/3rmxttve>

### ANNOUNCEMENT:

You are invited to “One Step Forward,” a Lenten Family Gathering. Join us in experiencing a simple Camino with stops that include prayer, reflection, crafts, and activities. This event will be engaging, family-friendly, and meaningful. The perfect way to take one step closer to Jesus this Lent. Please invite grandparents, family members, and friends. We don’t want anyone to miss out!

*(Include date, time, location)*





# PHOTOS OF EACH STATION

Photos of sample set-ups for each station for inspiration.



## **PRINTABLES INCLUDED:**

1. Event Flyer
2. Station Names
3. Welcome Sign
4. Camino Card
5. Companion Question Sheet
6. Family Gratitude Journal Cover



**SACRED HEART SCHOOL**

**JOIN US FOR**

# **One Step Forward**

**LENTEN FAMILY GATHERING**

**Friday, March 8  
6:30 - 8:00 PM  
Church Hall**

Join us in experiencing a simple Camino with stops that include prayer, reflection, crafts, and activities. This event will be engaging, family-friendly, and meaningful. The perfect way to take one step closer to Jesus this Lent. Please invite grandparents, family members, and friends. We don't want anyone to miss out!

**BRING YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY!**

**RSVP to Mary Smith by March 1**



# Less is More





# One Step Forward

**LENTEN FAMILY GATHERING**

[illegible]



# Companion Questions

- + My favorite color
- + My favorite place to be
- + Something that makes me happy
- + Something that makes me sad
- + Someone I love to spend time with
- + How I would describe Jesus
- + Something I like about myself
- + Something I wish I could change about myself



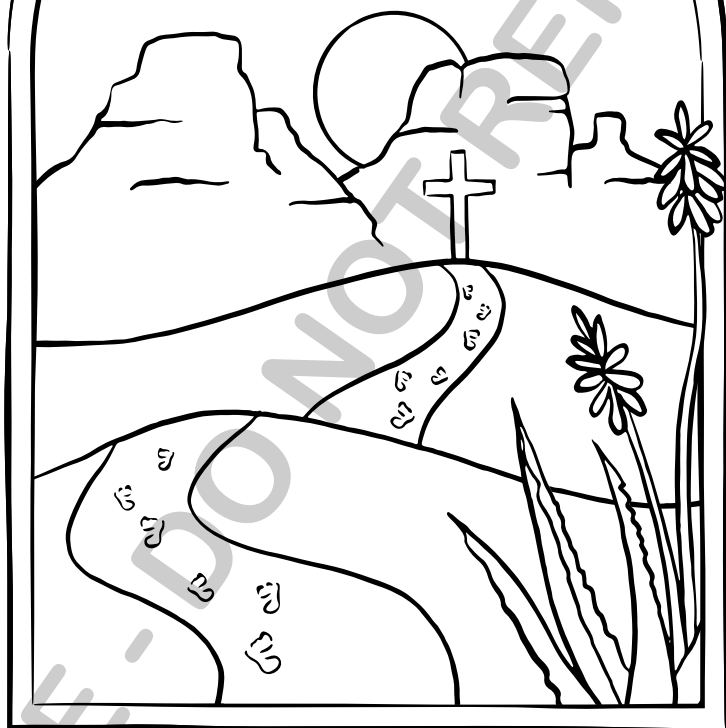
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THE

# FAMILY



Gratitude Journal



**TAKE**