Growing the Church

Pray that missionaries may help the church to grow by bringing God to people who don't know him yet.

Easter is such a wonderful time for the Church! We are celebrating Jesus' rising from the dead. We have so many reasons to be joyful!

At church on Easter the priest will remind you of the promises your parents made for you at your baptism. When we were baptized we became a part of the Body of Christ. As parts of the Body of Christ, we have an important job to do! Jesus wants us to be his body on Earth. We have to be his hands and feet and eyes.

One important job that Jesus wants us to do is to teach others about him. He asks for missionaries to go all over the world to tell people about how Jesus rose from the dead to save us from sin and death. This month Pope Benedict wants us to pray for the missionaries who work to bring God to people who don't know him yet.

Even though we may not be the ones who are traveling the world, we have important missionary work to do here at home. We not only have to pray for the missionaries who are traveling, and we have to live our lives as good examples of how Christians should act. If people who don't know God see that Christians are happy, kind, and joyful, maybe they will want to be Christians too.

This month we have a lot of praying to do! Pray for the missionaries as they do their important work. Pray for the people who don't know God yet, that they might learn about him and become Christians. Pray for yourself, too, that you might show others what being a Christian is all about.

Think about it!

- What does the priest remind us at church on Easter?
- What do missionaries do?
- What do you need to do to be a good example of a Christian?

Jelly Bean Prayer

Do you like jelly beans? We see a lot of jelly beans this time of year. Here is an activity you can do as a family, either for the rest of Lent, or for the Easter season (until the Ascension).

Take a glass jar and tape a copy of the **Jelly Bean Prayer** (below) on the jar. Every day you can earn a jelly bean for any of the colors/tasks you follow through on. You can't earn the white jelly beans, though - they represent the Grace of Christ, which he gives us freely!

The Jelly Bean Prayer

Red is for the Blood Christ gave.

Green is for grass he made.

Yellow is for God's light so bright.

Orange is for the edge of night.

Black is for the sins we made.

White is for the grace he gave.

Purple is for his hour of sorrow.

Pink is for a new tomorrow.

Behaviors and tasks to earn jelly beans:

Red jelly beans are earned by making sacrifices. Give something up today that you would've done, like eating candy or playing video games.

Green jelly beans are earned by doing good deeds. Do something **good for someone else!**

Yellow jelly beans **are** earned by sharing God's light through kindness to others.

Orange jelly beans are earned by paying attention and doing a good job while saying your prayers.

Black jelly beans are earned by saying a prayer for your parish priest. (If you don't like black jelly beans, use blue instead)

White jelly beans can't be earned! The Grace of Christ fills up what we are missing - so fill up your jelly bean jar with them at the end of this project.

Purple jelly beans are earned by apologizing to anyone you hurt with your words or actions today.

Pink jelly beans are earned by forgiving others who apologize to you for their hurtful behavior.