

Activities for "Rest for the weary" - Matthew 11:25-30 (5th July)

These activities are linked with the readings and sermon that the adults are hearing and may be more appropriate for older children.

We all have 'burdens' we are carrying - things we worry about such as illness, problems with relationships, doubts, things we feel bad about, hurts we need to forgive. Jesus invites us to give him our burdens, and he will give us rest.

Race with a burden

Set up an obstacle course with things to climb over, run round, crawl under, jump over etc. Have a go at doing the course. Then put on a backpack and add weights such as heavy books or tins. Do the course again. Repeat with more weights. How does it feel? Is it harder? Now take off the backpack. Hand the burden over to someone else. How does that feel? Jesus offers us rest when we are weary.

Holding weights

Hold a glass of water with your arm out at right angles. Does it feel heavy? Try and hold it for 1 minute, 5 minutes. Does it feel heavier now? What about if you could put it down and rest for a while, then carry on when you feel refreshed? Jesus offers us rest from our burdens. We can give them to him.

Stone in water prayer

Find a stone and carry it around with you for a while. This stone could represent something that is a burden to you. It might be something you are anxious about, something that weighs you down. Fill a bowl or bucket with water. Drop your stone into the water and as you do so, pray for Jesus to take the burden from you or help you to bear it more easily. Enjoy being free from your stone.

Doing exercises

Do some aerobic exercises such as press up, sit ups, jumping jacks, or running on the spot. Do you feel tired after all that exercise? Cool down with some gentler exercises or stretches and enjoy resting. Sometimes we rush around too much. It's good to have times of rest too. Jesus promises rest for the weary.

Rest in God's presence

Grab a cushion or pillow and lie down on the ground. Breathe slowly and deeply. Relax your muscles. Focus on God, who loves you, and wants to give you rest. You could repeat a phrase such as 'I will give you rest' or 'Be still and know that I am God'. Enjoy relaxing in God's presence. Listen to what God is saying to you.