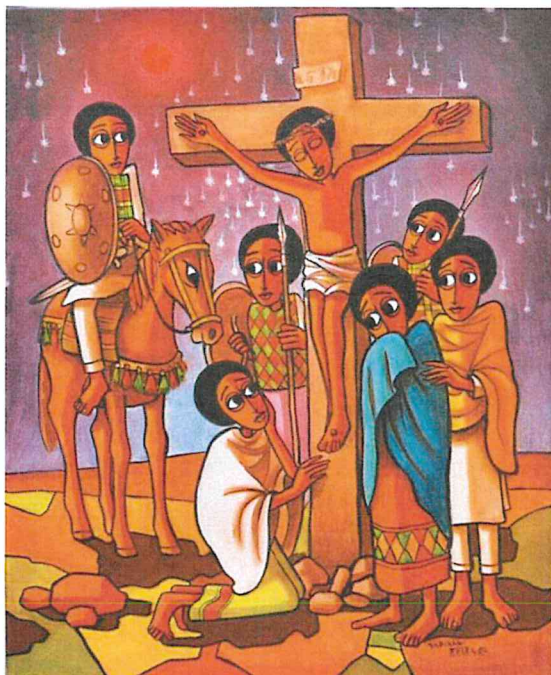


Journey Into Easter With Children – Good Friday

Reflections through art on the events of Holy Week.

The Painting – *The Cross* by Nebiyu Assefa *(Large version of picture can be downloaded)*



The Story: Even though he was guilty of no crime, Jesus was hung on a cruel cross by his enemies. At the moment that he died the sun became dark, the earth shook violently and rocks all around, split apart. The centurion and those with him who were keeping watch, were terrified. They knew for certain now that they had witnessed before their own eyes, the death of the Son of God.

As evening approached a man called Joseph from Arimathea, a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked if he could take Jesus' body away and put him in a tomb nearby, which was cut out of the rock. Pilate gave his permission. Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus carefully in linen, laid him in the tomb and rolled a huge stone across the entrance.

Reflect: The eyes in Nebiyu's paintings are always what we notice first. The only time that Jesus' eyes are shown closed is in this picture. He has died. The sun has stopped shining. The world is a dark place. There are 6 other characters in this picture. Choose three of them. If you were to draw a thought bubble for each of these, what would you write inside?

Create: Making Easter gardens is a tradition all over the world. They can be created using any materials that are at hand. If you are going outside today, collect some natural bits and pieces from the ground. Perhaps you can make a cross from two sticks.

On Good Friday the garden will be quite plain but on Easter Day it will be transformed!

Pray: Thank you Lord Jesus
that on the very first Good Friday,
you stretched out your arms
on the cross
and embraced the whole world in love.
Amen

