THIS WEEK'S "AT HOME" DEVOTIONAL

The King Who Stays on the Cross: Luke 23:33–43 (CEB)

GATHERING - Light a candle and pause before the cross. Remember that Jesus reveals God's power through forgiving, self-giving love.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK - *Merciful King, you chose love instead of saving yourself. Teach us to recognize true power in forgiveness, compassion, and sacrifice. Remember those who feel forgotten, soften our hearts toward those who hurt us, and help us trust the grace you offer from the cross. Amen.*

CARING CONVERSATION - Take a few moments to check in with one another. Share your highs & lows.

- What is one thing that brought you joy this week?
- When have you received mercy or forgiveness from someone?

THINKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING WEEK'S SCRIPTURE - The soldiers mock Jesus as a powerless king because he will not save himself. Yet from the cross, Jesus forgives those who crucify him and promises paradise to the dying man beside him. His kingship is revealed through mercy, reconciliation, and love that refuses to abandon us.

- Why do you think Jesus chose to remain on the cross?
- What does this story teach us about power?
- Why might the dying man's request matter to Jesus?
- Where are you being invited to practice forgiveness or mercy?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - As you read this week, ask: What kind of King does Jesus reveal himself to be?

DAY	READING	THEME
Sun	Isaiah 65:17–25	*God's New Creation*
Mon	Jeremiah 23:1–6	*The Righteous King*
Tues	Psalm 72:1–7	*A King of Justice*
Wed	Luke 23:26–34	*Father, Forgive Them*
Thur	Luke 23:35–43	*Remember Me*
Fri	Colossians 1:11–20	*Peace Through the Cross*
Sat	Philippians 2:5–11	*The Self-Giving King*
Sun	Luke 23:33–43	*The King Who Stays*

If your household includes children, feel free to use a children's Bible or summarize the readings in simple language.

DEVOTIONAL - "Save yourself." The soldiers' taunt expresses the world's idea of power: protect yourself, prove your strength, and escape suffering. Jesus does not come down. He stays on the cross.

Jesus is not doing nothing. He is forgiving those who crucify him. When the man beside him asks to be remembered, Jesus promises him paradise that very day. Even while dying, Jesus is opening the way to life.

Jeremiah promises a righteous king who will act with justice. Colossians declares that Christ reconciles all things and makes peace through the blood of the cross. Those promises meet at Calvary, where Jesus uses his power not for himself but to redeem others.

The cross shows us what kind of King Jesus is. His kingdom is built through mercy, forgiveness, and self-giving love. We follow our King whenever we refuse revenge, remember someone the world overlooks, and offer grace where condemnation would be easier.

PRAY TOGETHER - Invite each person to name someone who needs mercy, forgiveness, or hope. Then pray together:

Jesus our King, thank you for staying on the cross and opening paradise to sinners. Forgive us when we use power to protect ourselves or diminish others. Teach us to forgive, to remember those who are forgotten, and to offer grace freely. Shape our lives by your self-giving love. Amen.

MEALTIME PRAYER - *Jesus our King, thank you for this food and for the mercy that welcomes us to your table. Help us share forgiveness, compassion, and hope with everyone we meet. Amen.*

SERVICE CHALLENGE - This is one way we reflect Christ's kingdom in the world.
Choose one act of mercy this week. Forgive a small offense, encourage someone who feels forgotten, or reach out to a person carrying shame. Let your actions show the self-giving love of Jesus.

CLOSING & BLESSING
Extinguish your candle as a reminder that the love revealed on the cross continues to shine through mercy and forgiveness.

With permission, make the sign of the cross on one another's hands or foreheads and say: **"Follow the King who stays. Receive his mercy. And carry his forgiving love into the world."**