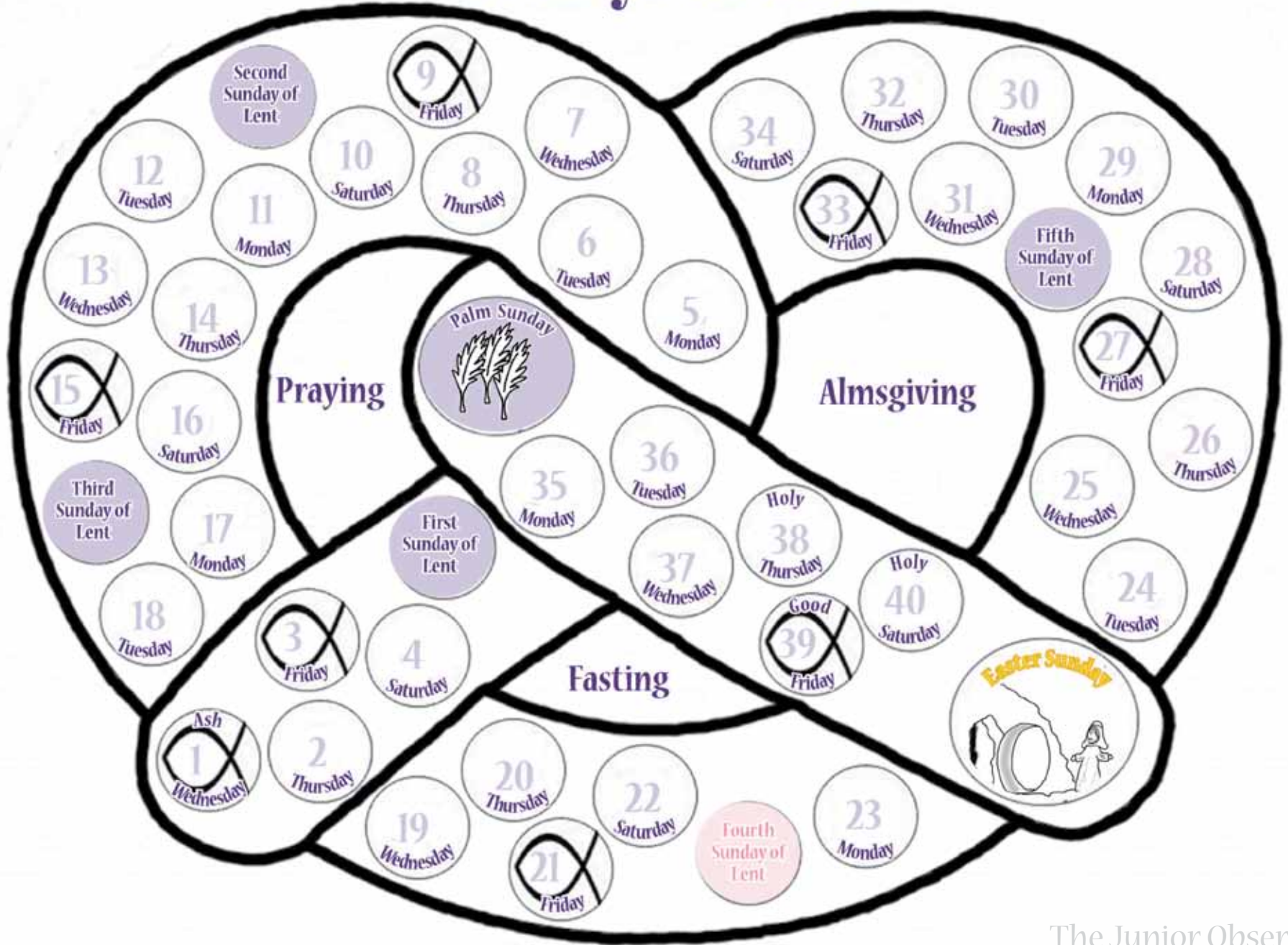


# 40 Days of Lent



This Lent calendar is meant to help children count the days until Easter.

Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays are marked with a fish to remind everyone about fasting and abstinence on those days.

With the shape of a pretzel, it ties into a traditional Lent food.

Greg Dues, in his book "Catholic Customs and Traditions," writes, "These little breads were shaped in the form of arms crossed in prayer and were called *bracellae* (Latin, 'little arms'). Among the Germans the word became 'bretzel.'"

The Sundays are marked by colors and have no numbers to help children understand they are not counted in Lent's 40 days.

You can cross off the days with a crayon or marker. You can buy Easter stickets and cover each day when it's over.

The genuinely crafty may want to use the pretzel as a top sheet and gently cut each day so it can be lifted to reveal a prayer, an item to give up (fasting) or someone to help (almsgiving) on that day. If you do that, you may want to back it on thin cardboard.

— The Junior Observer, 2018