

Holy Week Family Resources

Dear Families,

As we enter into Holy Week, I encourage you to make a plan, simple or not, to celebrate the three high holy days of our year, also known as the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter). If you wish to do something daily this week, that's entirely possible (and I have a link for this, too). Tuning into online masses can be spiritually nurturing and instructive, but for children, especially young children, providing opportunities beyond mass to actively participate in the meaning of these high holy days can lay a lasting foundation and deep memories.

Here are a few suggestions for each day that can be done at home (multiple suggestions are included in the hopes that you find something which works for your family – as with all things family, one thing well done is better than too much).

Holy Thursday – ideas...

- 1) Read the story of the Washing of the Feet in a Bible (John 13:1-15) or Children's Bible or use a video clip like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv5ajWNrnt4> (Washing Disciples Feet)
- 2) Before or after dinner use a basin, towels and water and have each member of the family wash another's feet. (I've also experienced a moving hand-washing experience and in this age of handwashing you could demonstrate a soapy, gentle, massaging hand-wash for a family member and then have that person help the next person wash their hands.) Talk about why Jesus washed the feet of his disciples at this important moment.
- 3) Bake or buy a nice loaf of bread to accompany your dinner and add some sparkling cider or apple juice. Read the story of the Last Supper in a Bible (Matthew 26: 17-20, 26-30 or Mark 14:17-26) or Children's Bible (or use a video clip like: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SigoALSS1R8> (Last Supper)).
- 4) Use a plain piece of paper as a placemat and ask all family members to draw or write answers to three questions on their "place mat." If it was your last night, what would you want for dinner? Who would you invite? What would you want to be remembered for or what words of wisdom would you share? Discuss your answers and then ask how Jesus celebrated his last night and why.

Good Friday – ideas...

- 1) If you have a prayer space or religious pieces in your home, you can do a "clearing of the altar" and remove or cover any pictures, crosses, altar spaces or even the table until Easter morning. Simply covering a crucifix in your home can be a visceral experience for kids (and adults) who are familiar with seeing it.
- 2) Read, watch, or using a coloring guide to encounter the story of Jesus's death.

- 3) Pray the “Stations of the Cross” – we will have one or more parish guides coming soon that can be used – viewing the pictures and talking about the journey to the cross can be powerful for kids.
- 4) Consider a “technology darkness” for 24 hours from noon Friday until noon Saturday. Talk about how alienating it feels and what it would be like if we were left “in the dark” and Jesus had not lived and died for us. (Technology darkness feels particularly dark right now so adapt as you wish...)

Saturday– ideas...

Saturday is a day of waiting and it's the perfect day to make an Easter symbol like dyed eggs or an Easter candle.

- 1) Dyeing Easter eggs involves waiting and is, of course, fun preparation for Easter
- 2) Bake “empty tomb cookies” for Easter: <https://faithfulprovisions.com/empty-tomb-cookies-2/>
- 3) Make your own Easter candle! There are simple or more elaborate ways to do this.

How to make a Paschal candle:

<https://www.showerofrosesblog.com/2012/04/creating-our-paschal-candle-easter-2012.html>

How to make an easy Paschal candle:

<http://firstrheralds.com/2014/04/16/super-easy-paschal-candle/>

- 4) Make an Easter card, flower, special treat or special message for neighbors, the elderly, essential employees, healthcare workers, or others.

EASTER:

****Amid the fun of Easter morning, remember to read the resurrection story, too!! (John 20:1-9)

Further details about some of the above ideas can be found here:

https://buildfaith.org/holy-week-at-home-family-practices-for-the-triduum/?fbclid=IwAR2bYYSr8_EkepfNmM9KEEAE3R0EPM9FknTZdl2kVLW91YiCIJa1EUBNNqA

If you want to do something every day of the week during Holy Week, this is an interesting concept for a table centerpiece that changes each day:

https://godspacelight.com/2020/03/27/freerange-friday-holy-week-at-home-praying-with-a-centerpiece/?fbclid=IwAR3n10OOg7-xVnRS773pdfGzCb-0DLb_DPC9nPwt4uu0dhkTgXLoW1tJvTE

Blessings on your family during this holy time. I hope you will share pictures or ideas with me during the week. You can text me a photo at 503-781-4737 or email me at bschaller@sipdx.org. With social distancing we hope to put photos in our bulletin and on our website so that we can still “see” one another. I so appreciate any resources or inspirations that you want to share!