

Holy Week at Home

As Easter approaches, we have the opportunity to share the story of our salvation and Jesus' great love for each one of us. This guide is meant to give you inspiration and ideas to help you celebrate Holy Week with your family!

Please tag @faithandfamilycollective in your photos and videos. We would love to encourage each other and journey through Holy Week together.

- Sunday:* Palm Sunday "Palms"
- Monday:* Creating a Sacred Space
- Tuesday:* The Meaning of Eggs
- Wednesday:* Kindness in Action
- Thursday:* Family Foot Washing
- Friday:* Stations of the Cross
- Saturday:* Trust Walk
- Sunday:* Resurrection Garden

PALM SUNDAY

Hands: Palm Sunday "Palms"



Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday as Jesus enters Jerusalem with His friends to celebrate Passover, a Jewish holiday. As He arrives, palm branches are placed in His path and He is welcomed by many.

Palm branches are sacramentals, a sacred sign that points us toward the death and resurrection of Jesus. Many times palms are displayed in homes tucked behind a crucifix, or woven into crosses themselves. At Palm Sunday liturgies, we begin the Mass processing into the Church with palm branches to commemorate this event.

Ways to celebrate Palm Sunday as a family:

- + Attend Mass together as a family.
- + Go on a walk to look for palm branches (if they grow in your area).
- + Create your own paper palm branches! Trace the outline of your hand on sheets of green construction paper and cut them out. Glue 5-8 of your green palm leaves (your hand cut-outs) onto a popsicle stick, strip of paper, or stick. If you do not have green construction paper you can also use a green crayon to make your own green paper.

MONDAY

Heart: *Creating a Sacred Space*



Creating a sacred space in our homes during Holy Week helps us reflect on the passion and resurrection of Jesus. We can use this space to gather and pray together throughout the week.

Begin by choosing a space in your home. You may decide on an entryway table, kitchen table, nook, coffee table, bedside table, etc. Mark your space by adding a piece of fabric, a table runner, or tablecloth. The color purple is used throughout Lent because it symbolizes Jesus' passion and suffering.

Add a few Lenten images that remind you of Holy Week. Some examples include: rocks, sand, succulents, branches, a candle, and a cross or crucifix. Consider also including your handmade palms from Palm Sunday, a crown of thorns, and a few nails.

Note: On Good Friday cover your prayer space. The Church covers its crosses and sacred images on this day as well.

After your prayer space is completed, pray the following prayer together:

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Prayer

Jesus,

The world seems a little uncertain right now,
but You promise that we are never alone.
Help us to keep our eyes on You, for You have
conquered the world.

Grant us Your peace as we draw closer to
You this week.

Amen.

TUESDAY

Hatch: The Meaning of Eggs



Dyeing and coloring eggs is a common Easter activity. But what you might not know is that there is a deeper meaning to the Easter egg. Eggs are a symbol of renewal and rebirth and are used to tell the story of Jesus' resurrection. The hard shell represents the tomb, and the emerging chick represents Jesus.

Decorate your own Easter eggs and talk about their symbolism with your children. Get creative - there is no "wrong way" to decorate an Easter egg!

Consider using dye, paint, paper, flowers, sparkles, tape, stickers, crayons, or food coloring!

Easter eggs point us to hope and new life. After decorating your eggs, have each family member hold an egg carefully in their hands. Take a moment to pray for someone who needs hope right now, or who is awaiting new life. This might be someone who is pregnant, preparing for Baptism, in need of a new job, experiencing a move, etc.

Jesus, we trust You with our prayers.

WEDNESDAY

Help: *Kindness in Action*



Holy Week reminds us of Jesus' love for us and is an opportunity to share His love with others. Jesus tells us that whenever we do something for someone else, we do that for Him as well.

We all know people who could use our encouragement right now; friends, family members, the elderly, people living in war-torn areas, the lonely, the hungry, etc.

Make a list of those you would like to bless.

Here are some ideas:

- + Make some Easter cards! Use paper, markers, stickers, crayons, pens, etc. When you finish you can put them in the mail or drop them off.
- + Leave a few uplifting messages and drawings with chalk on someone's driveway.
- + Facetime, Skype, or Zoom someone who would appreciate a friendly face and a good conversation.

**"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."
Matthew 25:40**

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HOLY THURSDAY



Held: Family Foot Washing

On Holy Thursday we remember the Last Supper, Jesus' gift of the Eucharist, and the washing of the disciples' feet.

As a family, participate in the following foot washing experience:

Read together: On the night before Jesus died, He gathered His friends for a meal. Before eating, He bent down to wash their feet. At that time, the roads were dusty and dirty, and people walked barefoot or wore open-toed sandals. As a result, everyone's feet were dirty and worn. No one wanted to touch someone else's feet! So when Jesus, their leader and their example, bent down and began washing their dirty feet, what do you think His disciples were thinking?

What do you think He was trying to teach them?

After Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, He said to them:

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." (John 13:34) Jesus wanted them to know that people who follow Him need to love and serve others, which sometimes means doing hard or uncomfortable things. Why is it hard to love each other in our family sometimes? These are the difficult parts of each other that Jesus is asking us to love. These are the "dirty feet."

We are going to have the chance to wash each other's feet right now. Fill up a few large bowls with warm water and grab a couple of towels. Give each family member a chance to wash and dry each other's feet. After everyone's feet are dry, find a place to sit together. Have someone read the following prayer:

Jesus, being family means serving one another. Help us to always follow Your example and to see You in each other. Amen.

To close the evening, have each person make the sign of the cross on each other's clean feet.

GOOD FRIDAY



Human: Stations of the Cross

Good Friday doesn't seem very "good" at all. But as Christians we know the goodness comes from Jesus demonstrating His great love for us. His sacrifice leads to our salvation. The Stations of the Cross is a beautiful way to journey through Jesus' passion and reflect on our own humanity.

This interactive and family-friendly Stations of the Cross is perfect for both children and adults.

Interactive Stations of the Cross for Families

This at-home and hands-on Stations of the Cross is designed to help families connect their daily lives to what happened to Jesus many years ago. We invite your family to enter the Way of the Cross, to walk with Jesus - who never ceases to walk with us. Each station will begin with a short, family-friendly account of what happened on the way to Calvary, followed by a reflective experience, and a prayer to say together.

Get creative: try printing out the stations and putting them around your house or sitting together at a table and passing around a tablet with the stations for each family member to read. The only additional supplies you will need are: a cross, a flower, a candle, markers, paper, and scissors. An image is included after the station if it is needed for the activity. You may choose to pray the stations aloud as a family or individually in silence. Spend as much time as you need.

The cross is very meaningful for all Christians. It tells the story of the love God the Father has for each of us, and the incredible suffering of His Son, Jesus. Take a moment to pass a cross or crucifix around - letting each family member hold it.

We hope this is a meaningful experience for your family this Lent.

**Jesus, remember me when you come
into your kingdom. Luke 23:42**

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STATION 1:

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Jesus was misjudged and accused of crimes He did not commit. Pontius Pilate, a leader at the time, washed his hands of the situation when he had the chance to help Jesus.

REFLECTION:

Take a moment to wash your hands and think of a time when you chose not to help someone when they needed it.

PRAYER:

Jesus, sometimes I look the other way when I have the chance to stand up for someone or something that I know is good and right. Help me to be brave.

STATION 2:

JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

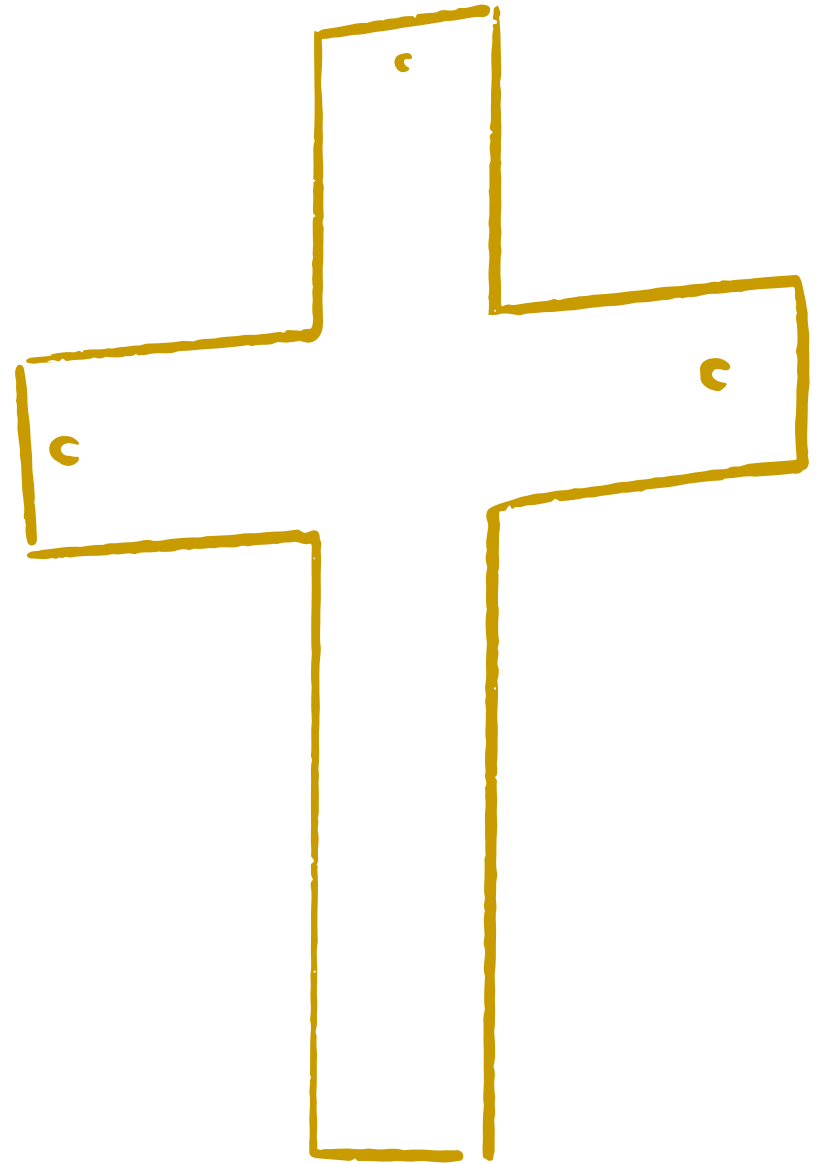
The cross was large and heavy. It was hard for Jesus to carry, but He put it on His back and accepted it out of love for us.

REFLECTION:

Take a moment to each cut out a paper cross that you will use throughout the stations (template provided). Write your name on it, knowing that Jesus suffered and died on a cross for you.

PRAYER:

Jesus, sometimes I complain about things that are hard for me. I want to keep trying even when things are difficult. Help me to be more accepting of my hardships.



STATION 3:

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

The weight of the cross caused Jesus to stumble and fall, but somehow He got up and kept going.

REFLECTION:

Take a marker and write something that you struggle with on your cross. Think of the times you have fallen under the weight of your cross.

Ask Jesus to help you to always get back up.

PRAYER:

Jesus, I find myself falling short sometimes when I make mistakes and poor choices. Help me to be strong and not give up.

STATION 4:

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Carrying the cross through the crowd, Jesus finds a familiar face, His mother's. Mary loved her Son very much and it must have been difficult for her to watch Him suffer.

REFLECTION:

If you have any flowers at home, take one and offer it to an image of Mary. If not, take a moment to draw one for her on your cross. Thank her for being a compassionate Mother and take a moment to pray for your earthly mother.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me to return the love my parents give to me. I know my parents love me very much, but sometimes I get mad at them or disrespect them when they are trying to do what is best for me.



STATION 5:

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

Jesus grew weaker with each step and it became difficult for Him to carry the cross alone. The soldiers pulled a man from the crowd, Simon, who helped Jesus balance the weight of the cross.

REFLECTION:

Take a moment to think of someone in your life that is carrying a heavy cross right now. Write their name on the back of your cross and say a prayer for them. If you feel called, send them a text to tell them you are praying for them.

PRAYER:

Jesus, there are many times I have had the opportunity to help my friends, my neighbors, or my family. Remind me of what it feels like to be Simon and say “yes” when I see someone in need.

STATION 6:

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

A woman named Veronica stepped out of the crowd and used a towel to wipe Jesus' face. That small action meant a lot to Him as He was suffering alone.

REFLECTION:

Think of a time when you served someone in need. Recall how it left an impression on your heart. Draw a heart on your cross as a visual reminder.

PRAYER:

Jesus, my smallest actions; kind words, a smile, waiting my turn, or giving a compliment, can make a big difference. Help me to notice another's needs like Veronica did.

STATION 7:

JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

Jesus fell to the ground again and the weight of the cross crushed His body. For a moment it looked like Jesus would not get up again, but somehow He found the will to carry on.

REFLECTION:

Tear a tiny piece off the top of your cross. Each time we fall because of sin we separate ourselves from God's plan for us. We can ask Him to forgive us and put us back together. Share with each other one thing you each need His forgiveness for right now.

PRAYER:

Jesus, I, too have things that I struggle with and I can become frustrated and overwhelmed. There are things I don't like about myself that really get me down. Help me to see myself as You see me.

STATION 8:

JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Some of Jesus' faithful friends were standing along the path as He walked by. Even when others turned their backs on Him these women continued to believe in Him.

REFLECTION:

Who is someone that believes in you? Say their name out loud and one thing you love about them.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me to be a loyal friend. To believe the best about others and to stick up for them when I have the chance.

STATION 9:

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Jesus fell again and the soldiers did nothing to help Him get up. They yelled louder at Him, but still Jesus never got upset, instead He chose to forgive them.

REFLECTION:

Take a moment and make the Sign of the Cross over yourself. This small action reminds us of how much Jesus loves and forgives us.

PRAYER:

Jesus, it must have been so difficult for you to forgive the people who hurt You. Sometimes it is so hard for me to forgive others, please help me to love like You.

STATION 10:

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES

The soldiers stripped Jesus of His clothes and made Him stand in front of the crowd humiliated and exhausted. He had nothing left, absolutely nothing.

REFLECTION:

We all know what it feels like to be embarrassed and humiliated by others, but we are known by a God who created us in His own image. Take a moment and say one positive thing about each member in your family. This is how our God sees us.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me to be someone who uses words that make people feel good about themselves.

STATION 11:

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

The soldiers hammered nails into Jesus' hands and feet and then they lifted the cross and He hung there in so much pain.

REFLECTION:

Draw three nail marks on your cross in the places Jesus was nailed to the cross and pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us, the Our Father.

PRAYER:

Jesus, there are so many people throughout our world who are barely hanging on. There are many who are sick, hungry, poor, alone, discriminated against, experiencing natural disasters, or homeless.

Please be with everyone who is in pain today.

STATION 12:

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

When Jesus took His last breath, the sky grew dark and the ground around Him began to shake. The soldiers and crowd realized in that moment that Jesus was innocent.

REFLECTION:

Place each of your paper crosses by a crucifix or cross in your home and kneel for a moment of silent prayer.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me to always believe in You. Let nothing ever shake my faith in You.



STATION 13:

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Jesus' broken body was taken down from the cross and laid in the arms of His loving mother, the same arms that held Him as a baby at His birth.

REFLECTION:

Hold your cross over your heart for a moment as you reflect on the image of the Pietà. Hold the death of Jesus in your heart as Mary held Him in her arms.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help me to understand the great love You have for me. I trust that You hold me in the palm of Your hand.



STATION 14:

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

As Jesus' body lay in the tomb it was very hard for His friends and family to have hope. It must have seemed like the end for them.

REFLECTION:

Light a candle and sit in silence for a moment thinking about Jesus' body laying alone in the tomb.

PRAYER:

Jesus, You are my hope. I know that the tomb was not the end. You rose from the dead so that I could have new life. You are my salvation!



CLOSING

Pass the cross or crucifix around again and have each person say a word that comes to mind as they hold it.

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HOLY SATURDAY

Hope: Trust Walk



Holy Saturday marks the day that Jesus' body lay in the tomb. The world was dark without Jesus. Talk with your children about what life would be like without our faith.

Use scarves or bandanas to make blindfolds and have each family member put one on. Sit in the darkness for a few minutes. This is what life looks like without our faith to guide us. Thankfully Jesus conquered the darkness when He rose from the dead. Jesus is our lantern - He lights the way for our choices and informs how we live our lives.

Use the blindfolds to go on a simple trust walk. Our faith requires us to trust in Jesus who we cannot physically see everyday. Have your family member's pair up. One person gets a blindfold and the other will be the guide. Have the "guides" gently lead their partner around your home, yard, etc., telling them when to step, turn, or stop.

After everyone gets a turn, discuss what that experience was like and how it is similar to how we must trust in Jesus who is always trying to lead us closer to Him.

EASTER SUNDAY

He is Risen: Resurrection Garden



Easter is the holiest day of the year! We celebrate Jesus rising from the dead. This miracle proved that Jesus was God.
He is the Savior of the world!

Some ideas for celebrating this beautiful day at home:

- + Make your prayer space reflect the Easter miracle by adding a white cloth, flowers, eggs, signs of spring and new life, etc.
- + We are an Alleluia people. Draw and color a sign that says Alleluia and add it to your prayer space.
- + Attend Mass together as a family.
- + Plant a Resurrection Garden! Use a large pot or a dirt area to plant something. Use sticks to make a cross and tie with a white ribbon to stick in the dirt. Add a small pot (or cup) and lay it sideways with the hole open to look like the tomb! Then, add a big rock next to it. This small resurrection garden tells the Easter story - Jesus conquered the cross, rose from the dead, and brought us new life. Watch in the weeks to come as this garden comes to life!

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If you have enjoyed this Guide to Holy Week, check us out! Our mission at Faith + Family Collective is to provide resources to help families share faith in their homes in simple and meaningful ways.

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