

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE RCIA

HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: INTRODUCTION

Celebrating Holy Week With My Family by Rita Burns Senseman

Introduction

During Holy Week the Church remembers and celebrates the final days of Jesus' life and his resurrection. Use this activity page as a guide through Holy Week.

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Holy Week begins with the celebration of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, when we recall Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. The palms used at Mass today are a reminder of how the people waved palms and happily welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. Keep your palms visible throughout this Holy Week. Many Catholic families find a place to display them all year; place them behind a crucifix or a picture frame in your home. Or, make a cross from your palm branches and keep it on your bedside table. Search the internet to find directions for making palm crosses.



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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: MONDAY

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Monday of Holy Week

The Gospel reading today is about a dinner Jesus has with his friends. When you read the story, notice who is at the dinner and what happens with the oil. Before your dinner, pour some vegetable oil into a clear glass bowl and set it on the table. Then, at dinnertime (or at another time) read from John's Gospel, John 12:1-11.

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.



During dinnertime, talk about these questions:

- Why is Lazarus such an important character in this story?
- Why did Mary anoint Jesus' feet?
- Imagine how Jesus must have felt when Mary poured the oil on him. How would you describe Jesus' reaction?
- What was the meaning of the oil?
- For those who are being baptized and/or confirmed, you will be anointed with oil at the Easter Vigil. What is the meaning of your anointing? How does it connect you to Jesus?

After dinner, leave the bowl of oil on the table.

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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: TUESDAY

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Tuesday of Holy Week

Oil again! During Holy Week (usually on Holy Thursday morning, but sometimes on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of Holy Week) the bishop blesses the oils that are used in the celebration of the Sacraments in parishes throughout the diocese. This Holy Week liturgy in which the bishop blesses the oils is called the Chrism Mass. That's because the Oil of Chrism is the most sacred of the three oils. Sacred Chrism is the oil that will be used on Holy Saturday

night (Easter Vigil) in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

Also at the Chrism Mass, priests of the diocese renew the promises they made at their ordination. Through Baptism we share in the priesthood of the faithful. We are anointed with the Chrism of Salvation and joined to Christ who is Priest, Prophet and King.

Together, as a family, do the Priest, Prophet, and King activity.

PPK = PRIEST, PROPHET, KING

Look up these Scripture verses that make a reference to the ministry of priest, prophet, or king. Write each Scripture verse under the correct heading P= Priest, P= Prophet, K= King. Describe how you see Jesus as a priest, prophet, and king. Then, in the bottom section, give examples of what YOU, as a baptized Christian, will do to share in each of Jesus' ministries.

Hebrews 4:14-15 Mark 6:1-4 1 Peter 2:4-5

	P(riest)	P(rophet)	K(ing)
SCRIPTURE			
EXAMPLES			

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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: WEDNESDAY

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Wednesday of Holy Week

At Mass today, we hear the story of Judas Iscariot, the Apostle who handed Jesus over to his death. The Apostles were Jesus' very good friends, so this was a very big betrayal.

Before reading the story of Judas and Jesus, talk about these questions with your family:

- Have you ever been betrayed by a friend?
- What happened?
- How did you feel?
- Were you able to forgive your friend?

Light a candle. Read Matthew 26:14-25. Sit silently for 3-4 minutes to think about the story.

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What will you give me if I betray him to you?' They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' He said, 'Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, "The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."' So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.' And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, 'Surely not I, Lord?' He answered, 'The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son



of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.'

Now, as a family talk about these questions:

- What does it mean that Judas betrayed Jesus?
- Why did he do it?
- The Passover meal that is described in the story is the Last Supper. The twelve Apostles were with Jesus. What do you think it was like when Jesus said that one of them would betray him?
- Do you think Jesus forgave Judas? Why or why not?

Close with this prayer: *Jesus, you are our brother and friend. Thank you for giving your life to save us. Help us to be good and loyal friends to all those around us. We ask this in your name, for you live and reign forever and ever. Amen.*

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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: HOLY THURSDAY

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Triduum: Holy Thursday of the Lord's Supper

Lent is over! Holy Thursday evening is the beginning of the Easter Triduum. Triduum means three days. The Triduum is the three-day festival of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection. For three days we celebrate the Paschal Mystery. We celebrate Jesus' dying and rising. The Easter Triduum is the high point of the Church year.

The Sacred Triduum begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening. The single most important thing you can do today is go Mass. It's a marvelous celebration. Don't miss it!

In the Gospel today, we hear the story of Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples. Imagine this scene in the Last Supper from the Gospel of John (John 13:2-8):

And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!'



As a family, discuss the following:

- Imagine Jesus washing your feet.
- How would you respond?
- What would you say to Jesus?

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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: GOOD FRIDAY

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Triduum:

Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)

Friday is the second day of the three-day feast. This is the day we commemorate Jesus' dying on the Cross. It is a day of fasting and abstinence. There is no Mass today, because in the Mass we celebrate Resurrection. At today's liturgy we listen to the story of Jesus' Passion and Death. We also are invited to come forward and adore, or venerate, the cross on Good Friday. To adore, or to venerate, means to show respect. Many people will approach the cross and touch it or kiss it.

If your family owns a cross or a crucifix, display it on the kitchen table today. If possible, put a red cloth underneath it. Why is red the liturgical color today?

Go to the Good Friday liturgy being held at your parish. It is often scheduled at 3 PM, the hour that Jesus died.



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HOLY WEEK RESOURCE: HOLY SATURDAY

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Triduum:

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

This is the third and biggest day of the Triduum. This is the holy night that Christ rose from the dead. Tonight we wait in vigil for Christ's Resurrection and we celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. This is the night that the elect will be baptized in holy water and so be united with Christ in his Death and Resurrection. Those to be confirmed will be anointed with Sacred Chrism and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And all those initiated, along with the faithful, will receive Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

During the day leading up to the celebration of the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, those receiving the Sacraments are encouraged to pray, reflect, and fast, if possible. Here are some suggestions for doing so:

- Celebrate the Preparation Rites, if your parish observes these Holy Saturday rituals.
- Take a nap so you are well rested for tonight. It's a long, but beautiful, night.
- Read the Apostles' Creed. This prayer is the basis for the profession of faith that the baptized will make tonight.
- Fill a big, clear glass bowl with water. Invite a family member to say this part of the prayer from the Prayer over the Water at the Easter Vigil (see RCIA 222A):
*In baptism we use your gift of water,
which you have made a rich symbol of the grace
you give us in this sacrament.*
- Think about these questions.
 - How is the symbol of water different for you now that you have long been preparing for the Sacraments?
 - On this Holy Saturday, what does the water mean for your family?



- At the Vigil, the Church sings a Litany of the Saints. Talk about the Saints that are most meaningful to your family, especially those whose names you might have chosen for Confirmation.
- Abstain from meat today.
- Maintain a fast that is appropriate for your family.
- Take some time to get your clothes and other belongings ready for Mass tonight.
- Take some quiet time to pray alone. Then, meet together as a family and pray the Lord's Prayer or pray the following:

*Loving God, source of all life and goodness,
you have called us to the Sacraments.*

*As this holy night approaches
grant us light and strength to follow Christ
and follow in the ways of your Church.*

May we be open to the fullness of your Spirit.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.