

Living the Easter Season

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The Resurrection of Jesus is such overwhelmingly Good News that a single day is not enough to celebrate it. The Lord's Resurrection is meant to be celebrated intensely for the whole week following Easter (known as the *Octave*), the whole liturgical *Season of Easter* (lasting until Pentecost, this year May 28th), and every *Sunday* thereafter (each as a mini-Easter).

While Lenten observances get a lot of attention, they are means for preparing us to fittingly celebrate the Easter Season, which also deserves our mindfulness. We continue to embrace Lent's call to prayerful reflection and generous action, but in a new context, the *Easter* context. We contemplate the saving love of the Father. We participate in the new life made possible by Jesus' victory on the Cross. And we invite the Holy Spirit to come and overflow our hearts with bold energy for witnessing to the Gospel!

Perhaps you've heard the phrase, "We are an Easter people." Good Friday was not the end. The "Season" in which we live. . . waiting for Jesus' second coming. . . is *Easter*. . . or perhaps, more fittingly, *Pentecost*. Ponder that. Celebrate that...and testify to it! This resource offers a menu of ideas for how to do that. Choose a few that resonate with you and your family, and let Easter Sunday joy spill over into your living the *Easter Season*!

Living the Easter Octave: April 9-16

- **Create and listen to an Easter play-list** of joyful music throughout the week – maybe the Alleluia's are sung out-loud, or maybe it's just music that makes your heart sing "Alleluia!"
- **Visuals:** keep up the Easter décor, spring table linens, colorful eggs, candles, fresh flowers. Put up your favorite image of the Risen Jesus or create an [empty tomb scene](#).
- **Proclaim Easter joy to your neighbors** with a symbol in your front window/door, yard or driveway.



- Make a point of **having some special food each day**: a special dinner each night, some extra baking, Easter candy. Or, since Jesus rose in the *morning*, have an octave of your family's favorite breakfasts!
- **Read a different post-Resurrection account** at a mealtime or before bed, reflecting on it for that day.
- **Pray a Glorious Mystery of the Rosary** daily, or start **praying the Regina Caeli** (the Easter form of the Angelus) at noon every day. (Phone alarms are great for this!)
- Pastors, liturgists, and others at the parish put in a lot of extra time and loving effort during Holy Week and Easter. **Send them some sign of your appreciation.**



Divine Mercy Sunday: April 16

- **Read about this day and St. Faustina**, the nun to whom Jesus revealed his mercy in a special way. Here's a [video for kids](#).
- **Offer Sunday Mass** for: those in special need of God's mercy, and to *know your own need* for God's saving mercy and *experience* receiving it.
- Learn about and **pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet**, the [novena](#) the nine days leading up to this day, or simply pray throughout the day or with grace before meals: "Jesus, I trust in you."
- **Place an image of Divine Mercy** (as Jesus appeared to St. Faustina) in a prominent place.
- If able, **pray before Jesus in the Tabernacle**. With a grateful heart, rest in Jesus' merciful love and forgiveness for you, personally. Ask him for the grace to show mercy to others.

The Regina Caeli

Queen of Heaven, rejoice,
 alleluia.
 For He whom you did merit to bear,
 alleluia.
 Has risen, as he said,
 alleluia.
 Pray for us to God,
 alleluia.
 Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary,
 alleluia.
 For the Lord has truly risen,
 alleluia.

Let us pray:
*O God, who gave joy to the world
 through the resurrection of Thy Son,
 our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we be-
 seech Thee, that through the inter-
 cession of the Virgin Mary, His
 Mother, we may obtain the joys of
 everlasting life. Through the same
 Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Living the rest of the Season mindfully: April 17 – May 28



- **Plant something in Easter hope** – your flowerbed, vegetable garden, or potted plants – reflecting on the new life and beauty Christ offers.
- As a family, reflect on and choose **which elements of your Lenten prayer and almsgiving you'll continue**. How might they be different to reflect the joy of the Season?
 - Little kids love those Easter egg hunts. With plastic eggs and non-candy snacks (Goldfish crackers work great!), why not have **multiple egg hunts throughout the Season!**
 - **Journal about your own “resurrection” experiences**, times you were “brought back to life” or renewed in notable ways. Spend time thanking and praising God. Share with someone.
 - **Choose an Easter-themed spirituality book** to read this season. Here are some [possibilities](#).
 - **Start every prayer** this Season with an expression of **praise or thanks to God!**
 - **Our daily challenges/sorrows** don't all go away this Season. As they come, imagine the power of the Resurrection moment. **Pray: “O Risen Jesus, I [surrender](#) myself to you. Take care of everything.”**
- **Make each Sunday of the Easter Season celebratory** with Mass, a special meal, and some family reflection/prayer. (Here are some [faith conversation/prayer starters](#) based on each Sunday's Gospel reading.) Schedule fun family re-creation: games in the yard, a trip to the nursery to buy garden plants, a picnic, a hike, etc.
- **Keep a “Joy Board”** – where family members write things/people/events/truths that give them joy. **Choose someone for each week of the Easter season with whom you will share Easter joy:** preparing a meal, a visit, a call, sending flowers or a note/text/email, etc.
- Traditionally, **many receive Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation** in this Season. **Accompany them** with: prayer, a card/gift, a call, a subscription to a resource that will bless them in an ongoing way, etc.



The Ascension of Our Lord: May 21

- Participate in **Sunday Mass**. Read the Scriptural account of the Ascension ([Acts 1:1-11](#)).
- Weather permitting, **lie on your back and look up at the sky**. Reflect on what it was like for Jesus' friends to watch him go up into heaven.
- This feast reminds us of our **belief in the resurrection of our own bodies** at the end of time. Do something intentional to **care for your body**: a walk or workout, a healthy snack, a nap, a bath.
- In Jesus' absence, his friends hid in fear. **Plan to give someone the comfort of your presence** this week.



Pentecost Sunday: May 28

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you participate in **Sunday Mass** with special joy and vigor. **Read the Scriptural account of Pentecost** ([Acts 2](#)).
- **Learn more about the Holy Spirit.** Here are some resources: Simply Catholic [articles](#), Ascension Press [videos/articles](#), [Wild Goose](#) video series, articles helping parents [explain](#) the Holy Spirit to kids and [celebrate](#) Pentecost at home (from *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*), fun 3 minute [video](#) for kids.
- **Pray a [novena leading up to Pentecost](#).** (For most dioceses in the U.S., the celebration of the Ascension has shifted to the Sunday before Pentecost. Previously it was *9 days* before Pentecost – *the first novena!* – a time of prayerful waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.) Another Pentecost [novena](#).
- As a family, **design a symbol for each of the 7 gifts or the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit**, and write a practical way to live it. Place the images in key places in your house. Explore what [charisms of the Holy Spirit](#) you've been given to serve others. Here's a [video](#) explaining gifts, fruits, and charisms.
- **Print a copy of the [Veni Sancte Spiritus](#)**, an ancient prayer to the Holy Spirit. As a family, circle all the titles for the Holy Spirit. Underline all the actions we ask of the Spirit. Talk about how/when you need this help of the Holy Spirit as a family. Pray the prayer together.
- Listen to this Pentecost [playlist](#) of songs.
- **Ask for and look for opportunities to share faith in Jesus with people in your life.** How might you accompany and witness to others on their faith journey? Invite the Holy Spirit to work in and through you—and in the hearts of those you're walking alongside. Pentecost shows that we have no reason to be afraid. God's Spirit of gentleness and boldness, wisdom and love is with us!



*He is risen!
Alleluia!*

