



Prayers, Readings and Ideas for celebrating the Easter Triduum at home

For parishioners who are isolated or
cocooned at home during Holy Week

Making an Act of Spiritual Communion

When following mass on TV you can ask God to enter into your heart truly receiving the same graces as when physically receiving the sacrament by making an Act of Spiritual Communion. You can pray the following prayer with true desire for Jesus, and with belief of Jesus' Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Spiritual Communion Prayer:

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen

Holy Thursday

Preparation

1. Have a little bell handy to ring along with the Gloria during mass



Gospel of St John

Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kedron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

Prayer Meditation

Today the Church puts the Blessed Sacrament in a specially prepared place that represents Jesus' loneliness in the garden of Gethsemane. Here we contemplate Jesus in the hour of his solitude and pray that all the loneliness in the world may cease. Let us join our loneliness with his in this intimate encounter with the Lord in prayer.

In the garden Jesus prays to the Father. In that desolation, he addresses the Father with the most tender and gentle word, *Abba*, that is, Father. Jesus teaches us to embrace the Father in our trials, because in praying to him, there is the strength to go forward in suffering. In times of struggle, prayer is relief, entrustment, comfort. Abandoned by all, Jesus is not alone. He is with the Father. (adapted from Pope Benedict XVI)

To do

1. The Gloria, with its joyful tones, returns now that our Lenten fast has concluded. During the Gloria the church bells ring and then fall silent until the Easter Vigil. If you have a small bell, you might like to ring it during the refrain of the Gloria.
2. Spend some time in your garden, if you have one. This is where Jesus went to pray before his Passion. Do you find the garden a good place to pray?
3. As you make your Act of Spiritual Communion take some time to truly welcome the presence of Christ into your very being and to give thanks to God for the gift of the Eucharist and the life to which it calls you.

Good Friday

Preparation

1. Place a cross on a table beside you. If you don't have a cross, you may be able to make a simple cross with something from the garden.



Gospel of St John

Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said "I am thirsty". After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said "It is accomplished" and bowing his head he gave up the spirit.

Prayer Meditation

And so we come to Good Friday, the day of the Passion and the Crucifixion of the Lord. Every year, standing in silence before Jesus hanging on the wood of the Cross, we feel how full of love the words were that he spoke on the previous evening during the Last Supper. "This is my blood, of the covenant, which is poured out for many". (Pope Benedict XVI)

All mothers know well what this means: they give another life; they suffer, but then they rejoice, they are happy because they have given birth to another life. It gives joy; love gives birth

to life and even gives meaning to pain. Love is the engine that empowers our hope. (Pope Francis)

Mother Teresa said, "God didn't call us to be successful but faithful ". The promise is paradise. It is for those who remain good and faithful servants. So walk on, on this Good Friday. Stay faithful under whatever pain you may have, for tomorrow is Holy Saturday. The day of hope, the day when the church holds her breath in anticipation of new hope. Hold your breath this Good Friday. It is being accomplished at this very hour. It is time for us to be silent. (Fr Niall Ahern)

To do

"Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the salvation of the world; come let us adore". This refrain invites us to contemplate and adore Christ. As you watch the Adoration of the Cross, you and household members are invited to make a gesture of adoration towards the cross in the home. This might be a bow or a kiss or other form of adoration. You may wish to hold the cross for a moment of contemplation.



Holy Saturday

Preparation

1. Gather some flowers and a statue or image of Our Lady

Gospel of St John

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his own home.

Prayer Meditation

Holy Saturday is a day of patient waiting when we, as Church, prayerfully reflect on the passion and death of Christ and await his resurrection. It is a day of fast as we ready ourselves for the feast of Easter.

All around us are signs of hope: an earth stirring with new life, the seed sown in hope and promise last autumn fulfils its promise. As we move towards this empty tomb tomorrow with our individual emptiness, let us pray that Christ

will nudge us awake to hope. In him we have reason for hope, a reason to trust because tomorrow our trust is rewarded with life everlasting. Today is the day to trust. Trust God. Simply trust God. (Fr Niall Ahern)

Mary is the one who remains faithful during the emptiness of Holy Saturday when the other disciples seem to have disappeared. Her trust in God remains. From the first moments of saying "Let what you have said be done to me" in reply to the angel Gabriel, Mary still trusts that God is bringing good out of the pain of Good Friday. Today we learn from Mary what it is to live in Holy Saturday while trusting that Sunday is coming.

To do

As we wait patiently with Mary, our Blessed Mother, place a statue or image of Mary in your sitting room or kitchen. Place some flowers in front of it, signs of the hope that she never lost, and that we hold onto now.



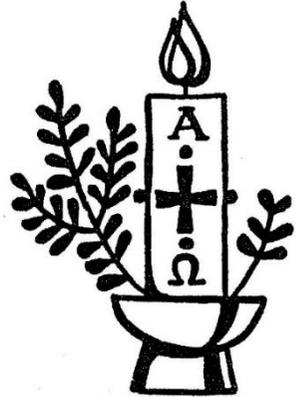
HE IS
Risen



Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday Night

Preparation

1. Have a candle ready that you can light when you are praying
2. Have some holy water with you too



Gospel of St Luke

The two men said to them, "Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen"

The Exsultet – The Easter Proclamation

This is the night
that even now, throughout the world,
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices
and from the gloom of sin,
leading them to grace
and joining them to his holy ones.
This is the night,
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death
and rose victorious from the underworld.
O wonder of your humble care for us!
O love, O charity beyond all telling,
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

Prayer Meditation

Alleluia! He is risen!

We, like Peter and the women, cannot discover life by being sad, bereft of hope. Let us not stay imprisoned within ourselves, but let us break open our sealed tombs to the Lord – each of us knows what they are – so that he may enter and grant us life. May the Lord free us from this trap, from being Christians without hope, who live as if the Lord were not risen, as if our problems were the centre of our lives.

Tonight it is important to shed the light of the Risen Lord upon our problems. Let us not allow darkness and fear to distract us and control us; we must cry out to them: the Lord “is not here, but has risen!”. He is our greatest joy; he is always at our side and will never let us down.

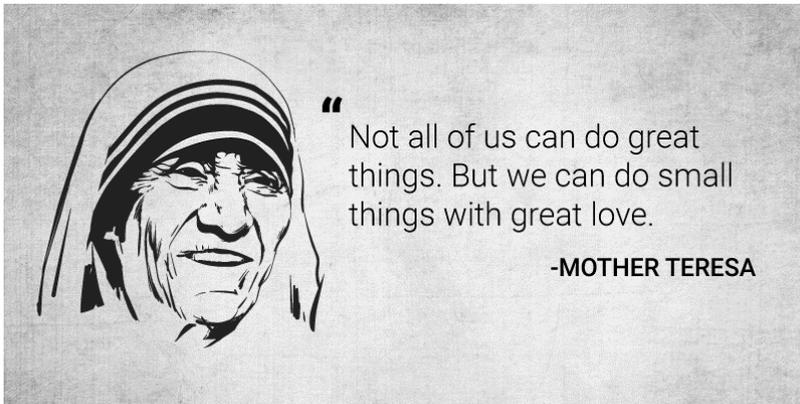
(Pope Francis)

Yes, Christ is truly risen and we are witnesses of this. We proclaim this witness to the world, so that the joy which is ours will reach countless other hearts, kindling in them the light of the hope which does not disappoint.

Christ is risen, alleluia! (St John Paul II)

To do

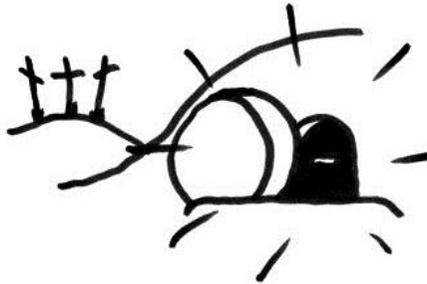
1. The Easter Vigil begins with the celebration of light and the lighting of the Paschal candle. Light your own candle at this time as you watch the Mass. This is the light of Christ, the light that darkness can never overcome.
2. During the renewal of Baptismal promises which takes place during the Easter Vigil mass, bless yourself with your holy water.
3. If you are not able to watch the Easter Vigil, before you go to bed light your candle and bless yourself with the holy water, renewing your faith in Jesus and his resurrection.



Easter Sunday

Gospel of St John

Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.



Prayer Meditation

Easter Sunday means that because he lives we shall also live. A reason for living and our hope in dying. Easter resurrection happens in small, small ways. We all have small deaths and resurrections, Easter stories to tell, moments of promise and truth, moments of resurrection. Today, tell your Easter story and as you do so, say simply, "It's good to be alive!". And alive in Christ, means alive forevermore. (Fr Niall Ahern)

This is the day that the Lord has made: let us rejoice in it and be glad". Alleluia!

Love has triumphed over hatred, life has conquered death, light has dispelled the darkness!

Jesus is Lord! (Pope Francis)

To do

1. Celebrate! Often we do that with food. Don't let Easter arrive without celebrating!
2. Place the picture printed of the resurrected Jesus in a place where you will see it all day.



