



# CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK AND EASTER AS A FAMILY

## THE FAMILY IS THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

Our teachers have compiled some resources and ideas to help your family celebrate Holy Week in your homes. "The family, is so to speak, the *domestic church*." (Lumen Gentium #11) This means that our homes are the first and primary place we encounter God and learn what it means to be a Christian. Even though we can't worship together in our parishes during Holy Week, each family can enter into Holy Week in their own *domestic church*.

Entering into the mysteries of Holy Week as a family will require both desire and creativity. The suggestions included here are just that—suggestions. Please do not try to do it all. Think of these suggestions as a buffet. If there's something that doesn't seem like it will work for your family, you can change it to make it work or pass on it altogether. Pick and choose what you can realistically do and try to do it well. Many of the ideas included have been drawn from the websites found in "Additional Resources."

If you see Underlined Text, it's clickable link. You will need to right-click to open in a new tab or window.



## GENERAL TIPS:

- Get the kids involved! Let them help pick activities and share their ideas for what they would like to see your celebration of Holy Week look like.
- Keep up with family traditions as much as possible. If you can't do something you usually do, brainstorm ways as a family to adapt or do something different.
- Start with the Bible! Look for the daily readings by visiting [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) and clicking on the date on the calendar in the upper right hand corner.
- Set up a prayer table or home altar if you don't have one. This gives you a focal point for your prayer life as a family. Include a crucifix, a Bible, statues of Jesus and/or Saints, rosaries, candles, etc.
- Consider giving something up as a family or adding a decade of the Rosary each day for Holy Week in addition to your regular Lenten fast.
- Trust your gut—you know your kids best. If things aren't going well, it's OK to "call an audible." Take a break or try something different.
- Go easy on yourself and on your kiddos. This time is challenging for everyone and it's OK to feel overwhelmed. Just do your best.

## MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

The following Spotify playlists have music to help set the tone for Holy Week. They have a mix of folk music, worship songs, ancient hymns, and Gregorian chant. Spotify is a free music streaming service. \*\*Please note: ads will play unless you have a premium account.

- [Lent Playlist](#)
- [Holy Week Playlist](#)
- [Ubi Caritas – Holy Thursday Playlist](#)
- [Wondrous Cross – Good Friday Playlist](#)
- [Christ is Risen – Easter Playlist](#)

## WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?

Want to learn more about Holy Week and why we celebrate each part? Click the image below to watch Busted Halo's "Holy Week in 3 minutes."



**HOLY WEEK:**  
**PALM SUNDAY – APRIL 5**  
**HOLY THURSDAY – APRIL 9**  
**GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 10**  
**HOLY SATURDAY – APRIL 11**  
**EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 12**





## CELEBRATING PALM SUNDAY

On Palm Sunday, we recall Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem while the people laid down their cloaks and branches, proclaiming "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

- Check your Parish website for livestream Mass time and to see if you can pick up blessed palms.
- Check Loyola Press' [Sunday Connection](#) for age-specific ideas to help children connect to the Sunday Readings and for ideas to discuss them as a family.
- Bless your own palms with Holy Water while you watch a livestreamed Palm Sunday Mass.
- Participate in the reading of the [Passion Narrative](#) by following along during Mass.
- Hang palm branches or other greenery on your door.
- Make [Palm Crosses](#) with blessed palms.

**Talk about it:** Over dinner, talk about how Jesus is the center of our lives and our faith. How do we feel when we make Jesus the center of our lives?

## CELEBRATING HOLY THURSDAY

This day recalls the Last Supper when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. It reminds us that we are called to serve one another.

- Check your Parish website for livestream Mass times.
- Have the father or head of your household wash the feet of everyone in the family, following Jesus' example to be a servant. You could do this during Mass when the celebrant washes the feet of members of the congregation.
- Share a family meal.
- After the Last Supper, Jesus prayed in the garden at Gethsemane. Light candles at your prayer table or home altar and spend some quiet time in prayer with Jesus.

**Talk about it:** The Eucharist is the central sacrament in our Catholic faith. Talk about our Catholic belief that we receive the real presence of the risen Jesus in holy Communion. How does this encounter with Jesus change us?

## CELEBRATING GOOD FRIDAY

This day commemorates the crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus. It is the most solemn and sorrowful day of the Church calendar.

- Check your Parish website for a livestream Good Friday Service.
- Venerate your family crucifix by kneeling before it and kissing it. Watch [this video](#) from The Diocese of Grand Rapids, MI for a good explanation of why we venerate the cross.
- Meditate on the Stations of the Cross. Get your children involved by allowing them to read the meditations or even act them out. You could use *Word Among Us*'s Stations of the Cross for Kids for a simple way to meditate for families with children 10 and under.
- Print this [Stations of the Cross Coloring Book](#) or one similar for younger children to color.
- Watch EWTN's [Way of the Cross for Kids](#).

**Talk about it:** It is OK to feel sad on Good Friday. Jesus' death on the cross is a sacrifice like no other; He died to teach us about everlasting life. Talk about friends and family who may have died and how we believe that, because of Jesus, we hope to rise to new life in heaven.

## CELEBRATING HOLY SATURDAY

This day commemorates the time of darkness and waiting when Jesus was in the tomb. It is also a day for final preparations before Easter.

- Check your Parish website for the livestream schedule of the Easter Vigil. This is a beautiful (though longer) liturgy to experience.
- Clean your home and decorate for Easter.
- Make [Easter Crafts](#) together as a family.
- Dye Easter eggs for tomorrow.

**Talk about it:** The Easter Vigil begins with the symbol of fire. Talk about how fire represents that Jesus is the light of the world. He brings light to the darkness and new life to a sleeping world. What are some other symbols of resurrection? (Water, the color white, the transformation of a butterfly...)

## CELEBRATING EASTER SUNDAY

Easter is when we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection and triumph over sin and death. We sing the "Gloria" and "Alleluia" again at Mass for the first time since Lent began!

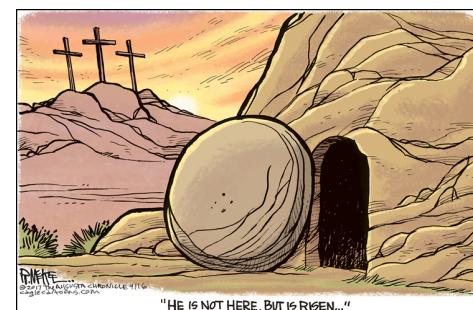
- Check your Parish website for livestream Mass times.
- Renew your [Baptismal Promises](#).
- Go for a walk around your neighborhood and look for signs of new life in springtime.
- Have an Easter egg hunt.
- Make Resurrection Rolls (recipe below).

**Talk about it:** Jesus rising to new life is truly transformative and life-changing. How does the truth of Jesus' Resurrection change the way we live our lives?

## MORE RESOURCES

The following sites have more resources and information to help you and your family celebrate Holy Week and Easter.

- [Holy Heroes Lenten Adventure](#): Subscribe for free daily videos, coloring sheets, and activities for kids.
- [Teaching Catholic Kids.com](#): Online tool for parents provided by Our Sunday Visitor (OSV)
- ["How to make the most of Holy Week at home"](#) from OSV
- ["Elementary Resources for Kids at Home"](#) from St. Mary's Press; includes great resources for Lent
- ["Parent Resources for Teens at Home"](#) from St. Mary's Press; includes interactive Scripture reflection activities for Holy Week
- [Catholic Culture.org](#): Resources to help celebrate the liturgical year.
- [Beginner's Bible - The Story of Easter](#): Classic cartoon telling the story of Holy Week and Easter
- Busted Halo's ["A Catholic Guide to Holy Week Symbols"](#)
- [Magnificat](#): A daily devotional that's currently offering free access. Includes the daily readings, morning and evening prayer, Saint of the Day, and a daily reflection.
- [Word Among Us](#): A daily devotional with meditations based on the daily Mass readings.
- [Ascension Presents](#): YouTube channel with informative and inspirational videos



# RESURRECTION ROLLS

A great and easy Easter recipe to do with the kids! Rolls with marshmallows wrapped inside, which become hollow as they bake, representing the death and resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning—when you break them open, they are empty inside! This recipe was shared with Mrs. Rios when her daughters were little. They continue to make Resurrection Rolls each year on Easter and wanted to pass their tradition on to your families!

## Tips from Mrs. Rios:

- I prefer to have everything out and ready to go in advance before the kids sit down. This helps reduce the wait time for little ones, so they're more likely to sit and pay attention to the resurrection rolls lesson without all the wiggles.
- I also prefer to make one resurrection roll myself FIRST while I tell the story and the kids watch (up until the point where the first roll goes on/in the pan). This way the kids are paying attention to the resurrection rolls story, not getting distracted trying to lick the cinnamon sugar.
- I included the shortened version of the Resurrection Rolls story below so you can easily do this recipe with wiggly little ones with short attention spans. If you have older kids and prefer to read the Easter story straight from the Bible before you begin, that's great! The actual Bible story can be found in Luke 23:24. BUT if you are reading the Easter story straight from the Bible to little ones, I would definitely recommend a good children's Bible.



## Ingredients

- 1 can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls (8 rolls)
- 8 large marshmallows
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons white sugar

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400° F (200° C).
2. Lightly grease a baking sheet or muffin tin.
3. Separate crescent rolls into individual triangles.
4. Melt butter in microwave for 15-20 seconds.
5. In a small bowl, mix together cinnamon and sugar.
6. Process: Dip a marshmallow into melted butter; roll in sugar/cinnamon mixture. Place marshmallow into the center of a dough triangle. Carefully wrap the dough around the marshmallow. Pinch the seams together tightly to seal in marshmallow. Place each sealed roll on a baking sheet or in a muffin tin. Repeat for all 8 rolls.
7. Bake in a preheated oven until golden brown, about 15 minutes.

## Telling the Story:

### Show a Marshmallow.

Explain: The marshmallow represents Jesus: Pure, white, sinless and perfect. Unfortunately, even though Jesus was perfect, there were people who did not understand Him or His message. They wanted Him dead. They crucified Him on a cross and left Him to die there.

Bible verses: Luke 23:1-49

### Roll the Marshmallow in the Melted Butter, then roll it in the Cinnamon Sugar Mixture.

Explain: Jesus's friends and family were very sad when Jesus died. They loved Him. They wanted Him to be alive. They were sad and confused. But what Jesus's disciples didn't know was that Jesus didn't JUST die. He also took all of our sins (the bad things we do) upon Himself. He took our punishment so we wouldn't have to! See how the cinnamon looks dirty on Jesus's body? The cinnamon represents our sin that Jesus took away when he died.

Bible verses: Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53:5, 1 Corinthians 15:3

### Wrap the marshmallow in a crescent roll, carefully sealing the edges.

Explain: Jesus's friends and family didn't know this, though. They thought He was just dead. They buried Him in a tomb and closed the door tight with a huge rock so no one could get in or out. This resurrection crescent roll represents Jesus's tomb. Can you see the marshmallow in there? You can't, because the tomb is sealed up tightly. Nothing can get in or out.

Bible verses: Luke 23:50-56

### Place crescent rolls on cookie sheet or in muffin tin; invite children to make remaining rolls.

Explain: After Jesus's friends buried His body in the tomb, they left and went home for the night, because it was getting late. Now, would you like to help me make the rest of this resurrection rolls recipe?

### Cook until browned (see package directions). Remove from oven. Continue the story while rolls are cooling

Explain: Three days later, some of Jesus's friends and family went back to His tomb. They wanted to anoint His body with oil and spices. When they came to his tomb, they saw the most incredible thing! Do you know what it was? (Cut the roll open – the marshmallow should be gone.) The tomb was empty! Jesus came back from the dead and He's still alive today, watching over us and helping take care of us from Heaven!

Bible verses: Luke 24:1-12, Luke 22:69, John 14:3

## Eat and Enjoy!