



Seeds of Faith

Supporting families

April 2018

Praying as a family

Easter Sunday is a great time to begin praying the Glorious mysteries. These mysteries celebrate the joy of the resurrection and also remind us of the important role that Mary had. Remember if you read the piece of scripture that connects to the particular Mystery of the Rosary it will give you more insight and understanding into it.

1. Jesus rises from the dead—Luke 24:1-7

2. Jesus ascends to heaven—Mark 16:19

3. Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit—Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4

4. Mary is taken up into heaven—Luke 1:46-50

5. Mary is crowned queen of heaven Revelation 22:1-5



Easter Eggs are a symbol of new life—like the chick that comes out of the egg so Jesus came out of the tomb. Why not put a little Easter egg at everyone's place at the table and share a prayer of thanks before you begin your Easter Sunday dinner.



Resurrection Joy!

Imagine how Jesus' friends must have felt on Easter Sunday. Imagine Mary of Magdala bursting in the door of the upper room with her news, amazed, delighted, overwhelmed. Think of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Their hearts had been broken, their hope destroyed. but now they have turned around and are striding back confidently to Jerusalem – laughter in their voices as they talk about how they had finally recognised him in words spoken and bread broken. Imagine what it was like for the followers of Jesus, who had been hiding in the upper room, lost and hopeless until he comes and stands among them. When they try to explain to Thomas there must have been new hope, delight and laughter in their voices. How could we have thought he would leave us? That that would be the end? But he is alive! And laughter washes away the last darkness of grief and the numbing sense of loss that had been theirs.

Laughter is the music of the resurrection. It reminds us that death does not have the last word. This is our faith, what it is to be Christian. Because the resurrection is not just the gospel writers looking for a happy ending. It is real and true. Easter is the most important day in our year. Without the resurrection we would not be Christian. Without the resurrection if Jesus was remembered at all it would only be as a good man with a good message.

Because of the resurrection nothing—neither life nor death—can separate us from the love of God. Why not talk to your children about what they think Easter is about and the difference the resurrection makes to us as Christians?

APRIL GOSPELS

This month, let's talk about surprises. Do you like to be surprised? When was the last time you found yourself surprised? Was it a pleasant surprise, or not? What was the greatest surprise you ever got? Do you think the crowds were surprised when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem with all that excitement? What about Mary Magdalene and Peter and John when they found that Jesus body was gone from the place where he had been buried? Or Thomas when the others told him that they had seen Jesus alive? Would *you* have believed them? Surprise can lead us back to the wonder that should be part of our response to these gospel stories.



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| 01 April | John 20:1-9 |
| 08 April | John 20:19-31 |
| 15 April | Luke 24:35-48 |
| 22 April | John 10:11-18 |
| 29 April | John 15:1-8 |

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| The disciples find the tomb is empty |
| Jesus helps Thomas to believe |
| Jesus back with his friends again |
| Jesus is the Good Shepherd |
| I am the vine—remain in me |



Prayer Space

Why not decorate your prayer space for Easter? You could add flowers for Easter Sunday to bring colour and joy, maybe some Easter eggs too. As you move through the month of April add signs of the new life you see around you—a bright new

leaf, a flower, a feather. Together, celebrate the new life of Spring and of the Resurrection.

Spirit of God

May the joy of the Resurrection
Touch our hearts and our minds.
May we be open to the new life
Offered to us in Jesus Christ
May we find our hope and our strength
in him
Amen



Stepping stones on the journey of faith

In the second part of the Creed we speak of our belief in Jesus

- We believe that he is the Son of God. We all are children of God but we believe Jesus is “true God from true God” sharing the very life of God the Father
- We believe that he also came to share our humanity—he understands us from the inside.
- We believe that he died and that he rose again from the dead.
- If we really believe in the resurrection then we know that nothing can separate us from God or from each other. Even when someone we love dies we are still together as part of the body of Christ—nothing can break that. The resurrection can offer us hope and comfort even in the midst of our grief and loneliness. God’s love, God’s life is stronger even than death.



What's happening?

At Easter we are celebrating New Life. One symbol or sacramental of this new life is Holy Water. Maybe this Easter your family could make a special effort to bring newly blessed Holy Water home on Easter Sunday and use it throughout the Easter season. This is what Mary Ferry, mother of 3 and grandmother of 3 say about how her family uses Holy Water.



This Easter Sunday morning we will go, as we go every year to get the new Easter Holy Water. In our family holy water feels like as much of a necessity as the water that comes out of the tap—we would struggle to live without it. None of my children or grand children would pass the holy water font without blessing themselves. It is the water in which our life is blessed day in, day out. This is a tradition passed on by my own mother and if the delight of our youngest grandchild is anything to go by it is a tradition which lives on as our family grows.

Holy water reminds us of our baptism when we became a member of the family of God and were marked with the sign of the cross as a symbol of our belonging to the Lord and to the Christian faith. We continue to use holy water on a regular basis in the home and in the Church. In doing so we remind ourselves that our baptism is a sacrament that we live each and every day, shaping who we are.

Holy water is used in the church—think how we bless ourselves going into the church, a reminder of our baptism. It is also used by the priest, sprinkled over all the people when we renew our baptismal promises at Easter. We can also use it at home. Do you have a holy water font? Maybe you could encourage everyone in the family to bless themselves each time they leave the house. Or perhaps at night you could bless the children going to bed. Holy water offers us a lovely way to invite God to be part of our day from beginning to end as well as putting us under God’s protection.

Imagine land that has not seen rain. Imagine how much it needs water if anything is to grow. Holy water is a symbol of the water of life, the current of faith which flows through our days bringing life and vitality.