

EASTER

Easter is a period of the year celebrated by Christians to commemorate Jesus's life on earth, his ministry and death. Easter does not have a fixed date, but it usually begins in February and ends in the early days of April. During Easter is celebrated *Lent, Passover, Ash Wednesday and Holy Week*.

When we celebrate Holy Week, each day is different, and something about Jesus's life or death is brought to remembrance. The days of Holy Week are:

- Palm Sunday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Holy Saturday
- Easter Sunday

Quiz time!

1. What is Easter?
2. Does Easter have a fixed date?
3. Why is Easter Celebrated?

(Parents' Note:

Hey parents! I know it can hard to take away from having your kids believe in the easter bunny, easter egg hunts, and the traditional kite flying (or it probably wouldn't be hard at all for you). Either way, I understand and I am very glad you are choosing the to tell your kids the truth!

Well, we have put together an activity list below that incorporates some of the things kids love, to enjoy while keeping it centered around the truth. But we have not

forgotten you either, so also, down below, we have added ways for you to celebrate Holy Week for yourselves, while celebrating with your children 😊)

Activities, for Children:

- ❖ Have a movie night and watch the kids' version of Jesus's life. (I do recommend *Lion of Judah*, which I believe is available for free on YouTube). Then talk about the story of Jesus and how important it was what he did.

- ❖ Make or get palm branches and reenact the story of Palm Sunday. (Watch the Superbook episode on it and talk about it)

- ❖ Attend a mass or communion service after which you talk about what Jesus did with his disciples and how the wine and bread reminds us of him and what he did for us, and how powerful and important it is to receive them.

- ❖ If your kid likes—or you yourself like to read it better—then read the story to them and have a deep conversation about it. This gives you an opportunity to really elaborate and get into things and to answer their many questions.

- ❖ Walk the *way to the cross* with eggs: this can be done two ways, or both can be done. You will need; colorful plastic eggs or whatever eggs you have; slips of white or colored paper; and some mini-chocolate or candy. (This goes in tandem with the Stations of the Cross.)

So, anywhere in your house you can either draw or print a picture of three crosses and stick it on your wall. Then, in each egg you place a bit of candy and the slip of paper that has a station written on it. You then lay the eggs out in a line leading up to the cross. You can either stop at

each egg and talk about Jesus's journey to the cross or collect all the eggs until you get to the cross and then talk about it.

(Note: if you do it the second way, you would have to label the eggs to know which is which).

The second way, is that you can hide the eggs and let your kids find them and then take them to the cross where you would talk about it and then they get the candy. You can add coloring pages for after activities or just get creative.

❖ Kite Flying:

This is a fun thing for children to do and they love it, but if we are looking for an opportunity to teach our kids about Jesus any way we can, then this one is quite the activity! And it's one that helps you to talk about his ascension and the coming of the Rapture.

So, first things first, you would need to gather up your notes on Jesus ascending into heaven and the rapture and how you are going to talk about it in a simple way.

Next, you can decide whether you are going to make a kite or buy one, but what is most important about this step is that it has to be *built* in some way so you can talk about "building your soul", like the kite would go up to the sky, to prepare the soul to meet Jesus. Then you would talk about some of the ways the children can put into practice to "build their soul".

But before they release their kites into the air, you can show them the Superbook episodes of the last days. Then when they release their kites into the air, they would know it is a symbol of them going to Heaven one day if they build their kites (themselves) well.

Holy Week Activities, for Parents and Teens:

I have not forgotten you too my dear parents, my fellow teenagers, even those who have no children but want to celebrate Jesus in some way—these following activities are for all.

Holy Week is a week to prepare your heart to be the tomb where Jesus can find his rest, be nurtured, be praised and be resurrected in **you**. This week we will recall the events leading up to Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection. It includes five days of very special significance.

Tips on how to celebrate the days of Holy Week:

❖ **Palm Sunday** (John 12: 12-16)

Make it a family affair especially if you have children, or do it by yourself. You can cut palm branches out of construction paper and share the story of Jesus entering into Jerusalem. You can pray the psalms that sing of his praises. Or simply read or watch a video on it.

❖ **Maundy Thursday** (John 13: 1-5)

Is when Jesus had the last supper and the institution of the Holy Eucharist. This is a great opportunity for you and your family to do communion or go to mass, if possible. Then wash each other's feet in remembrance that the *first* is always *last*, and we are here to serve as Jesus did.

❖ **Good Friday**

Commemorates Jesus' suffering and death on the cross. It is a day of sorrow, penance and fasting.

Do a simple fast if possible. Pray the Stations of the Cross to remember the journey to the cross. Use your sanctified imagination to meet Jesus there at the cross and be there with mother Mary as she walks that journey with him. Watch the Passion of the Christ movie, or any movie about his life.

❖ **Holy Saturday**

Is the end of Lent. It is a solemn day of remembrance that Jesus was *still* in the tomb.

Put yourself in the disciples' shoes and feel the grief of the loss of their Master, Friend and Savior. You can then contemplate blessed mother's sentiments as it was believed she was immersed in prayer and thanksgiving and anticipation that her son will arise the next morning.

In prayer, enter into the tomb again (using your sanctified imagination) and just sit and stay there at his side in the tomb in silence. Remembering the day that LOVE laid itself down for **you** that you might have life instead.

❖ **Easter Sunday**

The celebration of Jesus' resurrection on the third day after his crucifixion. Have a simple communion service with the Risen King. Praising and singing for He Is Risen!

I know this is not what is done traditional but my family and I have a Passover meal in celebration of his remembrance and love.

Offer your entire day for those lost souls and those in purgatory praying for them, and also those that desperately need a chance in this life to meet Jesus.

After the Holy Week, in the Catholic faith, there is also an event that is called *Divine Mercy Week* where a novena (nine day of prayers to God) is said with special prayer intentions to God in remembrance of Jesus's death.