

# Three Great Days – Celebrating the Triduum at Home

## Ideas for Family Participation:

- Assign different parts to different readers ahead of time.
- You may choose to go through the three days in one session or you may want to reflect on them on the corresponding day during Holy Week during your family prayer time.
- You may find a link to the bible on the USCCB website. There are also many bible apps available for download. The Catholic Church uses, most commonly, the New American Bible translation.

## *Leader – Introduction to the Triduum/Holy Week*

*Today we will focus on what we as Catholics call “The Triduum,” which is a Latin word meaning, literally, “three days.” The Triduum includes Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Today we have the opportunity to “walk through” the Triduum story for ourselves. This is the time when the Church celebrates the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus – what we refer to as the Paschal Mystery.*

*What we will discover through all of Holy Week is that each day tells us something new about who Jesus is, and if we only pay attention to some of the story (one of the days), we will lose the meaning of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.*

*Today we pause to reflect on Holy Week – the holiest time in the Christian calendar. Since we can’t gather with our church communities, we can still remember and prayerfully reflect on each special day in our homes. Here you will notice some of the symbols of Holy Week – water, a towel, a cross, and a candle. Each of these symbols reminds us of a different day of Holy Week.*

## Opening Prayer

*Let us pray.*

*Jesus our brother and companion, you used the regular things of your day to teach your disciples. Let these everyday items – water, towel, cross, and candle – help us to know you better. May we learn the lessons of your life and become better people by trusting in and following your example. We ask this in your name. Amen.*

## Holy Thursday

**Materials needed** – pitcher of water, bowl, towels, iPad, phone or laptop for music – song – *The Basin and the Towel* – by Michael Card (song can be found on YouTube)

### Introduction

**Reader 1:** *On Holy Thursday we celebrate the Last Supper. We remember Jesus instituting the Eucharist, “take; this is my body ... this is my blood ...” (Mark 14:22-24; read the scripture). Holy Thursday is also the night that we are reminded that Jesus came as a servant. Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and tells them to serve others. We are reminded that we are called to do the same.*

Foot/Hand Washing Ritual – choose what ritual best fits your family; either way reflect on the meaning of the ritual. Each family member will wash the feet/hands of another family member.

*\*\*Play music during foot/hand washing ritual.\*\**

**Reader 2:** *The society in which Jesus lived in reserved this dirty, messy role for those who were the “least.” Jesus washing the feet of the disciples demonstrated how he understood his role – as a servant to all. Today, we are going to wash each other’s hands/feet to remind ourselves that we are called to follow Jesus, which means serving each other.*

### Foot/Hand Washing Prayer

**Reader 3:** *Dear Friends, This water reminds us of our baptism and of our call to servant leadership within the Christian community. Our baptism calls us to lead as Jesus does by serving others. Let us ask God to bless this water. Creator God, your gift of water brings life and freshness to the earth. We ask you now to bless this water. May this water remind us of our baptism and of our call to follow Jesus’ example by serving others. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Play song – “The Basin and the Towel” (place bowl under family members hands/feet to be washed and pour water over; dry with towel)

### Holy Thursday Reflection Question

*Jesus gave us the model to wash the feet of others-to serve. How is Jesus calling you to serve?*

## Good Friday

Materials needed – wooden cross and meditation music of choice

***Reader 1:** The Good Friday liturgy begins quietly, picking up where Holy Thursday left off. Because the Triduum began on Holy Thursday, there is no procession or gathering song. Instead, the presider and other ministers are seated in their places before the liturgy. When it is time to begin, the entire assembly kneels in quiet reverence. As the assembly kneels, the presider and other ministers may lie prostrate (face down, in humility and adoration) on the ground. Prostration is a posture of great reverence. In your reflection and prayer time tonight, I invite you now to lie prostrate reflecting on all you need to “lay down” and offer to God.*

You may choose to venerate the crucifix or other cross in your home. This may also be a time of journaling or prayerful reflection. You may also choose to read the Passion from the Gospel of John 18: 1-19:42 as a family.

See other activities: “Journey to the Cross at Home”

# Holy Saturday

**Materials Needed** – Cross, lighter, candles for each family member, Easter Eggs filled with candy, slips of paper, and pens

## **Reader 1:** Introduction

*One of the things that makes the Triduum so special is that we know how each day fits together. We have walked through Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and now we will talk about Christ's resurrection.*

*But it is important to realize that for the disciples, the story ended on Good Friday. Their friend, mentor, teacher had been crucified. They were scared for their own lives. They were confused and alone and lost.*

*To truly appreciate Easter, we must share in the disciple's post-Good Friday experience.*

## **Reader 2:**

*The Easter Vigil is celebrated after sunset on Holy Saturday. It is the liturgical celebration that completes the Triduum, and it transforms the church from a barren and quiet space into a celebration of life. It is one of the most dramatic and powerful liturgies we celebrate as a church. Mass is also celebrated on Easter Sunday.*

*As we said already, Mass begins in darkness, and light is brought into the church to light the Easter candle and the whole church.*

*Everything is new at this Easter Vigil liturgy – the candle is new, the chrism oil is new, the Eucharist will be consecrated again, new Catholics receive the sacraments for the first time, and the congregation is new – or renewed.*

*The church is decorated for Easter with flowers as a sign of new life and rejoicing in Jesus' rising from the dead.*

*Now light your candles and spread the light of Christ with your family members.*

*Place your lit candles (if possible) around your family's cross for the remainder of this prayer.*

## Easter Egg Ritual

### **Reader 3:** Introduction to Ritual (place Easter eggs and candles around the cross, pass out paper and pens)

*At the base of the cross, there are Easter eggs. Eggs are a symbol of Easter because they remind us that new life is about to break through at any moment. At Easter we use candles to remind us that the darkness doesn't win. To be Easter people, we have to believe that no matter how hard things are, or how heavy of a burden we bear, there is hope in Jesus and hope that newness is right around the corner.*

*You have just been given a slip of paper. On it, please write something that needs change in your life – a situation in need of new life or resurrection. It might be a relationship that needs healing, or something that you need to let go of, or something that is keeping you separated from God. Take a few minutes to quietly think about the situation in your life that is most in need of change.*

Reader 1:

*To help us symbolize this trust we have in resurrection, I invite you, one at a time, to come forward and choose an egg and then place your slip of paper inside the egg. Keep this egg, until Easter....*

Reader 2: Closing Prayer

*Jesus our Brother and Redeemer, we thank you for this time together and for the chance to grow in faith. May this experience help us to live a life more deeply rooted in the gift of your redemption, away from sin and moving into the light. Offer the following gifts with your closing prayer today. The response will be "We praise you, Lord."*

The Candle: *For being a light in times of darkness... **We praise you, Lord.***

Basket of Easter eggs: *For promising us that new life is always possible...*

**We praise you, Lord.**

Wooden cross: *For being hope to people when we turn a blind eye... **We praise you, Lord.***

Water and Towel: *For being a model to us... **We praise you, Lord. Amen.***