

Praying Holy Week and Easter at home

Our homes are sacred spaces where we encounter God. We have become mindful of this during this challenging year, as we pray at home, on our own or with family. During this special week, you are invited to join the wider faith community by participating at Mass and the Holy Week ceremonies online. Ready the space in which you will be sitting, so that it helps you to pray, either online or alone. As you begin your prayer-time at home....

- *Light a candle as you begin, remembering God awaits you.*
- *Ask God for the gift of an open heart and mind as you pray each day.*

Palm Sunday



...Many people spread their cloaks on the road, others greenery which they had cut in the fields. And those who went in front and those who followed were all shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!'
Mark 11:8-9

Invitation Cut a piece of palm, or from an evergreen tree in your garden, as a symbol of welcoming praise. As you attend Mass online today, the palms at home will be blessed.

Pray *Loving God, we carry palms today – they remind us of those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem so many years ago. May all we are and do this day be a sign of our loving welcome to Jesus today. Amen.*

Act Take a few moments today to give thanks, to shout Hosanna! Recall the times during the year when you were conscious of Jesus Christ's loving presence with you. Put palm on your front door to witness to these blessings.

Monday of Holy Week

*...Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard,
and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair.*
John 12:3

Invitation Place a scented candle in your prayer space. As you smell the scent, imagine the Gospel scene - Mary lavishing ointment on Jesus' feet and wiping them with her hair. Imagine the love in her heart for Jesus.

Pray *Loving God, you lavish us with the gift of life, and the beauty of creation. Help us to share our abundance with others, open our hearts to lavish others with love and compassion. Amen.*

Act Mary lavishes Jesus' feet as a sign of love and care in the face of challenges. Am I aware of someone facing difficulties? How will I show love and support?

Tuesday of Holy Week

*It is you, O Lord, who are my hope, my trust, O Lord, since my youth.
On you I have leaned from my birth, from my mother's womb you have been my help.*
Psalm 70:5-6

Invitation I recall those who shared their faith with me, I remember the ways in which I have known the Lord's presence in my life. I entrust to God the worries and concerns I am carrying.

Pray *Lord of hope and trust, thank you for sustaining my life since my birth. In times of darkness, remind me of the times I have known your light. Open my eyes to you each new day. Amen*

Act Pray for those who handed faith to you. Give thanks to those who sustain you now as a person of hope.

Wednesday of Holy Week, also known as Spy Wednesday

*...Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?'
They paid him thirty pieces of silver...*
Matt 26:14-15

Invitation To be betrayed by someone you love and trust is very difficult. Today I take a moment to reflect on how I have shown love over the past weeks and when I have failed to love. I ask God's forgiveness, knowing God always wants to forgive. I will share this confession when I can next go to the sacrament safely.

Pray *Loving God, you know the intricacies of our hearts and how easily we are tempted to be less than our best selves. Draw us back with your compassion and mercy, and strengthen our desire to be more loving. Amen.*

Act Is there someone with whom I need to be reconciled?

Holy Thursday



'If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'

John 13:15

Invitation Place a jug, bowl and towel in your praying space, along with your candle and palm from Palm Sunday. Let these help to focus your heart during the day and when you participate at the Lord's Supper online.

Pray *Jesus our friend and brother, thank you for the gift of foot-washing – may we welcome each and every opportunity to love others in word and in deed. Thank you for those who have been foot-washers during this pandemic. Amen*

Act How might I wash another's feet? is there someone to whom I can offer a hopeful word, a loving touch, a word of forgiveness? I pray for those who have washed my feet or others' feet during the past year.

Good Friday



...Jesus said, 'it is accomplished', and bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

John 19:30

Invitation Try making a cross from two twigs and some string. Recall the cross Jesus carried and speak to Jesus about your crosses. Place a cross in your praying space as you participate in the Good Friday ceremonies online.

Pray *Jesus, we bring all the pain and suffering of the world today, to the foot of your cross. We take hope from your cross, that nothing can separate us from God's love, no matter. Amen.*

Act I pray the Stations of the Cross today for all those suffering in the world. I fast in solidarity with Jesus Christ and all my sisters and brothers. I give to support Trócaire.

Holy Saturday

We live this day reflecting on the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

Easter Vigil /Easter Sunday



..he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you."

Mark 16:7

Invitation Have a candle beside you, ready to light when the Easter candle is lit at the Easter Vigil online. Light individual candles from the central candle, a reminder that we depend on the light of Christ for our lives. Ring a bell when the Gloria is said or sung. Let our Easter joy be heard by all. Place some flowers in your prayer space.

Pray *Jesus Christ, you are the light, bringing hope into our despair, and courage into our fearful hearts. Teach us to trust in you that we might be beacons of your light and hope for others. Amen*

Act Share your joy and your hope with family and friends this day....make a phonecall, send a card, prepare some treats to celebrate our Easter joy.

A Daily Easter Prayer

*Resurrecting God, gather us into your Easter light!
You are always a God of new beginnings,
you take what is and shape what will be,
bring advance after reversal, sunshine after rain
and the bright promise of resurrection after the darkness of death.
We make this prayer, through Christ our Lord. Amen*