

WALKING WITH CHRIST: YOUR GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK

A companion for the
Domestic Church



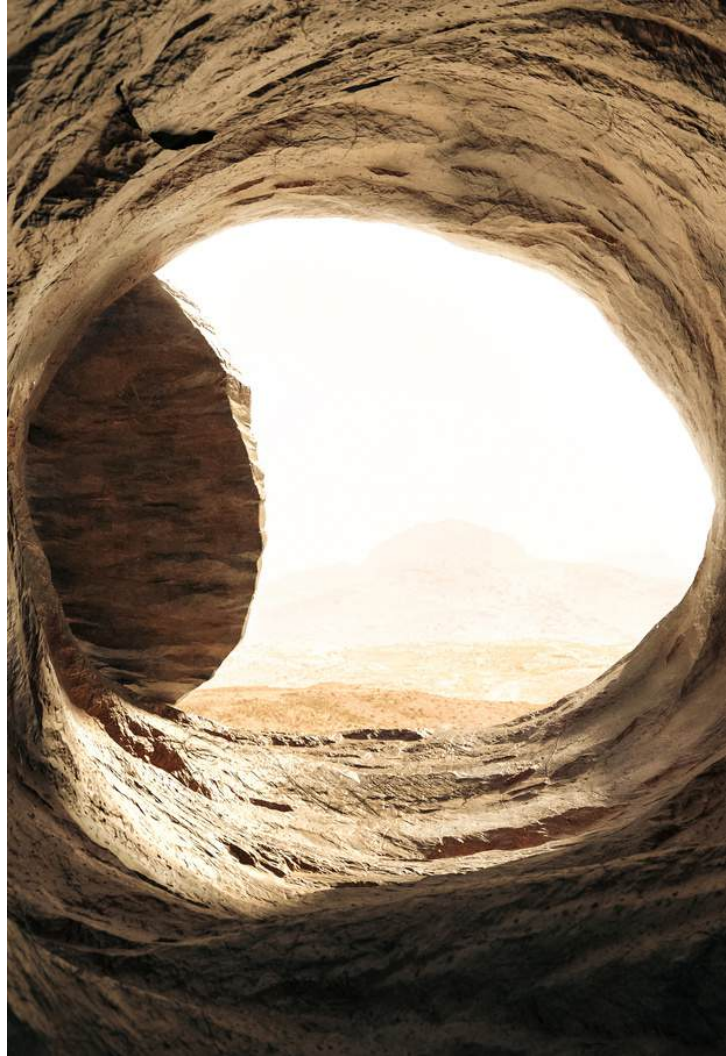
Walk with Him from the Upper Room to the Empty Tomb.



DIocese of LAFAYETTE
LOUISIANA

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A LOT CAN
HAPPEN IN
SEVEN
DAYS.



DIOCESE of LAFAYETTE
LOUISIANA



This guide is designed to be your companion as you walk with Jesus from the triumphant shouts of Palm Sunday to the silent expectation of Holy Saturday, and finally to the glorious light of Easter morning.

Holy Week is the heart of our Catholic faith. It is a time when we move beyond simply reading the Gospels to actually living them within our own homes—our "Domestic Churches." This guide invites you and your family to enter deeply into the Paschal Mystery, transforming your daily routines into a prayerful pilgrimage toward the Resurrection.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each day of this journey is structured to nourish your spirit and connect your home to the life of the Parish through four distinct elements:

1. THE DAILY REFLECTION

Short reflections are designed to help you pause and meditate on the drama of our salvation as it unfolds, providing a spiritual anchor for your busy week. Some recommended scripture verses will draw you further into the sacred experience of this week.

2. THE CALL TO ACTION

Our faith is meant to be lived. Some days include a specific challenge - a "mission moment" - to help you put the Gospel into practice through acts of charity, service, or a renewed commitment to prayer in your community.

3. FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Children learn best when they can see and touch the stories of our faith. You will find tactile activities - from crafting "moneybag" wontons to sealing the "tomb" of your oven - that make the biblical narrative tangible and memorable for all ages.

4. THE TABLE: DAILY RECIPES

Food has always been a sacred part of how God gathers His people, and food is a powerful teacher. Each day features a recipe "From the Kitchen" - ranging from the humble "Soup Bread" to the festive "Roasted Lamb" - that carries deep biblical symbolism. We encourage you to use these meals as a time to silence the world, pray together, and share in the "breaking of the bread" as a family. Each day's "From the Kitchen" recipe is in the Recipe Appendix.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you begin this week, remember that the goal is not perfection, but accompaniment. Whether you try every recipe or simply sit with one reflection, you are opening the door to Christ.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me." — Revelation 3:20

May this Holy Week be a time of deep renewal for your family, reminding you that through the Cross, we are led to the joy of the Resurrection. He is Risen indeed!



THE "DOMESTIC CHURCH" VISION

Your Home as a Sanctuary

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that the family is the "Domestic Church." While the great liturgies happen within the walls of our parishes, the faith is lived, breathed, and sustained within the walls of your home.

Transforming your home isn't about complex decor; it's about **intentionality**. When we create a space for prayer, we signal to our souls – and our families – that these days are "set apart." By bringing the rhythms of the Church into our living rooms, we ensure that the graces of the Triduum don't stay at the altar, but permeate our meals, our conversations, and our rest.

PRACTICAL PREP: THE LENTEN PRAYER TABLE

To anchor your week, establish a central "Sacred Space" in your home. This serves as a visual compass, grounding your family in the shifting emotions of the liturgy.

1. The Foundation: The Cloth

- **Palm Sunday through Holy Wednesday:** Keep a **purple** cloth on the table to represent penance and preparation.
- **Holy Thursday:** If possible, switch to **white** to celebrate the institution of the Eucharist and the Priesthood.
- **Good Friday:** Strip the table **bare**, the venerated Crucifix unveiled, emphasizing its stark symbolism as the wood of salvation.
- **Easter Vigil:** Bring out your finest **white or gold** cloth. Adorn it with flowers to signal the victory of Life.

2. The Centerpiece: The Crucifix

Place your most prominent crucifix at the center. On Good Friday, consider a "Veneration of the Cross" at home where each family member kisses the feet of the Corpus.

3. The Light: Candles

Place candles on the table to be lit during family prayer time or Scripture reading. For the Tenebrae (darkness) of the late week, extinguish them one by one to feel the weight of the coming shadows.

4. The Living Word

Keep a Bible open on the table. Each day, turn the page to the Gospel reading of the day, allowing the Word of God to be the literal centerpiece of your household.



ENTERING THE MYSTERY



Beloved, the bells are about to fall silent.

*As we stand at the threshold of Holy Week, do not mistake these coming days for an historical reenactment or a sacred play. We do not simply "remember" what happened two thousand years ago; through the liturgy, **we step into it**. The Paschal Mystery – the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ – is not a past event locked in time. It is an eternal reality that breaks into our present. This week, you are not a spectator in the crowd; you are a disciple in the Upper Room, a mourner at the foot of the Cross, and a witness at the empty tomb.*

The Church calls you to radical participation. This is the week where we stop "fitting God in" and instead center our entire lives around the heartbeat of the Gospel. Let us cast off the distractions of the world and enter the deep silence of the tomb, so that we may truly taste the sweetness of the Resurrection.

The veil is thin. He is calling. Will you walk with Him?





PALM SUNDAY

THE TRIUMPH & THE TRAP

The journey begins not with a whisper, but with a roar. Palm Sunday is the gateway to the most sacred week of the year, a day defined by a jarring, holy paradox. We stand with one foot in the triumph of the King and the other in the shadow of the gallows.

REFLECTION: THE FICKLE HEART OF THE CROWD

Close your eyes and hear the thundering hooves, the rustle of cloaks hitting the dust, and the rhythmic chant: *Hosanna!* a Hebrew cry meaning "Save us, we pray!" Today, we stand in the sun-drenched streets of Jerusalem. We wave our branches not just for a King, but for the One we hope will fix our lives. But look closely at His face. He is not a conquering warlord; He is the Lamb walking willingly into the lion's den. Are we cheering for the Christ who saves us from our sins, or are we only cheering for a Christ who fulfills our earthly whims? The palm in your hand today will be the ash on your forehead next year. And in the span of a few short days, the same voices that shouted "Hosanna" will scream "Crucify Him!"

THE CALL TO ACTION:

Place your blessed palms behind a crucifix in your home. Every time you pass it this week, say: "Lord, let my 'Hosanna' be true even when the shadows fall."

ACTIVITY: WEAVING THE VICTORY

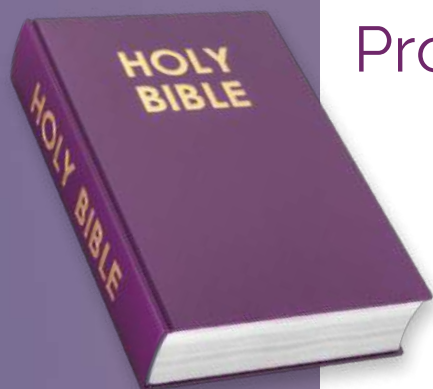
The palms we carry are sacramentals – reminders of Christ's victory over death. Instead of simply tucking them behind a picture frame, engage in the ancient tradition of Palm Weaving.

The Simple Cross: A beautiful way to "enthroned" the palm in your home. By folding the leaf into the shape of the Cross, we visually unite Christ's royal entry with His ultimate sacrifice. There are many simple tutorials for "Palm Weaving." A basic cross is made by taking two strips of palm and folding them over one another to form a "lock" in the center.

A Family Prayer: As you weave, pray for the grace of perseverance: "Lord, may this palm be a sign that You are King of my heart, in joy and in sorrow."



THE LIVING GOSPEL: Proclaiming the Passion



Gospel chapters that cover the Passion of Christ



Matthew
26-27

Mark
14-15

Luke
22-23

John
18-19

The **Palm Sunday** liturgy features the reading of the entire Passion narrative. Bring this powerful tradition into the "Domestic Church" by assigning roles for a family reading.

- The Roles:
 - **Narrator:** Leads the story.
 - **The Voice of Christ:** Traditionally read by the head of the household or the eldest child.
 - **The Crowd:** Everyone else joins in for the difficult lines, like "*Crucify Him!*"
- * **The Impact:** When you are forced to speak the words of the crowd, the weight of our collective sin becomes tangible. It prepares the soul for the mercy of the Triduum.



FROM THE KITCHEN

- The "Hosanna" Herb-Crusted Roasted Chicken
- The "Land of Milk and Honey" Fig Galette





MONDAY – WEDNESDAY

THE TENSION BUILDS

The air in Jerusalem thickens. The triumphant echoes of "Hosanna" from Sunday begin to fade, replaced by the hushed whispers of the Sanhedrin. In the shadows of the Temple, plots are being hatched for thirty pieces of silver. In a small house in Bethany, a woman breaks an alabaster jar, wasting a fortune's worth of perfume on Jesus' feet. The world calls it "waste"; Jesus calls it "love."

Not merely a "waiting room" for the Triduum, the "Quiet Days" of Holy Week are our chance to choose a side. Will we be like Judas, calculating what our faith costs us? Or like Mary of Bethany, reckless in our devotion?

These three days are a critical period of purity and preparation. We are called to look inward, identifying the fragilities of our own hearts before we stand at the foot of the Cross.

THE CALL TO ACTION:

The "Silver" Fast: Identify one luxury you usually spend money on this week (coffee, snacks, apps). Put that physical cash in a jar. On Holy Thursday, give it to the poor as "reparations" for Judas' greed.

FAMILY ACTION: THE SPRING CLEANING OF THE SOUL

In the Catholic tradition, the physical and the spiritual are deeply intertwined. This week, we don't just clean for the sake of chores; we clean as an act of liturgical preparation.

- **The Exterior Clean:** Dedicate one of these days to a deep "Spring Cleaning" of the home. As you scrub floors, declutter closets, or wash windows, do so with the intention of making your home (or even just one room if that is all you can do) a fit palace for the Resurrected King.
- **The Interior Clean (The Sacrament of Reconciliation):** The physical cleaning is a precursor to the spiritual. This is the ultimate "Spring Cleaning of the Soul." If you have not gone to Confession during Lent, do not let this Wednesday pass without seeking the Priest. Sweep out the dust of old sins and the cobwebs of bitterness. Enter the Triduum with a heart that is empty of self and full of Grace.



THE ANOINTING AND THE BETRAYAL

Monday

(The Fragrance of Love):

John 12:1–3

"Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume."

Tuesday

(The Prediction):

John 13:36–38

– Jesus tells Peter, "The cock will not crow until you have denied me three times."

Wednesday

(The Thirty Pieces):

Matthew

26:14–16

– Judas goes to the chief priests. "What will you give me if I betray him to you?"

DAILY REFLECTIONS: The Heart's Inventory

Monday: The Fragrance of Devotion

- **The Scene:** Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus' feet with costly perfumed oil. The house is filled with the scent.
- **The Reflection:** Mary gives her absolute best – her "wasteful" love – without calculating the cost. In contrast, the world (personified by Judas) calls this devotion a waste.
- **The Call to Action:** Ask yourself: Is my prayer life a "leftover" or a "lavish" offering? Do I give Christ my best time, or only what remains at the end of the day?



Tuesday: The Shadow of Denial

- **The Scene:** Jesus predicts that Peter, the Rock, will deny Him three times before the cock crows.
- **The Reflection:** We often see ourselves as the hero of the story, but Tuesday humbles us. Peter's fall reminds us that even our strongest intentions can crumble under the weight of fear or social pressure.
- **The Call to Action:** Identify your "Peter moments." Where do you remain silent about your faith to avoid discomfort? Offer these weaknesses to the Lord today.



Wednesday: Spy Wednesday

- **The Scene:** Judas Iscariot agrees to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
- **The Reflection:** Why is it called "Spy Wednesday"? Because Judas became a spy in the midst of the Twelve. We must confront the uncomfortable truth: every time we choose a sin, a comfort, or a worldly gain over Christ's command, we are choosing "silver" over the Savior.
- **The Call to Action:** Judas chose silver over the Savior. Today, examine what may be drawing your heart away from Christ.



FROM THE KITCHEN



- HOLY MONDAY - Herb-Anointed White Bean & Kale Stew
- FIG TUESDAY - The "Fruitful Harvest" Fig & Walnut Salad
- SPY WEDNESDAY – "The Thirty Pieces" Moneybag Wontons



THE SACRED TRIDUUM

ONE CONTINUOUS LITURGY

The Triduum is not three separate services; it is one single, unfolding prayer that spans three days.

From the shadowed Upper Room of **Holy Thursday**, where Christ gives the mandatum of love and institutes the Eucharist and priesthood, the Church moves toward the stark mercy of the Cross on **Good Friday**, waits in the breathless stillness of the tomb on **Holy Saturday**, and at last erupts in the paschal fire of the Easter Vigil, proclaiming the risen Lord, eternal light conquering the night.

Participation in community at your Church parish services is the most immersive way to experience these three sacred and solemn days. Private devotion, while valuable, cannot replicate the ecclesial reality where the Body of Christ united with its Head celebrates as one.





HOLY THURSDAY

THE NIGHT OF LOVE

Also called Maundy Thursday, tonight we enter the Upper Room. We celebrate the dual gifts of the Eucharist and the Ministerial Priesthood, born from Christ's desire to remain with us until the end of time.

THE REFLECTION

Tonight, the King of the Universe ties a towel around His waist and kneels in the dirt. Feel the water on your feet – the shock of a God who serves. Tonight, He holds bread and says, "This is My Body." He isn't just giving us a meal; He is giving us Himself so that we never have to be alone again. As the bells ring and then fall silent, we follow Him to the Garden of Gethsemane. He asks only one thing: "*Could you not watch one hour with Me?*"

The Mandatum: Christ gives us a "New Commandment" (Mandatum): *Love one another as I have loved you.* He proves this love not with a crown, but with a basin and a towel.

THE CALL TO ACTION:

The Empty Chair: Set an extra place at your dinner table tonight to represent the Apostles. After dinner, stripping the table bare – no tablecloth, no candles – mirrors the Church's ritual of stripping the altars in silence after the *Mass of the Lord's Supper*, symbolizing Christ's arrest, passion, and self-emptying.

FAMILY ACTION: WASHING OF THE FEET

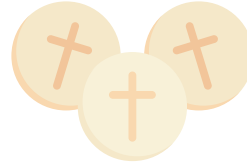
In your "Domestic Church," have the head of the household wash the feet of the family. It is a powerful, humbling reminder that to lead is to serve.

- **The Meaning:** Read John 13:1–15 together. Explain that even though Jesus is the King of the Universe, He knelt down to wash the dirty feet of His friends to show us how to love one another.
- **The Activity:** Set out a simple basin of warm water, a pitcher, and a clean towel. Have the parents wash the feet of the children. If the children are old enough, they can take turns washing their siblings' or parents' feet as well.
- **The Lesson:** It is a moment of quiet and intentionality. It teaches children that being a follower of Christ means putting the needs of others before our own.





THE GIFT OF THE EUCHARIST



After the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist is moved to an "Altar of Repose."

This repository holds the Blessed Sacrament in a closed tabernacle (never a monstrance) for Good Friday Communion and viaticum, symbolizing Christ's presence amid his agony.

After the procession to the Altar of Repose, Catholics are invited to adore locally, keeping vigil with Christ.

THE INSTITUTION

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

"For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread..."

THE MANDATE (MANDATUM)

John 13:14–15

"So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

THE AGONY

Matthew 26:36–46

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want."

FROM THE KITCHEN



- Serve a "Seder-inspired" meal of roasted lamb and bitter herbs (like horseradish or arugula) to connect the Passover of the Old Covenant with the true Lamb of the New.

or

- The "Servant King" Roasted Lamb & Unleavened Flatbread





GOOD FRIDAY

THE DAY THE WORLD DARKENED

THE SILENCE OF THE WOOD

The altars are stripped. The tabernacle is empty. Today, the Church does not celebrate Mass; we simply venerate the Wood of the Cross on which hung the Savior of the world.

THE REFLECTION

Total silence. The Tabernacle is empty. The lamp is out. At 3:00 PM, the breath of God leaves the world. Look at the Wood of the Cross. This is not a tragedy; it is a rescue mission. Every drop of Blood is a signature of mercy written on the ledger of your life. Do not look away from the Crucifix today. Let the weight of His sacrifice break your heart so that His Grace can finally enter and heal it. **The Seven Last Words:** Meditate on Christ's final breaths. From "*Father, forgive them*" to "*It is finished,*" these words are His final will and testament of mercy.

THE CALL TO ACTION:

The Veneration of the Cross: At 3:00 PM, gather everyone in the house. Place a single crucifix on a table covered with a black cloth. In total silence, each person approaches, genuflects, and kisses the feet of Jesus. You can keep it simple. No words are needed. But you may repeat: "*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You, because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"

St. Ambrose taught:

*"Let us adore Christ, our King, who hung upon the wood,
and not the wood."*

FAMILY ACTION

- **The 12:00–3:00 PM Blackout:** Challenge the family to total silence and an "electronics fast" during the hours Jesus hung on the Cross. Turn off the Wi-Fi, silence the phones, and let the house be still.
- **Veneration of the Cross:** At 3:00 PM (the hour of His death), gather at your prayer table. Each person takes a turn kneeling before the crucifix, offering a kiss or a touch to the wounds of Christ.
- **Fast:** Eat bread and clear Lenten broth for dinner to maintain a spirit of fasting.



THE SACRIFICE OF THE LAMB



THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 53:5

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed."

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

Luke 23:34, 43
John 19:26-27
Matthew 27:46
John 19:28, 30
Luke 23:46

THE WITNESS

John 19:34
"Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out."

WALKING THE PATH TOGETHER: A Family Way of the Cross



The Stations of the Cross offer a profound opportunity to pause and walk alongside Jesus during His final hours. This Holy Week, transform your living room or backyard into a sacred space. This activity isn't just about reciting prayers; it's about inviting your children to see, feel, and wonder at the depth of God's love.

THE ACTIVITY

Set up fourteen simple "stations" around your home using printed images or even household objects (like a piece of wood for the Cross or a white cloth for the burial). At each stop, read a brief scripture passage and ask a "heart question" to spark conversation. For example, "What is a 'heavy' task you have to do today? How can you do it with a smile for Jesus?" for the 2nd Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

WHY THIS MATTERS

By participating in the Way of the Cross as a family, you are: **Creating Living Traditions:** Moving beyond the pews to make the faith tangible and accessible.

Building Empathy: Helping children connect the suffering of Christ to the needs of their neighbors and friends.

Answering the Call: Engaging in a powerful call to action to follow Jesus not just in words, but in our daily sacrifices for one another.

A Family Prayer: *"Lord Jesus, as we walk these steps, help our hearts to burn with love for You. Teach us to be Your hands and feet in the world today. Amen."*



FROM THE KITCHEN

- The "Crown of Thorns" Braided Soup Bread





HOLY SATURDAY

THE GREAT SILENCE

THE GREAT WAITING

Today is a day of profound waiting. The King is asleep. While His body rests in the tomb, His spirit descends into the depths (the "Harrowing of Hell") to break the chains of the ancient dead and bring them into glory.

THE REFLECTION

The Waiting Room of Faith: This is the day of the "hidden" God. We sit in the uncomfortable space between the tragedy of Friday and the triumph of Sunday. The world holds its breath. The tomb is sealed. It feels like defeat, but beneath the earth, Christ is shattering the gates of hell. Today is a day of "Holy Expectation." We live in the "in-between." We know the ending, but we must sit in the darkness first to truly appreciate the Light.

THE CALL TO ACTION:

Remain near the tomb with the Church in prayerful hope, remembering that even in silence God is at work. Take time to keep watch with Scripture, meditate on the mystery of Christ's descent among the dead, and prepare your heart for the joy soon to be proclaimed.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: THE "NEW FIRE" CANDLE PREPARATION

In the liturgy of the Easter Vigil, the celebration begins with the blessing of the "New Fire." You can bring this symbolism into your home.

The Activity: Clean and decorate a large white candle (a "Family Paschal Candle") using markers, wax pens, or even stickers of a cross, the Alpha and Omega, and the current year.

The Moment: Keep the candle unlit throughout the day. Place it in the center of your dining table. Explain to your children that this candle represents Jesus. Just as the tomb was dark and cold, the candle remains unlit until the sun goes down or until Easter morning, when we finally "proclaim the light."



SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION



*"Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!"
Psalm 27:14*



*"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."
John 1:5*

IN SILENCE WE WAIT



- **The "Great Silence" Hour:** Set a timer for one hour (or even 15 minutes for younger children) where the house remains completely silent. No music, no talking, no toys. Use the time for reading or resting, modeling the quiet of the tomb.
- **Preparation of the Feast:** Holy Saturday is traditionally a day of preparation. Spend time together in the kitchen baking "Empty Tomb" Resurrection Cookies or "Resurrection Rolls" (both where the center "disappears" during baking to represent the empty tomb) or preparing the food for your Easter Sunday celebration.
- **Visit the Empty Church:** If your local parish is open, take a brief walk through the quiet sanctuary. Point out the empty tabernacle and the purple veils, explaining that we are waiting for Jesus to return.



FROM THE KITCHEN

- The "Hidden Life" Stuffed Harvest Peppers
- "Empty Tomb" Resurrection Cookies
- Resurrection Rolls





EASTER SUNDAY

THE VICTORY OF THE LAMB

THE DAWN OF THE EIGHTH DAY

Alleluia! He is Risen! The long fast is over, the debt is paid, and the grave is empty. Today, the "Domestic Church" erupts in the joy of the Resurrection. This is not just a happy ending to a sad story; it is the definitive victory of Light over darkness, Life over death, and Grace over sin.

THE REFLECTION: THE FOUNDATION OF OUR HOPE

The word has been buried for forty days, and now it explodes into the air! The stone is rolled away – not so He could get out, but so we could see in. Death has lost its sting. The darkness did its worst, and it wasn't enough. Today, we don't just celebrate an historical event; we celebrate our own future. Because He lives, we shall live also. Burn your brightest candles, wear your finest clothes, and feast until your heart is full! If Christ is not raised, our faith is in vain. But because He is risen, every tear, every cross, and even death itself has been transformed.

THE CALL TO ACTION:

Do not let the "Alleluia" stay inside the church walls. Carry it into your home, your work, and your relationships. Live as a "Resurrection People" – a people who know that no matter how dark the Friday, the Sunday victory is guaranteed.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: SIGNS OF NEW LIFE

The Resurrection Garden: Using a shallow planter, create a living scene of the empty tomb. Use a small terra cotta pot turned on its side as the sepulcher, covered with dirt and moss. On Easter morning, roll away the stone (a large pebble) and place a small white cloth inside to represent the burial linens. It is a visual "Exclamation Point" for children.

Resurrection Eggs (The Holy Hunt): Instead of just candy, fill twelve plastic eggs with symbols of the week:

- A piece of purple cloth (The Mocking).
- Three silver coins (The Betrayal).
- A thorn (The Crown).
- The Final Egg: Leave it completely empty to represent the Empty Tomb. As the children find them, gather to tell the story one last time.



EASTER SUNDAY BLESSING



*In the name of the
Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

*Alleluia! Christ is
risen!
He is risen indeed!
Alleluia!*

*Lord Jesus, Risen
Savior,
fill this home and
our hearts with the
joy of your victory
over death.*

*May the light of
your Resurrection
dispel all darkness,
renew our faith,
and unite us in
your peace.
Bless us, O Lord,
with the grace of
new life,
through the power
of your Holy Spirit.*

*Through Christ our
Lord. Amen.*

Alleluia!

THE VICTORY OF LIGHT



THE RESURRECTION

Matthew 28:5–6

"But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.'"

THE NEW CREATION

Colossians 3:1

"So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Luke 24:30–31

"When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him."

FROM THE KITCHEN



- Roasted Lamb with Garlic and Rosemary
- The "New Life" Asparagus & Prosciutto Bundles
- Traditional "Pane di Pasqua" (Easter Bread)





RECIPE APPENDIX



THE "HOSANNA" HERB-CRUSTED ROASTED CHICKEN

This recipe uses a "crown" of fresh herbs – representing the palms – to flavor the meat. It is a meal that gathers the community together before the quiet of Holy Week begins.

Prep time: 15 mins | Cook time: 1 hour 15 mins | Serves: 4 – 6

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken (4–5 lbs), patted dry
- 4 tbsp butter or olive oil, softened
- A "Palm" Herb Mix: 1 tbsp each of chopped fresh rosemary, thyme, and flat-leaf parsley
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 lb fingerling potatoes or baby carrots (to roast in the pan)
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Prepare the Herb Rub: In a small bowl, combine the butter (or oil), garlic, lemon zest, and half of your herb mix.
2. Season the Bird: Rub the herb butter under the skin of the breast and all over the outside of the chicken. Generously season with salt and pepper.
3. Create the "Path": Place the potatoes and carrots at the bottom of a roasting pan. Toss them with a little oil and the remaining herbs. Place the chicken on top, breast – side up.
4. Roast: Bake at 400°F for about 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until the internal temperature reaches 165°F.
5. Rest and Serve: Let the chicken rest for 15 minutes before carving. This is a time to pause and prepare your heart for the week ahead.



THE "LAND OF MILK AND HONEY" FIG GALETTE

This recipe focuses on the natural sweetness of the fruit and the richness of the honey, symbolizing the promised abundance. A galette is a free-form tart, which is much more forgiving than a traditional pie – it's a beautiful reflection of the "imperfect but sincere" offering we bring to the table.

A Symbolic Sweet: Fig & Honey Galette

Figs are deeply biblical, often representing the faith of Israel. Honey represents the "land flowing with milk and honey" and figs also recall Jesus' journey between Bethany and Jerusalem.

Prep time: 20 mins | Chill time: 30 mins | Cook time: 35 mins | Serves: 6-8

Ingredients

The Crust:

- 1 1/2 cups All-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) Cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 tbsp Sugar
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 3-4 tbsp Ice water

The Filling:

- 1 lb Fresh figs, stemmed and halved or sliced (representing the "fruit of the land")
- 2 tbsp Honey (plus more for drizzling)
- 1/4 cup Goat cheese or mascarpone (optional, for a "milk and honey" effect)
- 1 tsp Fresh thyme or rosemary (chopped)
- 1 Egg (beaten, for the egg wash)
- Coarse sugar (for the crust)

Instructions

1. **Make the Pastry:** Pulse flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor. Add cold butter and pulse until it looks like coarse crumbs. Add ice water 1 tablespoon at a time until the dough just holds together. Wrap in plastic and chill for 30 minutes.
2. **Prepare the Base:** Preheat your oven to 400°F. On a piece of parchment paper, roll the dough into a rough 12-inch circle. It doesn't have to be perfect—the rustic edges are part of the charm.
3. **Layer the Offering:** Spread the cheese in the center (if using), leaving a 2-inch border. Arrange the figs on top in a circular pattern.
4. **Drizzle and Fold:** Drizzle the honey and scatter the herbs over the figs. Fold the edges of the dough over the fruit, pleating as you go to "seal" the galette.
5. **The Finish:** Brush the crust with the egg wash and sprinkle with coarse sugar.
6. **Bake:** Slide the parchment onto a baking sheet and bake for 30-35 minutes until the crust is a deep golden brown and the figs are jammy.

The "Honey" Connection: As you drizzle the honey over the warm tart, remember the words of Psalm 119:103

"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"



HERB – ANOINTED WHITE BEAN & KALE STEW

This recipe is hearty yet meatless, adhering to the spirit of Lenten sacrifice. The use of fresh rosemary and high-quality olive oil serves as a culinary nod to the fragrant nard used to anoint Christ.

Holy Monday

marks the beginning of the final journey toward the Paschal Mystery, and a meal that balances simplicity with deep tradition is often the most fitting. In many Catholic traditions, this day focuses on the anointing of Jesus at Bethany, where Mary used costly perfumed oil – a gesture of profound love and preparation. A beautiful way to reflect this in your kitchen is through a dish that uses aromatic herbs and oil, emphasizing the "anointing" theme while remaining humble enough for a day of Lenten reflection.

Prep time: 10 mins | Cook time: 20 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 cans (15 oz) Cannellini or Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 large bunch Lacinato kale, stems removed and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp fresh rosemary, finely minced
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes (optional, for a touch of warmth)
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Garnish: A generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a pinch of sea salt

Instructions

1. Sauté the Aromatics: In a large pot, heat a splash of olive oil over medium heat. Add the sliced garlic, rosemary, and red pepper flakes. Sauté for 1–2 minutes until the garlic is golden and the rosemary is fragrant.
2. Simmer the Base: Add the drained beans and the vegetable broth. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, then reduce heat and let it simmer for about 10 minutes. For a creamier texture, lightly mash a few of the beans against the side of the pot.
3. Wilt the Greens: Stir in the chopped kale. Cook for another 3–5 minutes until the kale is tender and bright green.
4. The Anointing: Remove from heat and stir in the lemon juice to brighten the flavors.
5. Serve: Ladle into bowls. Just before eating, perform the "anointing" by drizzling a circle of high-quality olive oil over the top of each serving.



THE "FRUITFUL HARVEST" FIG & WALNUT SALAD

This salad is a beautiful balance of textures—crunchy walnuts, creamy cheese, and “jammy” figs – brought together by a honey-balsamic dressing that speaks of the "sweetness of the Lord."

We lean into the "**Fig Tuesday**" theme by creating a dish that is both refreshing and deeply symbolic. This salad is designed to be "fruitful," combining the sweetness of the fig with the bitterness of greens, reminding us of the complexity of the walk toward Calvary. We pray that our own lives are not like the barren tree, but are instead bursting with the sweetness of Christ's love.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." — Galatians 5:22 – 23

Prep time: 15 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 5 oz Fresh arugula or a spring mix (the slight bitterness represents the Lenten fast)
- 6 – 8 Fresh mission figs, quartered (or dried figs, thinly sliced)
- 1/2 cup Toasted walnuts (representing the hard "shell" of our hearts that must be opened)
- 1/4 cup Feta or Goat cheese crumbles (omit for a strict fast)
- 1/2 Red onion, very thinly sliced

The "Oil of Gladness" Vinaigrette

- 3 tbsp Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp Balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp Honey (to recall the "sweetness of the Word")
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- Pinch of sea salt and cracked black pepper

Instructions

1. Prepare the Dressing: In a small jar, combine the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, honey, mustard, salt, and pepper. Shake vigorously until emulsified.
2. Toast the Walnuts: In a dry pan over medium heat, lightly toast the walnuts for 3–5 minutes until fragrant. This releases their oils and deepens the flavor.
3. Assemble the Greenery: In a large bowl, toss the arugula and red onion with about half of the dressing.
4. Layer the Fruit: Gently fold in the sliced figs and toasted walnuts. We add these last so the delicate figs stay intact.
5. Finish & Garnish: Top with the cheese crumbles and a final drizzle of the dressing.

This salad pairs perfectly with a crusty artisan bread, representing the "Bread of Life."



"THE THIRTY PIECES" MONEYBAG WONTONS

These crispy bundles are shaped like small pouches tied with a string. They are fun to assemble and even better to eat. You can fill them with pork, chicken, or a vegetarian mix of tofu and finely chopped mushrooms.

Expanding on the "**Spy Wednesday**" theme with a family – friendly twist is a fun way to engage all ages in the storytelling of Holy Week. "Moneybag" wontons are a perfect visual metaphor for the thirty pieces of silver, making the biblical narrative tangible at the dinner table.

By making these together, you turn a meal into a catechetical activity – a call to action for the family to reflect on loyalty and the value of our "yes" to Christ.

Prep time: 30 mins | Cook time: 15 mins | Makes: 24–30 bags

Ingredients

- 1 package Wonton wrappers (square or round)
- 1 lb Ground pork or chicken (or extra – firm tofu, crumbled)
- 2 Green onions, very finely minced
- 1 tbsp Soy sauce
- 1 tsp Toasted sesame oil
- 1 tsp Fresh ginger, grated
- For the "Ties": A bunch of fresh chives (blanched in hot water for 10 seconds to make them pliable)
- Oil for frying (or cooking spray for air – frying)

Instructions

1. **The Filling:** In a bowl, mix the meat (or tofu), green onions, soy sauce, sesame oil, and ginger.
2. **Filling the "Bags":** Place a small teaspoon of the mixture in the center of a wonton wrapper.
3. **The Cinch:** Moisten the edges of the wrapper with a dip of water. Gather the edges upward toward the center, pleating them slightly to create a pouch. Squeeze the "neck" of the bag firmly to seal it.
4. **The Tie:** Carefully tie a blanched chive around the neck of each bag in a simple knot. (This is a great task for children!)
5. **The "Silver" Finish:** * **To Fry:** Heat 2 inches of oil in a pot to 350°F. Fry in batches for 3–4 minutes until golden brown.
 - **To Air – Fry:** Spray generously with oil and cook at 375°F for 8–10 minutes.
6. **Serve:** Arrange exactly 30 on a platter to represent the silver coins.

A Simple Dipping Sauce

Mix 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp honey, and a squeeze of lime. The sweet and salty contrast mirrors the bittersweet nature of the day.



THE "SERVANT KING" ROASTED LAMB & UNLEAVENED FLATBREAD

A traditional Seder Meal is a beautiful way to commemorate this Holy Thursday. Alternatively, you may choose these recipes. Lamb is the traditional Passover meat, symbolizing the "Lamb of God." Pairing it with a quick, unleavened bread recalls the haste of the Exodus and the humility of Christ's service.

For **Maundy Thursday**, the focus shifts to the Upper Room. This is the night of the Last Supper, the institution of the Eucharist, and the Mandatum (the washing of the feet). The tradition is one of humble service and communal bread.

Prep time: 20 mins | Cook time: 30 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 lb Lamb loin chops or medallions
- 4 cloves Garlic, smashed
- 2 tbsp Fresh rosemary, chopped
- The Bread: 2 cups flour, 3/4 cup water, 3 tbsp olive oil, pinch of salt
- Accompaniment: Fresh parsley and a bowl of salted water (representing the bitter herbs and tears of the Exodus)

Instructions

1. The Lamb: Rub the lamb with garlic, rosemary, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Sear in a hot pan for 4–5 minutes per side until medium–rare. Let it rest – this represents the "waiting" in the garden.
2. The Unleavened Bread: Mix the flour, water, oil, and salt into a smooth dough. Divide into 8 balls and roll them out paper–thin.
3. The Fire: Cook each flatbread in a dry, hot skillet for 1 minute per side until charred spots appear.
4. The Service: Serve the bread warm, intended to be torn by hand and shared among everyone at the table.

The Gift of Presence

Jesus didn't just give a command; He gave Himself in the bread and wine. True stewardship is the gift of presence. We are called not just to give our treasure, but to be fully present to the mission and to those we serve.

Blessing:

"Lord, as we break this bread, remind us that we are one body. May this meal fuel us to serve others with the same humility You showed in the Upper Room. Amen."



THE "CROWN OF THORNS" BRAIDED SOUP BREAD

This is a simple, lean bread (no eggs, milk, or butter) shaped into a circle to represent the Crown of Thorns. It is designed to accompany a humble vegetable soup.

Good Friday is the most solemn day of the Church year, a day of fasting and abstinence. In the Catholic tradition, we traditionally abstain from meat and limit ourselves to one full meal (and two smaller collations) to maintain a spirit of penance and solidarity with the suffering of Christ.

Prep time: 15 mins (+ 1 hr rising) | Cook time: 20 mins | Yields: 1 loaf

Ingredients

- 3 cups All-purpose flour
- 1 cup Warm water
- 1 packet (2 1/4 tsp) Active dry yeast
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tbsp Olive oil (representing the anointing)
- 12–15 Whole cloves (to represent the thorns)

Instructions

1. **The Dough:** Dissolve the yeast in warm water. Mix in the flour, salt, and olive oil. Knead for about 8–10 minutes until smooth.
2. **The Rise:** Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm spot for 1 hour until doubled.
3. **The Braid:** Punch down the dough and divide it into three long strands. Braid them together—representing the Holy Trinity.
4. **The Crown:** Shape the braid into a circle, pinching the ends together.
5. **The Thorns:** Press the whole cloves into the dough at intervals along the braid.
6. **The Bake:** Bake at 375°F for 20–25 minutes until golden brown and hollow – sounding when tapped.

The Price of Mission

As you press the "thorns" into the bread, consider the cost of the mission. Every campaign you lead and every effort to modernize the Church's data comes with a "cost" of time and labor. We offer that labor today in union with the Passion.

The Broken Bread

We do not feast today; we sustain ourselves for the vigil. This bread, broken and shared, is a sign of our communal sorrow and our shared hope.

Blessing: "Lord, as we partake of this simple bread, we remember Your sacrifice. May our fast today sharpen our hunger for justice and our desire to serve Your Kingdom with all we have. Amen."



THE "HIDDEN LIFE" STUFFED HARVEST PEPPERS

Brightly colored bell peppers act as the "tomb," while a savory filling of grains and colorful vegetables represents the "hidden treasure" of the Resurrection. This is a lighter, meatless – capable meal that respects the final hours of the Lenten fast.

For a **Holy Saturday** dinner that bridges the gap between the quiet of the tomb and the coming joy of the Vigil, a "Hidden Treasure" Stuffed Chicken or Bell Pepper is a wonderful family–friendly entree. This dish uses the concept of a "hidden" filling to mirror the mystery of Holy Saturday – where life is tucked away, waiting to burst forth.

Prep time: 20 mins | Cook time: 35 mins | Serves: 4 – 6

Ingredients

- 4–6 Large Bell peppers (any color), tops sliced off and seeded
- 2 cups Cooked quinoa or rice (the "seeds" of new life)
- 1 can (15 oz) Black beans or chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 cup Corn or diced zucchini
- 1 jar (16 oz) Marinara or mild salsa (the "earth")
- 1 cup Shredded mozzarella or Monterey jack (the "light" hidden inside)
- 1 tsp Cumin and smoked paprika

Instructions

1. Prepare the Tombs: Stand the hollowed–out peppers in a baking dish. If they are wobbly, slice a tiny bit off the bottom to level them.
2. The Hidden Mixture: In a large bowl, stir together the cooked grain, beans, vegetables, half of the cheese, and the spices. Stir in half of the sauce to bind it together.
3. The Burial: Spoon the mixture into each pepper, pressing down gently. Top each with a spoonful of the remaining sauce.
4. The Seal: Place the "lids" (the sliced–off pepper tops) back on. Pour a 1/2 cup of water into the bottom of the baking dish to steam them.
5. The Wait: Cover the dish with foil and bake at 375°F for 30 minutes.
6. The Reveal: Remove the foil and the "lids," sprinkle the remaining cheese over the filling, and bake for 5 more minutes until the cheese is melted and glowing.

The Gift of Expectation

As you slice into these peppers to reveal the vibrant filling, let it be a call to action to live with expectation. We don't just wait; we wait with hope. We invest our time and talent today because we know the "hidden life" will eventually be revealed.

Blessing: "Lord, as we wait in the stillness of this Saturday, we thank You for the growth that happens in secret. Bless this meal and our family. May we always look for the 'hidden treasure' of Your grace in one another. Amen."



RESURRECTION ROLLS

These rolls use a marshmallow to represent the body of Jesus. When baked, the marshmallow melts, leaving the inside of the roll completely empty – just like the tomb on Easter morning.

For another family–friendly **Holy Saturday** activity, many Catholic homes prepare "Empty Tomb" Resurrection Rolls. This is a culinary object lesson that "prepares" the tomb on Saturday so it can be "opened" on Easter Sunday morning. It is a powerful way to engage children in the mystery of the Resurrection through a tactile, sweet miracle.

Prep time: 20 mins | Cook time: 12 mins | Yields: 8 rolls

Ingredients

- 1 can Refrigerated crescent roll dough (the "shroud/tomb")
- 8 large Marshmallows (the "Body of Christ")
- 1/4 cup Melted butter (the "anointing oils")
- 2 tbsp Cinnamon mixed with 1/4 cup sugar (the "burial spices")

Instructions

1. The Preparation: Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. The Anointing: Give each child a marshmallow. Have them dip it in the melted butter and then roll it in the cinnamon – sugar "spices."
3. The Burial: Place the coated marshmallow on a triangle of crescent dough. Fold the dough around the marshmallow, pinching all edges very tightly to seal it completely. (If there are holes, the "miracle" will leak out!)
4. The Sealed Tomb: Place the rolls on a parchment–lined baking sheet.
5. The Waiting: Bake for 10–12 minutes until golden brown.
6. The Reveal: Let them cool slightly. When you break them open, the center will be empty!



Easter “Resurrection” Cookies

“Experience” Notes on page 2

To be made the
Saturday night
before Easter
Sunday

YOU NEED:

1 cup whole pecans
1 tsp vinegar
3 egg whites
Pinch of salt
1 cup sugar
Gallon zipper bag

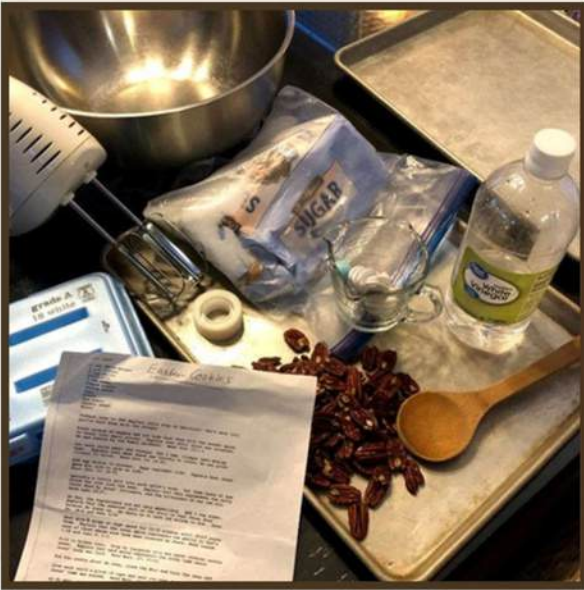
Wooden spoon
Tape
Bible
Wax paper
Cookie sheet
Mixer

Read side 2 first
for best
experience!

Preheat oven to 300 degrees (This step is important! Don't wait till you're half done with the recipe.)

1. Place pecans in the zipper bag and let kids beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers.
Read John 19: 1-3
2. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19: 29-30
3. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life.
Read John 10: 10-11
4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers and the bitterness of our own sin.
Read Luke 23:27
5. So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him.
Read Psalms 34:8 and John 3:16
6. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks form. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus.
Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3: 1-3
7. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto parchment or wax paper that covers the cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid.
Read Matt. 27: 57-63
8. Place the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt. 27: 65-66
9. GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight, just as Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16: 20 and 22.
10. On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matt. 28: 1-9

NOTES from our Family Experience



Do NOT forget to preheat the oven before you begin this process. I know the instructions say it, but if you are a scanner/speed reader like I tend to be, you may have missed that important note.

Have the kids who are at reading age take turns with the Bible passages, even the young readers.

Take the time to beat the mixture. A hand-held mixture will take a good 15 minutes. Something like a Kitchenaid mixture takes a little less time. Regardless, it takes patience.

You want this mixture to be bright white with stiff peaks. It will look a lot like marshmallow cream!

The kids usually bail on the mixing part after a few minutes 😊



You can regather when it's time to create the "mounds" on the cookie sheet(s).

We've used as many as 3 cookie sheets.

Tape: We've used Scotch, Freezer and Painter's tapes over the years. Fold at least one end of each piece back on itself so that it's easy to remove in the morning.

If you happen to have any left, these will keep for a few days in a sealed plastic container.

ROASTED LAMB WITH GARLIC AND ROSEMARY

Easter Sunday is the "Feast of Feasts," the day the fast ends and the celebration of the Resurrection begins. In Catholic homes, the table is a place of victory, often featuring Lamb (the victory of the Lamb of God) and Eggs (the symbol of new life). These dishes are designed to be shared, emphasizing the "new life" we celebrate as a community.

Symbolism: Lamb recalls Christ, the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

Ingredients

- 4–5 lb leg of lamb
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh rosemary
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Juice of 1 lemon



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Mix garlic, rosemary, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.
3. Rub mixture over the lamb.
4. Roast about 20 minutes per pound until desired doneness.
5. Rest 10–15 minutes before slicing.



THE "NEW LIFE" ASPARAGUS & PROSCIUTTO BUNDLES

These represent the "springing forth" of life. They are simple to assemble, allowing you to focus on the joy of the day.

Prep time: 10 mins | Cook time: 10 – 12 mins | Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 1 lb Fresh asparagus (tough ends trimmed)
- 6 – 8 slices Prosciutto di Parma (halved lengthwise)
- 2 tbsp Extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp Garlic powder
- Garnish: Balsamic glaze and shaved Parmesan cheese



Instructions

1. Seasoning: Toss the asparagus in a bowl with olive oil, garlic powder, and a light pinch of pepper (the prosciutto is already salty).
2. The Wrap: Take 3–4 asparagus spears and wrap a strip of prosciutto snugly around the middle. Place them on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
3. The Roast: Bake at 400°F for 10–12 minutes. You want the prosciutto to be crisp and the asparagus to be tender – crisp.
4. The Finish: Drizzle with balsamic glaze just before serving.



TRADITIONAL "PANE DI PASQUA" (EASTER BREAD)

This braided bread is a centerpiece of Catholic tradition, symbolizing the Holy Trinity and the "crown of glory."

Prep time: 30 mins (+ 2 hrs rising) | Cook time: 25 mins |
Yields: 2 small rings or 1 large loaf

Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups All-purpose flour
- ¼ cup Sugar
- 1 packet (2 ¼ tsp) Active dry yeast
- ⅔ cup Warm milk
- 2 tbsp Butter (softened)
- 1 Egg (for the dough)
- 3 – 5 Raw eggs (dyed with food coloring, but unboiled—they cook in the oven!)
- Egg wash: 1 egg beaten with 1 tsp water
- Topping: Rainbow sprinkles (representing the joy of the Alleluia)



Instructions

1. The Dough: Dissolve yeast in warm milk with a pinch of sugar. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, the yeast mixture, butter, and one egg. Knead for 8 minutes until smooth.
2. The Rise: Cover and let rise in a warm spot for 1 hour until doubled.
3. The Braid: Punch down the dough. Divide into three long ropes. Braid them together loosely.
4. The Crown: Form the braid into a circle on a baking sheet. Tuck the dyed raw eggs into the spaces between the braids.
5. Second Rise: Cover and let rise for another 45 minutes.
6. The Shine: Brush with egg wash and add sprinkles.
7. The Bake: Bake at 350°F for 20–25 minutes until golden brown.



YOUR GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK

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