

# Holy Week at Home

*An aid for families seeking to celebrate holy week fruitfully at home*



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## Holy Saturday

Extract from Roman Catholic Daily Missal

Holy Saturday is liturgically a day of deepest mourning, a day which the Church spends at our Lord's sepulchre, meditating on his sacred passion and death. There is no Mass; the sacred altar is bare.

The solemn Easter Vigil service is intended to show liturgically how life and grace flow to us from the death of our Lord: the Light of the World is exhibited under the symbol of the Paschal Candle, dispelling the night of sin by the light of grace; the *Exsultet*—the Easter Proclamation—is the song that heralds Easter, singing of the brightness of the holy night of Resurrection; the Lessons taken from the ancient prophesies tell of God's wonderful dealings with his people under the Old Covenant, faint types of the glorious happenings that were to come to pass under the New; the waters for Baptism are blessed—those waters in which those who have been buried along with Christ die to sin and with him rise to walk in newness of life; this grace he has won for us, and in Baptism bestowed on us; by renewal of our baptismal promises we publicly announce our purpose to show forth this newness in our daily lives.

# HOW TO PRAY THE TV MASS FROM HOME

*Creating a sacred space to reverently watch the mass in your home*

Create a prayer altar under your TV or streaming device. Consider setting a crucifix or other sacred art in the prayer space.

Open your bible to the gospel of the day and place it on your "home altar" to remind you that the Word of God is among you.

Light a candle to symbolize the beautiful light that shines in the darkness and to help your home resemble the Church.

Set up chairs like a pew to help you engage in the mass and keep you from passively watching from the couch.

Get dressed as you normally would when attending mass. Keeping this routine is especially helpful for children.

If you have holy water at home, bless yourself and your family before you begin the mass.

Take a few moments of silence to transition from the busyness of your home to the sacredness of the mass.

Unite yourself spiritually to the mass by standing, kneeling, sitting, and responding as if you were actually present.

Engage in community by having coffee and breakfast with your family after mass or by calling your loved ones to connect.

[List of Online and Televised Masses Viewable in the Diocese of Superior](#)

## Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.



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# Passiontide Penance

## Holy Saturday - The Silence of the Tomb

From the [website of the U.S. Bishops](#): "If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the 'paschal fast' to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection."

## The Exsultet

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God's throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!  
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of your King! Christ has conquered! Glory fills you! Darkness vanishes for ever!

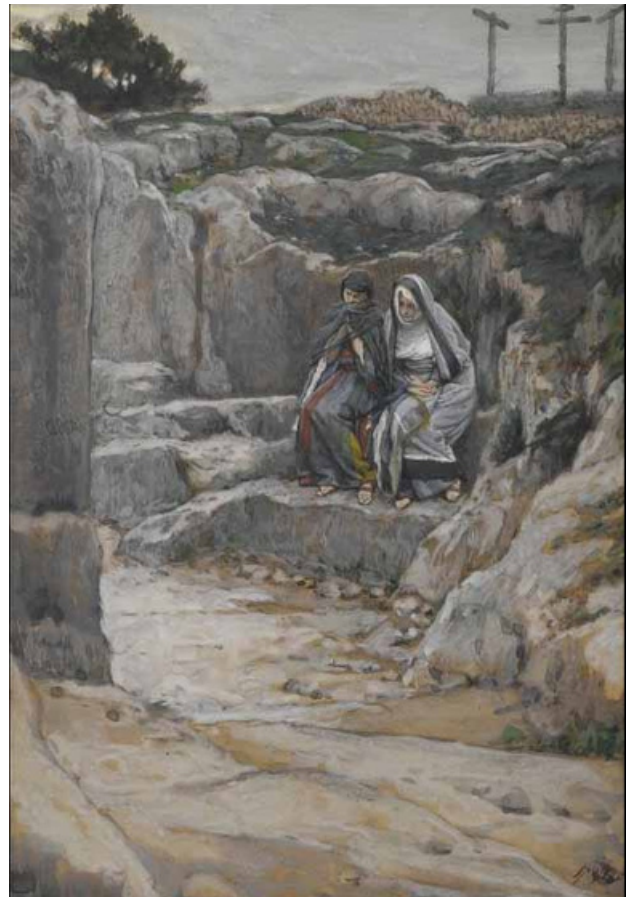
Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory! The risen Savior shines upon you! Let this place resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

It is truly right that with full hearts and minds and voices we should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Father, and his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For Christ has ransomed us with his blood, and paid for us the price of Adam's sin to our eternal Father!

This is our passover feast, when Christ, the true Lamb, is slain, whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers. This is the night when first you saved our fathers: you freed the people of Israel from their slavery and led them dry-shod through the sea. This is the night when the pillar of fire destroyed the darkness of sin!

This is the night when Christians everywhere, washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement, are restored to grace and grow together in holiness. This is the night when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death and rose triumphant from the grave. What good would life have been to us, had Christ not come as our Redeemer?

Father, how wonderful your care for us! How boundless your merciful love! To ransom a slave you gave away your Son. O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam, which gained for us so great a Redeemer! Most blessed of all nights, chosen by God to see Christ rising from the dead!



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- Start your day with a simple [morning offering](#).
  - Use the [Magnificat Online Edition](#) for morning and evening prayers.
  - Pray Day 2 of the [Divine Mercy Novena](#) leading up to the feast of Divine Mercy on the Sunday after Easter ([sign up for daily email reminders](#)).
  - Pray a Family Rosary: [How to Pray the Rosary](#)
  - [Read and learn about the Exsultet](#) (to the left) so that you can appreciate it more fully when it is sung at the Easter Vigil.
  - After the Easter Vigil, sing *Jesus Christ is Risen Today* or *Regina Caeli* (next page).

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## Family Prayers

# Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

EASTER

Words: 14th Century Bohemian Latin carol. Stanzas 1-3 translated in John Arnold's *Compleat Psalmist*, 1749.  
 Stanza 4 Charles Wesley, 1740, alt.  
 Music: 'Easter Hymn' from *Lyra Davidica*, 1708. Setting: composite found in "Church Praise: with tunes", 1885.  
 copyright: public domain. This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

$\text{♩} = 120$

1. Je - sus Christ is ris'n to - day, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 2. Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 3. But the pain which He en - dured, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 4. Sing we to our God a - bove, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!

Our tri - um - phant ho - - ly day, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Un - to Christ, our heav'n - ly King, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Our sal - va - tion hath pro - cured, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Praise e - ter - nal as His love, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!

Who did once, up - - on the cross, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Now a - - bove the sky He's king, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Praise Him, all you heav'n - ly host, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!

Suf - fer to re - - deem our loss, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Sin - ners to re - - deem and save, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Where the an - gels ev - er sing, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!  
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, Al - - - le - - lu - - ia!

[Click here for link to melody on YouTube.](#)

VI

**R** E-gína cæ-li \* lætá-re, alle-lú-ia: Qui- a quem me-  
 ru- ísti portá-re, alle-lú-ia: Re-surré-xit, sic-ut di-xit,  
 alle-lú-ia: O-ra pro no-bis De- um, alle-lú- ia.

The Regina Caeli is a hymn of joy used in place of the Angelus and sung at the close of night prayer through the whole Easter season.

O Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia!  
 For he whom thou didst merit to bear, alleluia!  
 Hath arisen as he said, alleluia!  
 Pray for us to God, alleluia!

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.  
 R. Because the Lord is truly risen, alleluia.

[Click here for link to melody on YouTube.](#)

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# Meditation on Christ's Descent into Hell

From an ancient homily for Holy Saturday

"What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: "My Lord be with you all." And Christ in reply says to Adam: "And with your spirit." And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

"I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: Have light, and those who sleep: Rise.

"I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

"For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form; that of slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

"Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image.

"See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

"I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.

"But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise, but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make the cherubim worship you as they would God.

"The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness; the treasures of good things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages."

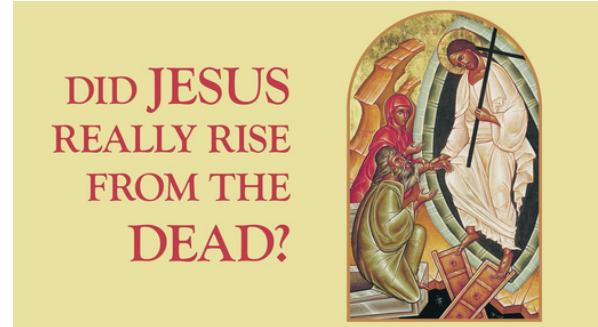


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# Bible Study

## Go deeper!

During these challenging times, the Augustine Institute is extending complimentary access to FORMED (a digital platform for the Catholic Faith on demand) for 40 days. Get access at [Faith at Home](#)



*If Christ has not been raised, said the Apostle Paul, then Christian Faith is in vain. The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is not an incidental or minor aspect of Christianity. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, Christianity is certainly false.*

*Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead?* carefully scrutinizes the historical evidence. Rather than accept Christian belief blindly, top scholars, and biblical historians critically examine alternative explanations. In the end, they show why it is a matter of sound reason as well as faith to affirm what the early Church proclaimed: Jesus is risen.

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### During the day on Holy Saturday

- **Enter the tomb.** Jesus remains in the darkness of the tomb today. Try to keep most of the lights off in your house and continue to cultivate an atmosphere of prayer and silence.
- **Lay flowers at the tomb** of Jesus in mourning for his absence, which we feel especially powerfully in this time of pandemic when so many of us are unable to receive Jesus in Holy Communion. If your flower garden is not yet blooming, [make paper flowers with your kids](#).
- **Ready the Flame.** Get ready to celebrate the Light of Christ by [making a family Paschal Candle](#).
- **Prepare for Easter.** Dye Easter Eggs. Finish Easter baskets. Decorate. Prepare food for your Easter feast. The Lord is coming!

### After the Easter Vigil

- **Celebrate!** After the Easter Vigil, it's time to party. Go all out! Pop the champagne. Let the cork explode out of the bottle and bang off the ceiling to symbolize the power of Christ's resurrection. Have some desserts or even a big meal, and enjoy some of whatever you gave up for Lent. *Live joyfully!*
- **Listen** to the [Halleluia Chorus from Handel's Messiah](#) and sing along!
- **Greet each other** by saying *Christ is Risen!* To which the other person responds *He is Risen indeed!*

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## Family Activities

*Live it!*