

GOOD FRIDAY. SIMPLE VENERATION OF THE CROSS WITH CHILDREN.

REQUIREMENTS.

Prepare a crucifix by covering the figure of Jesus with a purple cloth.
A Bible.

THE SERVICE.

The leader can begin by explaining to the children what happened to Jesus.
The group gathers around the crucifix.

Someone reads Matthew 27: 33-50 and Psalm 22: 1-5 or more.

The leader unveils the crucifix in 3 stages and each time the leader says:

“Behold the wood of the cross, on this hung the Saviour of the world.”

Or use words as appropriate.

Everyone answers: “Come let us adore and him ”

Everyone present then kisses (or touches) the cross.

PRAYERS:

Leader: Jesus you loved us even when you were nailed to the cross.

All answer: Jesus, we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus, you forgave your enemies.

Answer: Jesus we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus you obeyed your Father.

Answer: Jesus we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus, you are alive again.

Answer: Jesus, we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus, you care for all the people.

Answer: Jesus, we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus you care for all of creation.

Answer: Jesus, we thank you for your love.

Leader: Jesus, you love us still.

Answer: Jesus, we thank you for your love.

To end say together: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

EASTER VIGIL AND NEW LIFE

The Easter vigil liturgical celebrations consists of the ceremony of light, blessing of baptismal water, baptism or renewal of baptismal promises, litany of all saints and the Easter Mass. A suitable family celebration could be put together from the missal and suggestions below.

REMEMBERING OUR BAPTISM

To begin in a simple way talk about and look at photos of family members' baptism and remember our godparents too. As appropriate the family can consider the meaning and importance of their baptismal promises.

THE SERVICE:

Leader: "Promises are made to be kept. At our baptism our parents and godparents promised that they would help us to follow Jesus. Now we can make those promises for ourselves."

With lighted candles all say," I..... promise to do my best to reject the devil and avoid evil. I confirm my belief in God the Father, in Jesus God's only Son, in the Holy Spirit, in the holy Catholic church and what it teaches. I promise that I will try to follow Jesus to the best of my ability in the years to come."

End by praying together the Our Father and possibly sing an Easter hymn.

A FAMILY EASTER CANDLE could be prepared and blessed and used at family prayer times.

BLESSING OF THE WATER. Water is blessed at the Easter vigil Mass, to be used in Church and taken home.

A LITANY OF SAINTS can be adapted to include family members' favourite saints and patrons. Leader says, "Throughout the centuries very many Christians have followed Jesus and reached heaven. Some have been recognised by the Church as saints. We can ask our own special friends among them to help us to get to heaven too." Each member can mention their own saints and all respond, "Pray for us."

OTHER FAMILY ACTIVITIES FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Explain the symbolism of the different activities.

- Pray for and thank our priests for their dedication as they renew their commitment on Holy Thursday at the special Chrism Mass where they also receive the special oils used in Church.
- Make and/or eat hot cross buns on Good Friday and discuss the meaning of the cross. These buns were baked and given to the poor at this time of the year.
- Create a small Easter garden, with stones and rocks, a crucifix and a cave for the burial. It can also be made of edible items.
- An Easter egg hunt around the house and garden, possibly as a treasure hunt using biblical cues.
- Make or decorate Easter eggs. Eggs can be hardboiled and decorated with coki pens. Bunnies and chickens are also symbolic of new life.
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A FAMILY PRAYER

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
blessed Trinity
You have shown us how to love,
to be God's family.
We're sorry for the things we've done
to cause another pain
Make us willing to forgive
and so be whole again.
Bless our family today,
keep us in your care
Old and young, or sick or healthy,
those no longer there.
Help us care for others too.
Jesus showed the way.
May every home be home for God,
now and every day.