



Living EASTER

Text by: Kristi Quinlan



LIVING EASTER

"Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song." - Pope John Paul II

The Resurrection of Jesus is such overwhelmingly Good News that a single day is not enough to celebrate it. The Lord's Resurrection is meant to be celebrated intensely for the whole week following Easter (known as the Octave), the entire liturgical Season of Easter (lasting until Pentecost Sunday), and every Sunday thereafter (each as a mini-Easter).

While Lenten observances get a lot of attention, they are means for preparing us to fittingly celebrate the Easter Season, which also deserves our mindfulness. We continue to embrace Lent's call to prayerful reflection and generous action, but in a new context, the Easter context. We *contemplate* the saving love of the Father, *participate* in the new life made possible by Jesus' victory on the Cross and *invite* the Holy Spirit to come and overflow our hearts with bold energy for witnessing to the Gospel!

Perhaps you've heard the phrase, "We are an Easter people." Easter Sunday was not the end. The "Season" in which we live waiting for Jesus' second coming is Easter or perhaps, more fittingly, Pentecost! Ponder, celebrate and testify to that truth! This resource ideas for how to let Easter Sunday joy spill over into living the full Easter Season!

EASTER TERMS

Easter Octave:

The eight-day period that begins on Easter Sunday and ends with Second Sunday of Easter, marks the beginning of Eastertide

Eastertide:

The time of Easter, Easter season

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

Easter is a special time to meditate on the **glorious mysteries of the rosary**, as they begin with the Resurrection of the Lord.

Traditionally these mysteries are prayed on Sundays & Wednesdays. Consider picking one of these days each week to pray the rosary together as a family.

Younger children may also enjoy [working on coloring sheets](#) for each of the 5 mysteries.



EASTER OCTAVE

"...Easter Week is the antithesis of Holy Week. Since the resurrection was the most significant event in the life of our Lord who by means of this wonderful and undeniable fact made His divinity known to the entire world, Easter is the highest Sunday and Easter Week the great week of the entire Church year. No other feast is ever celebrated during this week (With Christ Through the Year, 1947, Bernard Strasser)."

There are many ways to participate in this, the greatest week in the Church! If you pray the Liturgy of the Hours, you'll notice that each day uses the prayers from Sunday for Lauds & Vespers, treating each day a solemnity. That's because the Easter Octave is an extension of Easter Sunday!

- **Create and listen to an Easter playlist** of joyful music throughout the week
- **Proclaim Easter joy to your neighbors** with hand-written cards or drawn pictures (perfect for kids who love arts & crafts!)
- **Keep up your Easter decorations** and decorate with colorful eggs, candles, & fresh flowers. Put up your favorite image of the Risen Jesus or create an empty tomb scene.
- **Make a point of having some special food each day:** a special dinner each night, some extra baking, Easter candy or, since Jesus rose in the morning, have an octave of your family's favorite breakfasts!
- **Read a different post-Resurrection story** at a mealtime or before bed, reflecting on it for that day.
- **Pray a Glorious Mystery of the Rosary daily**, or at least once during the week
- **Pray the Regina Caeli at noon daily**

THE REGINA CAELI

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia.

The Son you merited to bear, alleluia,
Has risen as he said, alleluia.

Pray to God for us, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary,
alleluia.

For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray.

God of life, you have given joy to the world by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through the prayers of his mother, the Virgin Mary, bring us to the happiness of eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



DIVINE MERCY

"I realize more and more how much every soul needs God's mercy throughout life and particularly at the hour of death. This chaplet mitigates God's anger, as He Himself told me." - St. Faustina, Diary 1036

St. Faustina's Diary records 14 occasions when Jesus requested that a Feast of Mercy (Divine Mercy Sunday) be observed. On May 5, 2000, five days after the canonization of St. Faustina, the Vatican decreed that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as Divine Mercy Sunday.

- **Start praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet on Good Friday**, so that the novena ends on Divine Mercy Sunday (9 days later)
- **Learn more about Divine Mercy Sunday and St. Faustina**, the nun to whom Jesus revealed his mercy in a special way. *Christian Family TV* has a [great YouTube video](#) about both the image and St. Faustina!
- **Offer Sunday Mass** for those in special need of God's mercy, to know your own need for God's saving mercy, and to experience receiving it.
- **Place an image of Divine Mercy** (as Jesus appeared to St. Faustina) in a prominent place and pray "Jesus, I Trust in You" when you look at it.
- **Pray with Jesus at Eucharistic Adoration.** With a grateful heart, rest in Jesus' merciful love and forgiveness for you, personally. Ask him for the grace to show mercy to others.



DIVINE MERCY EXPLAINED

Jesus asked that his image be painted and venerated throughout the world: "I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish" (Diary, no. 48) and "By means of this image I will grant many graces to souls" (Diary, no. 742).

- **The red rays represent the blood of Jesus**, which was spilled for sinners to redeem the world
- **The white rays represent the water**, that poured forth from the side of Jesus when the Roman soldier stabbed him, representing the water that will purify all souls
- **The whole image is a symbol of charity, forgiveness and love of God**, referred to as the "Fountain of Mercy"



EASTERTIDE

“Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus says that there is a future for every human being; the cry for unending life which is a part of the person is indeed answered.” - Pope Benedict XVI

Easter continues until Pentecost on May 19th. How can you keep living the joy of the Easter season for the next 6 weeks?

- **As a family, reflect on and choose which elements of your Lenten prayer and almsgiving you could continue doing this year.** How might they be different to reflect the joy of the Season?
- **Plant something in Easter hope** – your flowerbed, vegetable garden, or potted plants – reflecting on the new life and beauty Christ offers.
- **Start every prayer with an expression of praise or thanks to God.** Remember that the tribe of Judah - meaning *praise* - always goes into battle first!
- **Make each Sunday of the Easter Season celebratory** with Mass, a special meal, and some family reflection & prayer. (Check out our weekly faith conversations to get you started!) Schedule fun family time for after: games in the yard, a trip to buy garden plants, a bike ride, a hike, etc.
- **Traditionally, many receive Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation in this Season.** Celebrate them with prayer, a card or gift, or a call to bless them and share in their joy.
- **Journal about your own “resurrection” experiences,** times you were “brought back to life” or renewed in notable ways. Spend time thanking and praising God. Share with someone.
- **Choose an Easter-themed spirituality book to read this season.** [Loyola Press](#) has a great list of options if you don't know where to start!
- **Our daily challenges & sorrows don't go away because it's Easter.** As they come, imagine the power of the Resurrection and pray: *“O Risen Jesus, I surrender myself to you. Take care of everything.”*
- **Keep a “Joy Board”** – where family members write things, people, events, and truths that give them joy.
- **Choose someone for each week of Easter to share Easter joy with:** preparing a meal, going for a visit, calling them on the phone, sending flowers, etc.
- **Celebrate the feast days** during the Easter season, learning about new saints together as a family.



PENTECOST

"Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" - Acts 2:1-11

On the Feast of Pentecost, Christians commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. This happened on the 50th day after the Resurrection, with the original Greek "pentekoste" meaning 50.

When the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples, they immediately began proclaiming the Gospel. In fact, three thousand people were baptized that day. The disciples, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, were answering Jesus' call to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, source: EWTN.com)

- **Learn more about the Holy Spirit.** There many resources available including [Simply Catholic](#) articles, [Ascension Press](#) videos & articles, the [Wild Goose](#) video series, or a fun video for kids from [Bible Kids on YouTube](#)
- **Celebrate Pentecost with an at-home presentation of Pentecost**, where you will discuss the gifts of the spirit and each child selects a gift they would like to receive (from [the United States Association of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd](#)).
- **Pray the [Pentecost Novena](#)**
- **As a family, design a symbol for each of the [7 gifts](#) or the [12 fruits](#) of the Holy Spirit.** Write a practical way to live out these gifts and place the images in key places in your house.
- **Print a copy of the [Veni Sancte Spiritus](#)**, an ancient prayer to the Holy Spirit. As a family, circle all the titles for the Holy Spirit and underline all the actions we ask of the Spirit. Talk about how/when you need this help of the Holy Spirit as a family and then pray the prayer together as a family.

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- *Wisdom*
- *Understanding*
- *Knowledge*
- *Counsel*
- *Fortitude*
- *Piety*
- *Fear of the Lord*

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

- *Charity*
- *Joy*
- *Peace*
- *Patience*
- *Kindness*
- *Goodness*
- *Generosity*
- *Gentleness*
- *Faithfulness*
- *Modesty*
- *Self-control*
- *Chastity*



EASTER CALENDAR

Easter is the longest feast season in the Church, even longer than Christmas! We will celebrate Easter for 7 weeks with the season coming to an end at Pentecost. During those 50 days there are other feasts to celebrate and novenas to start! This calendar notes feast days to celebrate and when to start your Pentecost Novena!

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	<i>Easter Octave</i> →						
2	27	28	29	30	May 1	2	3
	Divine Mercy Snday	Solemnity of the Annunciation					
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
					St. Mark the Evangelist		
5	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			St. Joseph the Worker				
6	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						Start Pentecost novena	
7	June 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Feast of the Ascension	Our Lady of Fatima					
	8						
	Pentecost Sunday						

