

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Community Celebrating Holy Week at Home

*A Resource to Enhance Your At-Home Holy Week Virtual Experience
Adapted from "Holy Week at Home", a resource from Liturgical Press*



Materials to Gather:

A short list of items for celebrating Holy Week at Home! Please refer to the "Prepare" section for each day for more detailed notes. *None of these items are mandatory but may enhance your interactive worship at home.*

- **Palm Sunday:** "Palms", Sidewalk chalk, homemade instruments, homemade banners and signs, home altar or prayer space, red material for home altar, candle, bible, crucifix or cross (homemade or drawn is fine!)
- **Holy Thursday, Mass of the Lord's Supper:** white material for home altar change, candles (electric for young ones) or flashlights, pitcher of warm water, large bowl and towel(s)
- **Good Friday:** Creative family cross, candles
- **Easter Vigil:** Redecorate your home altar using a white or gold material/flowers/greenery. Candles for your altar, bible and your creative family cross from Good Friday. For worship: A candle for each person (electric or flashlights for young ones): try to find your baptismal candles! Bells, homemade signs or posters: "Alleluia, He is Risen!"

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION ~ APRIL 5, 2020

Read:

Palm Sunday celebrates two seemingly different stories. We begin the liturgy by commemorating Jesus's triumphant journey to Jerusalem where he is greeted by shouts and songs of acclamation and joy. Everything seems to be going well. Jesus is hailed as a King and people wave palm branches to show their honor for him. By the time we reach the Gospel, however, we hear the Passion of Jesus Christ, recalling the events leading up to his crucifixion and death on the cross. It may seem strange that these two extremes are celebrated on Palm Sunday, but that is the reality of the Paschal Mystery. There is only one story. Jesus's life, death and resurrection are all connected; It is impossible to separate them as isolated events. The same is true for our lives. Everything we do is united with Christ, the good times and the difficult ones. Even when God seems distant and far away, we know that we are always connected to the story of Jesus's life, death and resurrection. We are always connected to Christ.

Discuss:

As we begin Holy Week, take a moment to recall this narrative of Christ with your family. What are some events from Jesus's life that stand out to you? Do you have a favorite parable or story of healing? It is important to remember that the Jesus who walked and taught and ate is the same Jesus who dies and rises again. Think too about your own life. What are some of the significant events you have experienced this past year? Recall some of these moments aloud as you continue to share the story of your family, which is also the story of Christ!

Prepare:

- Gather your "palms", which can be any greenery from your yard or around your home. You could even collect some on a walk! Tie them together and hang on your front door or drape around your door. Also, bring some indoors to wave during Mass. You could also use last year's palms, fake flowers, or make your own out of paper. (Here are instructions for how to make beautiful palms at home: <https://www.catholicicing.com/printable-palms-for-palm-sunday-free/>)
- Send the kids outside with chalk and have them write welcome messages to Jesus in the driveway or on the sidewalk.
- Gather any percussion instruments from around the house to use during the entrance procession during Mass (think tambourines or shakers, or make your own! Pots and pans work well too!)
- Make signs or banners saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" or string up leftover streamers from a birthday party.
- Set your environment at home. Choose where and how you will be viewing and test picture and sound.

- Make a “home altar” on a coffee, dining, or side table. If you have a red scarf, tablecloth, napkin, blanket, or placemat, you can spread this out in your viewing area. If you have them, add a candle or two, a bible, and a crucifix (you can also make these out of paper.)
- You can join in the procession during Mass! Map out your “route” at home before Mass begins.
- Review the readings for this liturgy found here:
<http://usccb.org/bible/readings/040520.cfm>

Worship:

- *Palm Sunday, April 5, at 9:30am, worship virtually with our parish community using one of three platforms:*
 - Watch from our NEW [St. Francis live stream platform.](#)
 - Watch from our [St. Francis Facebook Live stream](#)
 - Watch directly from our [St. Francis webpage](#)
- Follow along in the worship aid for your cues to process, wave your palms, and play your instruments.

Reflect:

1. What picture comes to your mind when you think about Palm Sunday?
2. We saw in the Palm Sunday Mass how quickly our opinions can change from “Hosanna!” to “Crucify him!”. When in your own life have you been inconsistent, or changed quickly, in your actions or beliefs?
3. Who or what do you want to pray for as we begin Holy Week?

HOLY THURSDAY MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER ~ APRIL 9, 2020

Read:

The Sacred Paschal Triduum begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. The word Triduum comes from the Latin for "three days." These three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil are the highpoint of our entire liturgical year. Holy Thursday especially commemorates Jesus's command to serve others, modeled explicitly in the washing of feet and the celebration of the Eucharist.

Discuss:

How do you serve others in your own family and community? Why is it important to connect our daily service to others with Jesus's command to do so? Even when we are unable to gather to celebrate Eucharist, we are still called to be a eucharistic people. Jesus's self-gift in the Eucharist allows us to give freely of ourselves to others, following Jesus's instructions, "Do this in memory of me." Our own table fellowship with our family and friends is also a participation in the Eucharist, because the Eucharist by its very nature is deeply relational. If we limit our understanding of Eucharist to only what we receive at Mass, we are missing a major part of Christ's invitation to us. "Do this in memory of me" is a command and call to action. Do we dare to live our lives following the example of Christ?

Prepare:

- Set your environment at home. Choose where and how you will be viewing and test picture and sound.
- Modify your "home altar" from Palm Sunday or make one if you haven't already on a coffee, dining, or side table. Spread a white scarf, tablecloth, napkin, blanket, or placemat, etc., out in your viewing area. If you have them, add a candle or two, a bible, and a crucifix (kids can also make these out of paper.)
- You can join in the Eucharistic procession during Mass! Map out your "route" at home before Mass begins. Gather candles or flashlights for kids to use during this if you wish.
- Place a pitcher of warm water, a large bowl, and a towel per person in front of your worship space for use after Mass concludes.
- Review the readings for this liturgy found here:
<http://cms.usccb.org/bible/readings/040920-lord-s-supper.cfm>

Worship:

- *Holy Thursday, April 9, at 7:00pm, worship virtually with our parish community using one of three platforms:*
 - Watch from our NEW [St. Francis live stream platform](#).
 - Watch from our [St. Francis Facebook Live stream](#)
 - Watch directly from our [St. Francis webpage](#)
- Follow along in the worship aid for your cues to process and hold your candles high.

Ritual at home after Mass:

The *mandatum*, or foot washing, has been a Holy Thursday practice since as early as the seventh century. A concrete representation of our call to service, the foot washing in the Holy Thursday liturgy reminds us of Jesus's example and command. If we truly understand this command, however, we realize that we are called to do more than literally wash feet. Rather, this is a ritual that reminds us of our call to serve others through the concrete realities of life. **Participate in a tactile way, or a spiritual way below.**

To participate in a tactile way, after Mass, wash each other's feet using this ritual:

Opening Prayer: Loving God, You show us by example how to love others. Today as we celebrate Holy Thursday, we remember when you washed the feet of your disciples. Give us the strength to wash each other's feet, not only in the ritual moment of today, but in all moments of our lives. May we as a family recommit ourselves to the service of others. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

- Placing a pitcher of warm water, a large bowl, and a towel in front of those gathered, one of the adults might invite everyone to sit in a circle on the ground.

A designated leader reads: We follow Jesus's example and celebrate our own washing of feet. Throughout our time together, pay close attention to what you are experiencing and how you feel. I now invite you to slowly remove your shoes and socks. What do you feel? How do you think Jesus's friends must have felt as they were preparing for him to wash their feet? What do you imagine Jesus was thinking as he began washing?

- The leader takes the feet of one person and places them in the bowl. Pouring some water over the feet, and looking the person in the eye, the leader says:

For washing the feet of children, leader says: (Name), I love you. Be kind to one another, help each other, and love everyone you meet.

For washing the feet of adults, leader says: (Name), I love you and Christ loves you. Share the love of Christ with everyone you meet.

- One person may wash the feet of all present or each person may take a turn, washing the feet of their neighbor after their own feet have been washed. After washing each person's feet, gently dry their feet with the towel.

To participate in a spiritual way:

Opening Prayer: Loving God, You show us by example how to love others. Today as we celebrate Holy Thursday, we remember when you washed the feet of your disciples. Give us the strength to wash each other's feet in all moments of our lives. May we as the Body of Christ recommit ourselves to the service of others. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

- Place yourself in Jesus' presence. What do you feel as you see Him kneel at the feet of his disciples? How do you think Jesus's friends must have felt as they were preparing for him to wash their feet? What do you imagine Jesus was thinking as he began washing?
- Think of a time that you acted as Christ for another and spiritually washed their feet. Think of the difference you made in their life and walked as Christ with them.
- Think of a time that someone else acted as Christ for you. Something small, or perhaps something life-changing. Think of the joy of seeing Christ in someone beside you.

Reflect:

1. What picture comes to your mind when you think about Holy Thursday?
2. How does Jesus call you to serve others in your everyday actions and interactions?
3. How might you explain the connection between the washing of feet and Eucharist?
4. The Eucharist is rooted in community and table fellowship. What does table fellowship look like in your own home? What are some ways you can commit or recommit to the sharing of family meals?

GOOD FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION ~ APRIL 10, 2020

Read:

As we celebrate the Passion of Jesus Christ and hear John's Gospel account of his suffering and death, we are reminded of the injustices that pervade our world. Often these systems of oppression, hate, and fear are so commonplace in our world that perhaps we do not even notice them. Good Friday serves as a good reminder of this reality. It is easy to become discouraged, to see the work that has to be done and look away. Today we pray that we may have the conscience to see and the courage to act, remembering that death never wins. Life and love always prevail in Christ.

Discuss:

What is one way we can enter more fully into our relationship with Christ and recommit to prayer and working for the good of the church and world? Where or how have you been reminded of the hope Jesus provides this past week?

Prepare:

- Take time to clear your home altar space so that it is bare, except for a candle or two.
- Before Mass begins, spend time gathering items from around your house to build, construct, or craft a cross that is meaningful to your family. You could use sticks from your yard, or paint one on a piece of paper.
- To enter deeper into this solemn day, consider turning off screens and media following the liturgy and for the rest of the day.
- Review the readings for this liturgy found here: <http://cms.usccb.org/bible/readings/041020.cfm>

Worship:

- *Good Friday, April 10, at 3:00pm, worship virtually with our parish community using one of three platforms:*
 - Watch from our NEW [St. Francis live stream platform](#).
 - Watch from our [St. Francis Facebook Live stream](#)
 - Watch directly from our [St. Francis webpage](#)
- Follow along in the worship aid for your cues to participate in the liturgy.

Reflect:

1. What picture comes to your mind when you think about Good Friday?
2. What are your own experiences of death and resurrection? Do you know anyone who has passed away? How did you feel when that happened?
3. How might you explain the significance of the cross to someone?
4. Spend some time in quiet in front of your home altar, recognizing that God is present with you, even at home.

VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT OF EASTER ~ APRIL 11, 2020

Read:

“Exult, let them exult!” We hear these words at the beginning of the Exsultet, The Easter Proclamation, as we trace God’s saving action throughout history. The name Exsultet comes from the first word of the prayer: Exult! As a Christian people we do exult, for Christ is risen from the dead and light banishes all traces of darkness.

The Easter Vigil liturgy is rich with symbol and ritual, and the Scripture readings connect us to our ancestors in faith, living the very same hope that we live today. The Genesis reading highlights God’s incredible work of creation, and reminds us that creation and recreation continue today. Abraham’s sacrifice recalls God’s promises and abundant blessings for God’s people, just as the reading from Exodus in which the Israelites cross the Red Sea prefigures Christ’s own resurrection. Readings from the prophets follow, those great heralds of God’s message throughout the ages. The Epistle from Paul to the Romans reinforces our baptismal identity and relationship with Jesus Christ who died and rose.

If time permits, read each of these Scripture passages in your own commemoration of The Easter Vigil. Each of these stories highlights God’s love for God’s people and helps us to celebrate Christ’s resurrection by recalling God’s saving action. You can find the readings here: <http://cms.usccb.org/bible/readings/041120.cfm>

Discuss:

Today we celebrate the greatest mystery of our faith: Jesus’ resurrection into eternal life! Alleluia! What helps us know that today is a joyful day? What are you doing at home that celebrates this special day?

Prepare:

- Set your environment at home. Choose where and how you will be viewing and test picture and sound.
- Decorate your “home altar.” Spread a white or gold scarf, tablecloth, napkin, blanket, or placemat, etc., out in your viewing area. If you have them, add a candle or two, a bible, and the cross you created with your family for Good Friday.
- Add flowers or greenery to decorate the space.
- If you know where it is, pull out your baptismal candle to light during the Mass, or ensure each person has a candle, electric tea light, or flashlight to hold during Mass.
- If you have any bells around the house, gather them to ring during the Gloria.
- Make signs or posters that say, “Alleluia!” or “He is risen!”
- Review the readings for this liturgy here:
<http://cms.usccb.org/bible/readings/041120.cfm>

Worship:

- *Holy Saturday, April 11, at 8:00pm, worship virtually with our parish community using one of three platforms:*
 - Watch from our NEW [St. Francis live stream platform](#).
 - Watch from our [St. Francis Facebook Live stream](#)
 - Watch directly from our [St. Francis webpage](#)
- Follow along in the worship aid for your cues to participate in the liturgy. Be prepared to turn your lights off and on if you wish to participate in this way.

Reflect:

1. What picture comes to your mind when you think about Holy Saturday?
2. Which Easter Vigil reading or psalm was your favorite? Why?
3. What role do you play in salvation history? How can you bring the Light of Christ to others?

**On behalf of the friars and the entire staff of the parish and schools,
HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER! We miss you!
Alleluia! He is risen!!**