

Holy Week at Home

Palm Sunday:



- Place a piece of greenery on the door of your home/apartment to symbolize the palms.
- Consider making a family altar or sacred space in your home, if you do not have one. A piece of greenery could go here too along with a bible and a crucifix or a statue of Mary, if you have one. As the week goes on, add other symbols; younger children could draw the events of the week as they envision them in their minds. Read in [Maryknoll Magazine](#) online, stories of Holy Week in other countries, other cultures, other situations of poverty, war, etc.
- Watch a Palm Sunday mass together. Discuss it afterwards: What was one thing from the mass that touched you or that you remember? How was it different from other masses that we have been to?
- Ask each household member: What is one specific thing that you could do individually or that we could do together to make this week holy? Decide as a group which things you will try together and what you plan to do by yourself.

Monday-Wednesday:

- Implement the actions that you decided to do together.
- Begin and/or end each day in prayer, using ones that you already know or just by taking turns speaking to God from your heart.
- Read the gospel of the day <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040220.cfm> and then discuss it as a family. Some possible questions: What does this passage teach us about God? What does it teach us about human beings? What could we do to live out the lessons from this passage?
- Say together the [Maryknoll Mission Rosary](#)

Holy Thursday:

- Read the gospel of the day (the account of the last supper) and discuss it helping the children to understand that feet washing was a very common practice in Jesus' time, but that he transformed it into a lesson about how we are all called to serve others in mission.
- Have each person take off his/her shoes and put them in a line. Then each person tells a story about some place his/her shoes have gone (perhaps an ordinary place, and a very significant place).
- Then imagine/discuss what it might be like to walk in the shoes of: an immigrant, a homeless person, a person who is hungry, the person who has no shoes at all.

**Good Friday:**

- Traditionally, the hours between noon and three this day are the times that Jesus is thought to have hung on the cross before he died. Try observing this as quiet reflective time by turning off all phones, computers, tvs, radios, etc. Engage young children in quiet activities like drawing, coloring, reading or writing. If it seems impossible to have quiet time for three hours, think about doing it for one hour or even half an hour. At three o'clock gather the family to remember that this was the time that Jesus died and say a little prayer together asking each person to share how he/she feels about Jesus dying for us. Here is a prayer to close with:

- **Jesus**, during this Holy Week help me to see in your Cross all the crosses of the world:
the cross of people hungry for food and for love;
the cross of people dying from lack of clean water;
the cross of people sick and in need of health care;
the cross of people without shelter;
(pause here to invite each person to say aloud any things that feel heavy or a burden in his or her life right now)
Jesus, by the sacrifice of your cross you restored hope; help us to find the strength and courage to live your mission of mercy and share love and hope with those people burdened by the weight of their cross. AMEN
(adapted from Pope Francis)
- Pray together with our [Stations of the Cross](#) that have drawings from Tanzania, one of the countries in Africa where Maryknoll works.

Holy Saturday:

- During the day, this is a time of waiting. Jesus is in the tomb; his disciples and friends knew that they saw him die and did not know what was going to happen. They were sad and scared. Write down what you are waiting/hoping for and post it with a sticky note on the refrigerator.
- In the evening just after it has become dark, if you have a safe area outside to do this, build a little fire. Beforehand or while you are there, invite everyone to write down on a little piece of paper what you are worried about or what you are sorry for. Then crumple them up and throw them into the fire, offering them to God for our healing. If you only have a place to do this inside, have everyone write down their worries/sorrows and then turn out

all the lights for just a minute or so. Then light one candle or one little electric light as a symbol of Jesus coming into the world. Invite everyone to crumple up his/her piece of paper and throw it into a little recycle bin or bowl of water. Close with a prayer.



Easter Sunday:

- Plan ahead and decide which mass you will watch together. Get dressed up like you were going out to mass. Watch and discuss the mass together. Some possible questions: What happened on Easter? What does it mean for us? How could we bring Easter hope to others?
- Take a family picture of yourselves with your nice clothes and share it with others. Celebrate with whatever special food you have on hand.

