

April 2017

# parenting CHRISTIAN kids



CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER



ROMAN CATHOLIC

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## Rejoice in Jesus' Resurrection at Easter

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To bless your family's Easter preparations and celebrations.
2. To help your children know that the Easter message is for them.
3. To keep the joy of Easter in your hearts throughout the year.

Reminders of new life and rebirth appear each spring throughout nature. For Christians, the most important celebration of new life is Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Easter. Children may associate the holiday with bunnies, baskets, and candy, so it's important to share with them the real reason we rejoice: Jesus' empty tomb.

Use these creative ideas to share Easter's message with children. Share that Jesus died and came to life again so we can go to heaven and be with him forever.

**Palm Sunday** Make "praise shakers" to celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Decorate the bottom sides of two paper plates. Staple the plates together, bottom sides out, leaving

space to pour in beads or buttons. Staple the gap. Add streamers, and have a parade. Celebrate Jesus by shaking the instruments and with shouts of praise.

**Good Friday** Insert toothpicks in a small vine wreath to resemble Jesus' crown of thorns. Whenever a family member makes a sacrifice for someone else, remove one thorn. The night before Easter, after children are asleep, remove the remaining thorns and decorate the crown with white ribbons and bright flowers.

**Easter Sunday** Using a stamp pad and colored pencils, work together to make thumbprint pictures that retell Easter events. For example, draw a tomb with a rolled-away thumbprint rock and a butterfly with thumbprint wings.

## Easter Is for Me!

The events of Holy Week and Easter might frighten or confuse younger children. Share the message in age-appropriate ways by using these tips.

**Ages 2 to 5** Say that people who hated Jesus nailed him to a cross and left him there until he died. Explain that Jesus' friends were sad and afraid until Jesus came back to life three days later.

**Ages 6 to 9** Fairness is a big deal at this age, so explain in simple language that Jesus willingly died in our place because he loves us. Children may be fascinated by crucifixion details. Avoid euphemisms for death such as "sleeping."

[See additional ideas for celebrating Easter on page 5.](#)

**New Life** Go on a nature walk to collect lots of twigs. Help children use a low-temperature glue gun to attach the twigs to the outside of a clean, empty soup can. Then fill the "vase" with fresh flowers as you talk about how the twigs are like our lives before Jesus (dead and broken) and how the flowers represent our lives with Jesus (new and alive).

**Prayer Eggs** During Easter week, use a basket of plastic eggs to encourage your family to talk to God. Place slips of paper with prayer topics inside the eggs. Make enough eggs for each person to open one per day during Holy Week. Include praises and gratitude, as well as prayer requests for friends, family, and the community. Open the eggs at meals or bedtime, and pray together for the requests. Place special prayer eggs in the basket on Easter morning to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

**Cookie Pops** Follow your favorite sugar cookie recipe to make crosses on a stick. If you don't have a cross-shaped cookie cutter, you can create a template or freehand the shape with a knife. Press a cookie stick (available at craft stores) about 2 inches into each cookie. Bake until edges are

golden. Frost when cool. Share the treats with friends and neighbors, along with an Easter card or verse.

**Jelly Bean Joy** Use the colorful candy in children's Easter baskets to remind them of Jesus' love. In this poem, each color represents part of the Easter account.

*Red is for the blood Christ gave.  
Green is for the palm's cool shade.  
Yellow is for God's light so bright.  
Orange is for prayers at twilight.  
Black is for sweet rest at night.  
White is for the Grace of Christ.  
Purple is for His days of sorrow.  
Pink is for each new tomorrow.*

**Why Jesus Stayed on the Cross**

Give each family member an ice cube, plus a paper towel. Say: "Hold the ice cube in your bare hand while I read from the Bible." Read aloud Matthew 27:27-36, 45-50. Then ask: "How did it feel to hold the ice? What did you want to do with it? What do you think it was like for Jesus to be crucified on a cross? Why do you think he stayed up there?" Say: "I don't think the soldiers or the nails kept Jesus on the cross. I think his love for us is what kept him up there. Jesus died and came back to life so we can live with him in heaven!"

"Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He isn't here! He is risen from the dead!"

—Luke 24:5-6, NLT



## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### Resurrection Rolls

Share the Easter story with this quick and delicious recipe.

- Preheat oven to 350.
- Separate crescent rolls into triangles.
- Mix together cinnamon and sugar in a small bowl, and melt butter in another.
- Explain that the white marshmallow represents Jesus and his holiness. Dip each marshmallow in butter, and then roll in the sugar mixture. This reminds us of the way Jesus' friends prepared to bury him by anointing him with oil and spices.
- Place the marshmallow on a crescent roll and carefully seal it tightly around him, just as Jesus was sealed in the tomb.
- Bake until golden brown, 10-12 minutes.
- After the rolls have cooled, read aloud Luke 24:1-3. Give each family member a roll and have them take one bite.

Ask: **What do you see inside your roll? How is that like what the women found? What do you think Jesus' empty tomb means?**

Say: **Just as our rolls are empty, Jesus' tomb was empty on Easter morning. That's because he died and came back to life for you and for me!**

Close in prayer. Say: **Dear Jesus, thanks for coming back to life and leaving your tomb empty on Easter. We celebrate you today! Amen.**

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# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIE

**Title:** *Wonder*

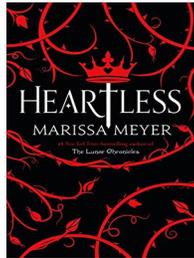
**Genre:** Drama

**Rating:** Not yet rated

**Cast:** Jacob Tremblay, Julia Roberts, Mandy Patinkin, Owen Wilson

**Synopsis:** This film is based on R.J. Palacio's 2012 *New York Times* best-selling novel, now required reading in many middle schools. It features Auggie Pullman, a 10-year-old with a severe facial deformity. After years of surgeries and homeschooling, Auggie enters middle school and deals with friends, bullies, and self-esteem issues.

**Our Take:** Viewers will do some soul-searching about how they view and treat people who look different from them. Because the subject and situations can be intense, this film is best for kids ages 9 and up. Topics for follow-up discussions include appearance, character, and friendship.



## BOOK

**Title:** *Heartless*

**Author:** Marissa Meyer

**Synopsis:** This young-adult fiction book tells how Catherine, the Queen of Hearts in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, became evil. Catherine was once an innocent girl who wanted to open a bakery and fall in love on her own terms. But in a world of magic where she's desired by the King of Hearts, things don't turn out as she hopes.

**Our Take:** The main character, described as "cold, heartless, ruthless female lead," certainly isn't a positive role model. Although *Heartless* is recommended for kids as young as 12, it's a dark love story with an unhappy ending, making it inappropriate for preteen readers.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

**Undocumented Students** With the recent crackdown on undocumented immigrants, some school districts are denying federal authorities access to students and their records. Almost 4 million K to 12 students in the United States are children of undocumented immigrants. (*cnn.com*)

**Oh, Boy!** The popular American Girl doll line has introduced its first boy doll. Logan Everett, a drummer, represents an effort to appeal to a broader audience, says a company spokeswoman. "A boy character has been a top request from our fans for decades." (*USAToday*)

## QUICK STATS

**So Artificial** The number of children who eat or drink artificial sweeteners (such as sucralose and aspartame) nearly tripled from 1999 to 2012, according to a recent study. The rate went from less than 9% of kids to 25% of kids in 13 years. (*time.com*)

**On the Fence** One-third of parents still don't feel they have enough information to decide whether to get their preteens vaccinated against human papillomavirus (HPV). But 57% of parents are okay with a law that requires preteens to be vaccinated, as long as there's an opt-out provision. (*wfdd.org*)

## Games, Sites & Apps

### 1-2 Switch

This game for the new Nintendo Switch console features face-to-face play. Instead of staring at a screen, players look at one another to compete in duels, dance-offs, and more. With a portable console and Joy Con wireless controllers, this game will likely be a hit at parties.

### iCivics.org

This site, founded by retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, helps children learn about civics and encourages community involvement. After setting up a free account, kids can try a variety of role-playing games. Activities are geared toward children ages 8 and up.

### Taps to Riches

In this simulation game, players build virtual riches by tapping buttons onscreen. The goal is to make "money," which players do by buying and investing in homes and businesses. Players can take over towns - even towns in outer space. Despite the materialistic message, the game is appropriate for kids.

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This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our goal is to help you make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.

## Celebrating Easter: Ideas for Busy Parents

A visitor from another planet might conclude that our Easter celebration is as much a festival of bunnies, eggs, candy, and new clothes as a celebration of Jesus' resurrection. We're not suggesting you should banish all of your Easter traditions, but consider some suggestions on how to make Easter a more joyful and faith-filled experience for your whole family.

### The Reason for the Season

The first step is to share the Easter story with your child - even if your child knows it. There can be no resurrection without death, so the Easter story includes the Passion and death of Jesus. Be sensitive about discussing the violent details of Jesus' death with younger children. You are the best judge of what your child is ready to understand.

### Telling the Easter Story

There are two sides to the Easter story: what physically happened, and what it means to us. The first side comes to us from the Gospels. If your child is old enough to understand the language, read it together. We recommend John chapter 20 and/or Luke chapter 24. A good children's Bible could help if the language is too difficult for younger children. Or you could tell your child the story in your own words. Be playful and have fun with it. Don't just relate the facts, but draw your child into the emotions - they were sad, scared, surprised, happy!

### What it Means

Your child is likely to start asking questions - perhaps starting with the famous "why?" Don't be intimidated. A good place to start is to ask your child what he or she thinks.

If a question comes up that you don't know how to answer, tell them it's a great question and you'll look for the answer.

Key points to share:

- Jesus rose to show us that even though people do bad things and sad things happen, God's love overcomes them all.
- Jesus' resurrection means that we will also rise after we die someday, so we can be with Jesus and everyone who died before us.
- Jesus is still alive and we still meet him today (even though it can be hard to recognize him.) Jesus left the Holy Spirit to be with us in a special way.

### How to Celebrate

After telling your child what the Easter story is about, ask what *they* think would be good ways to celebrate that. Then have a family conversation to make some decisions together.

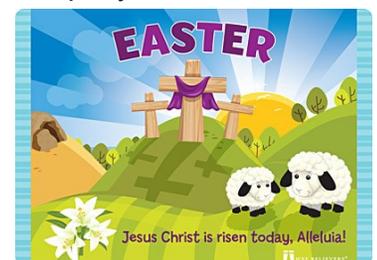
See the "[Easter Celebration Ideas](#)" on the right for some suggestions.



### Easter Celebration Ideas

We don't have to toss all the candy or ban the Easter Bunny, but we can be intentional about how we choose to celebrate.

- ◆ Brainstorm way to adapt your existing traditions or start new ones to incorporate the real meaning of Easter. Add "Jesus is Risen" alongside "Happy Easter."
- ◆ Explain the connections between the Easter message and traditions you continue. For example, eggs and rabbits remind us of new life.
- ◆ Find ways to decorate that are less wasteful. Reuse decorations from year to year, and avoid plastic grass as much as you can.
- ◆ Shop only for what you need.
- ◆ Moderate the amount of candy you eat. Make it a treat, not a binge. Consider alternatives to candy for stuffing eggs and baskets - coins, goldfish crackers, books...
- ◆ Have a special Easter feast as a family. Use it as an opportunity to connect with family and friends. The food doesn't have to be super fancy, but try to do something differently. Get everyone involved in the preparation so no one has to do too much. Light candles. Begin with prayer. Enjoy each other's company.





**There are no Sunday or Monday sessions  
April 9/10 or  
April 16/17.**



## Pass It On!

### Donate Outgrown Swimsuits

The Northside YMCA offers a "Learn to Swim" program for Richmond 2<sup>nd</sup> graders, and they are always in need of swimsuits for children who don't have them.

As you make your switch to spring/summer clothing, consider donating any gently used, outgrown swimsuits. There is a donation basket under the R.E. table in Genesis Commons.



**Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>  
after 10:00 Mass  
Egg hunt, crafts, and  
lunch!**

## Catholic Calendar Connections

**Apr. 4<sup>th</sup>** - Either take some extra computer time OR enjoy a no Internet day in honor of **St. Isidore of Seville**, the patron saint of the internet. Google him to find out why!

**Apr. 9<sup>th</sup>** - Place the palm(s) you received on **Palm Sunday** in the center of your family table and offer a prayer asking God to guide your family's journey through Holy Week. [Click here](#) to learn how to make a palm cross

**Apr. 13<sup>th</sup>** - Attend the **Holy Thursday** liturgy, or read the day's Gospel at home - John 13:1-15. Brainstorm ways to be of service to others in your home, school, workplace, neighborhood, or parish. Choose one act of service to carry out before Easter.

**Apr. 14<sup>th</sup>** - Attend the **Good Friday** service. If you can't, spend at least five minutes in silence to reflect on Jesus' death.

**Apr. 15<sup>th</sup>** - At noon on **Holy Saturday** you can bring a basket of your Easter meal items to be blessed. At 8:00 PM we will gather for the Vigil - our holiest night. The service is long, but powerful - darkness, fire, candles, baptisms, and a great reception!

**Apr. 16<sup>th</sup>** - Bring back the "Alleluia" on **Easter Sunday**. Shout it, sing it, and color one to place on your table. How many things can you think of to be joyful about?

**Apr. 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Celebrate **Earth Day!** Work in your yard, plant a garden, decide how your family can help the environment....

**Apr. 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Enjoy a special ice cream treat for **Divine Mercy Sunday**. Find a recipe [here](#).

**Apr. 25<sup>th</sup>** - Pick your favorite story from the Gospel of **St. Mark** to share for his feast day. (His Gospel is the shortest!)

**Apr. 27<sup>th</sup>** - **St. Zita** is the patron saint of maids, servants and domestic workers, and is remembered for her great charity to the poor, sick and imprisoned. Who can you help today in her honor?

**Apr. 29<sup>th</sup>** - **St. Catherine of Siena** was the youngest of 23 children! She wrote over 400 letters in her efforts to bring peace to the Church and the world. How can your family be people of peace?

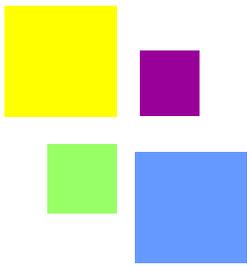


**Pray for our 1<sup>st</sup> Communion children - and then come celebrate!**

5:30 Mass - Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Mass - Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

3:00 Mass - Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>



# The Easter Story

Use the pictures to tell the story. Can you cut them apart and put them in order?



Most of the crowd spread their coats on the road ahead of Jesus, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.  
Matthew 21:8



Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests and asked, "How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?" And they gave him thirty pieces of silver.  
Matthew 26:14-15



As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it and eat it for this is my body."  
Matthew 26:26



Peter declared, "Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will." "Peter," Jesus replied, "the truth is, this very night before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times."  
Matthew 26:33-34



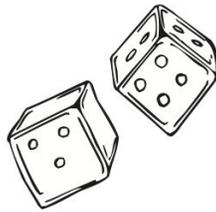
He went on a little farther and fell face down on the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine."  
Matthew 26:39



The soldiers made a crown of long, sharp thorns and put it on his head, and they put a royal purple robe on him.  
John 19:2



Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross.  
Mark 15:24a



They gambled for his clothes, throwing dice to decide who would get them.  
Mark 15:24b

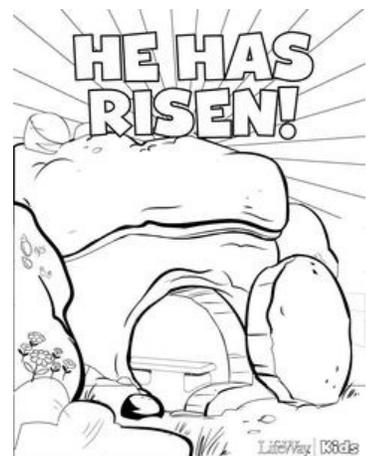
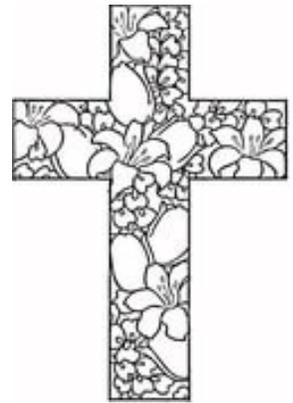
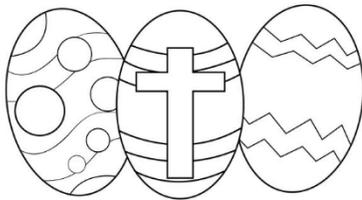


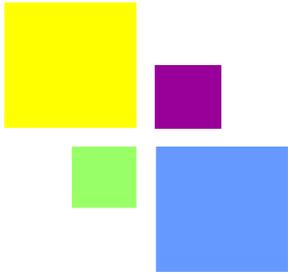
Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance as he left.  
Matthew 27:59-60



He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying.  
Matthew 28:6

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We are an Easter people, and...



is our Song, St. Augustine



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4 St. Isidore of Seville	5 7:00 Taize Prayer	6	7 Fish Fry & Stations of the Cross	8
9 Palm Sunday No Elem. R.E.	10 No Elem. R.E.	11	12 7:00 Rosary	13 7:00 PM Holy Thursday Service	14 7:00 PM Good Friday Service	15 8:00 PM Easter Vigil
16 Easter  Christ is risen!	17 No Elem. R.E.	18	19 7:00 Prayer for Haiti	20	21	22 Earth Day
23 Divine Mercy Sunday Elementary R.E. resumes	24 Elementary R.E. resumes	25 St. Mark	26 7:00 Sing-a-long Prayer	27 St. Zita	28 Arbor Day 6:30 First Communion Rehearsal	29 First Communion at 5:30 Mass
30 First Communion at 10:00 Mass						