

EASTER GUIDE

EASTER LITURGY

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

The light of Christ

Thanks be to God

Collect for Easter Day

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may, by your life-giving Spirit, be delivered from sin and raised from death; through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Just as you were intentional about setting aside time during Lent to fast and prepare your families hearts for Easter, consider how you might include feasting during the 50 days of Easter. Perhaps your family says the brief Easter liturgy each morning during breakfast, maybe you listen to an Easter playlist. We have additional activity suggestions below.

EASTERTIDE

Easter

by: Benjamin Alire Saenz

My mother woke us that Sunday – her voice a bell proclaiming spring. We rose diving into our clothes, newly bought. We took turns standing before mirrors, combing, staring at our new selves. Sinless from forty days of desert, sinless from good confessions, we drove to church in a red pickup, bright and red and waxed for the special occasion. Clean, polished as apples, the yellow-dressed girls in front with Mom and Dad; the boys in back, our hair blowing free in the warming wind. Winter gone away. At Mass, the choir singing loud: ragged notes from ragged angel's voices; ancient hymns sung in crooked Latin. The priest, white robed, raised his palms toward God, opened his mouth in awe: "Alleluia!" The unspoken word of Lent let loose in flight. Alleluia and incense rising, my mother wiping her tears from words she'd heard; my brother and I whispering names of statues lining the walls of the church. Bells ringing, Mass ending, we running to the truck, shiny as shoes going dancing. Dad driving us to see my grandmother. There, at her house, I asked about the new word I'd heard: resurrection. "Death, death," she said, her hands moving downward, "the cross – that is death." And then she laughed: "The dead will rise." Her upturned palms moved skyward as she spoke. "The dead will rise." She moved her hands toward me, wrapped my face with touches, and laughed again. The dead will rise.

"We are Easter people! We stand on resurrection ground. Easter is not only our greatest party... Easter is the only reason we are here at all! We should meet regularly for Easter parties. We should drink champagne at breakfast. We should renew baptismal vows with splashing water all over the place. And we should sing and dance and blow trumpets and put out banners in the streets. And we should invite the homeless people to parties and we should go around town doing random acts of generosity and celebration. We should be doing things which would make our sober and serious neighbors say, 'What is the meaning of this outrageous party?'"

- N.T. Wright

EASTER ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Add white and gold fabric to your lenten table (or the place that you were counting down the 40 days), add flowers, paper butterflies, and other signs of life.
- Make an Alleluia banner and hang it in your home. (keep it for next year to 'hide' during Lent)
- Walk around the neighborhood, looking for signs of new life.
- Sing! Before dinner, say the brief Easter liturgy and sing a favorite Easter song or Alleluia.
- List or draw as many "Easter verbs" as you can, for example: breathe, ignite, run, arise, bless, triumph, touch...
- Make or buy cards to welcome those baptized on Easter.
- Decorate a large, white candle as a paschal candle at home. Light it for each meal during the Easter season.
- Buy fresh flowers each week as an Easter treat.
- Feast, have a special feast (maybe pick what each family member fasted from during Lent to have a special treat)
- Feast, invite others over for a weekly meal, desert, or gathering.
- Drink Champagne (and sparkling juice for the kids)
- Spend time outside in nature observing the signs of new life and spring.
- Keep a gratitude journal for 50 days.
- Pray for signs of the resurrection. Where is God wanting to do something new in your life, relationships, etc.?
- Listen to an Easter playlist.
- Color Easter eggs.
- Don't participate in Easter egg hunts before Easter, especially not Holy Saturday. (If you already did, have another one in reparation, and switch your family tradition to Easter egg hunts during Easter. You have 50 days to hunt eggs -- don't do it on the day Jesus is in the tomb)