

Part Three

Ways Families Celebrate Lent and Easter

2011 SURVEY RESULTS
LENT & EASTER PRACTICES FOR
ADULTS AND CHILDREN, RECIPES,
AND MORE



Compiled by Catholic Heritage Curricula
www.chcweb.com

As a parent, which Lenten activity/prayer/practice is the most helpful to your own spiritual growth and renewal?

The most helpful practice is to have meat free Fridays. I grew up protestant, so one of the biggest adjustments for me after we converted was to be meat free on Fridays. I remember the first few Lents, I got tripped up a lot because I'd get my days of the week mixed up. The sign on the fridge proclaiming "remember NO MEAT on Fridays" only worked if I remembered it was Friday! It felt like such a huge accomplishment the first Lent I made it through without error! This is an additional huge challenge for me because I have a strong aversion to fish, in the past we had to work around dairy allergies, and now I'm on a low carb diet (due to diabetes). The rest of the year, we have one meat free meal per Friday and/or do other sacrifices. But Lent, I put a tremendous amount of effort into meat free Fridays.

Karla in Fargo, ND

Increased prayer time with a special devotional book for the season of Lent has helped me to experience the most fruitful Lenten seasons.

Megan in Pearland, TX

I feel the added devotionals and Lenten sacrifices bring me closer to Christ.

Megan in Apex, NC

I love praying the Stations of the Cross during Lent. This always helps me enter the passion more fully.

Andrea in Fort Collins, CO

I love doing the activities in the little Lenten books, taking time daily to consider why we practice this time and what it means and can give us.

Melanie in Iowa City, IA

I think the giving up of something shows us how strong we are and that love is truly more important than things.

Nicole in Brook Park, OH

Each year I try to give up much of my excess computer time. Throughout the year, I spent way too much time on it & this sacrifice on my part

during Lent helps me to have more time in prayer & more time w/ my family...which I SHOULD have more of throughout the year anyway!

Maria in Canal Winchester, OH

Daily Mass, Stations, and Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Janette in IL

Meditating on Jesus' passion and Mary's sorrows while watching her son suffer helps me focus on what is important. Saying the rosary of the Seven Sorrows is a good way to meditate on these things.

Alysha in Newfield, NJ

I love the crown of thorns, but I need the additional Masses and scripture study to renew my soul. It all works together beautifully.

Charlene in Kennewick, WA

I find that fasting and giving something up is very helpful to me. I am more able to break bad habits (ie caffeine) during Lent, because I have a greater motivation.

Savanna in Sweetwater, TX

I would have to say that the Stations of the Cross has also helped me in my spiritual growth. I think in the busy life of a home schooling mom of 5 soon to be 6 I tend to slack on my own daily prayer life. It's usually Lent that brings me back to why I live this wonderful vocation of motherhood.

Jodi in Stewartsville, MO

I like to focus on devotional reading that has daily prompts for self-sacrifice during lent. I think that teaching my children about Lent and the many things we do during Lent to prepare ourselves for Easter probably benefits me the most spiritually. Teaching my children about Lent and helping them to live this portion of the liturgical year does a lot to focus my heart and mind where it needs to be.

Karen in Williamstown, NJ

I enjoy picking a book to read about spiritual growth. I also try to limit my own "screen time" during Lent.

Julie in Manassas, VA

I think praying the Stations of the Cross has really helped me to grow spiritually, especially during Lent.

Kim in Nashville, TN

The highlight of Lent for me is always spending as much time as possible at church for the Triduum. It is a real time of renewal for me.

Sharon in Shelby Township, MI

The Stations of the Cross is most helpful to me because as the year progresses I let my prayer life slip more and more because of all the housework and other cares of life, but when Lent arrives it is a change for me to refocus and renew my prayer life and closeness with God, and the Stations of the Cross (which I can pray daily at home, too) really brings this home to my heart and renews my daily devotional life.

Marina in Kapunda, South Australia

Meditation and spiritual reading on the passion of Our Lord.

Mary Ann in Sainte Anne, Manitoba

The St. Therese sacrifice beads help this busy Mommy of 5 with one on the way to focus on my small ability to give even more in little ways throughout my homeschooling days and to focus on the encouragement that Jesus walked the way first and is with me each moment.

Kristi in Lansing, KS

Offering something up is for me the most helpful to my spiritual growth. Every year I offer something harder for me to give up and it really helps me to continue to grow in humility and abnegation throughout the rest of the year.

Carla in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

As parents, my husband and I find that going to

confession always makes the biggest difference in how well we prepare for any season within the liturgical year. We also have enjoyed the soup suppers at Church where we can catch up with friends, and go to the Stations of the Cross.

Veronica in King George, VA

The year I gave up reading Christian novels & read: "The Silver Chalice" and "The Robe." Reading those books really helped me to participate and understand more about what happened to Jesus during His Passion.

Minette in Wynot, NE

I would have to say fasting, Therese sacrifice beads, and teaching my children

Katrina in Cloquet, MN

For me, I prefer spiritual reading (such as The Dolorous Passion by Bl. Emmerich) and fasting. I've spent my most recent Lents either pregnant or nursing, so I try and fast from things like the Internet, gossip, backbiting, and so on.

Kim in Helena, MT

Each Lent I set out to deepen my relationship with our Lord by attending a retreat, doing a book study or a Bible study; read about a life of a saint.

Tricia in Merrimack, NH

I enjoy fasting and daily masses as well as finding a new Lenten devotional each year. I often secretly fast from whatever the children are fasting from as a quiet support to them.

Karen in Slaton, TX

I think the sacrifice beans are the best for me. It allows me to choose to give up things I want for the good of my spouse or my children.

Evie in Orange Park, FL

My husband and I have just recently started saying the Rosary with our family, but before that, we would (sadly) say it together every Lent. This private prayer time helped me to feel renewed and gave my day a focus on the Lord that was usually missing.

Bridget in Newark, NJ

Do you usually “offer something up” for Lent or do you find “giving alms and doing acts of charity” is more beneficial — or both?



I try to perform more acts of charity through my donations of clothing & household items for the poor.

Maria in Canal Winchester, OH

We do both.

Janette in IL

For me it is more difficult to consistently give something up for Lent. It takes more effort and sacrifice.

Alysha in Newfield, NJ

I usually do offer something up~the years I have tried doing only “the positive” I am sad. There is something very edifying about sacrifice! Anyone who says it doesn’t do them any good probably doesn’t realize how much sacrifice reminds us that it is Lent. The reminder can then serve to encourage our almsgiving and acts of charity! Doing both is the best!

Charlene in Kennewick, WA

We have found that both are beneficial for us as a family.

Savanna in Sweetwater, TX

In the past we have used the following Lenten sacrifice formula.

Monday-Mary Mondays (we pray the rosary as a family)

Tuesday-Tubeless Tuesday (no television, computer, anything w/a screen)

Wednesday-Water Wednesday (eat as normal but drink only water-no juice, milk, coffee, etc)

Thursday-Thankful Thursday (look at all of the blessings our family has been given)

Friday-Family Friday (we are almost always together but we make a point to not schedule any activities (except for the Knights Fish Fry) on Fridays)

This year I will have to make some adjustments because we have made more effort to pray the rosary every night and really cut back on the television during the week anyway.

Jodi in Stewartville, MO

Everyone in our house offers something up for Lent. It could be a favorite food, television or video games or even the internet.

We post our sacrifice on the door above our merciful cross for all to see. We also keep an Operation Rice Bowl in our kitchen to remind us to donate to those who are in need.

Karen in Williamstown, NJ

I usually give alms and do acts of charity and extra prayers during Lent because I’m usually pregnant. I can’t seem to fast from food while pregnant.

Kim in Nashville, TN

I’ve done both, and like to alternate (or do both at once). I can’t decide which I find more beneficial; it depends on what is going on in my life that year!

Sharon in Shelby Township, MI

I try to do both, but especially offering things up because I am such a weak willed person that, through the year, I let so many good habits slide. The things I try to focus on giving up (or doing) are those that will hopefully have a continued effect even after Lent (sort of like the concept of “28 days to a new habit”, except this is 40!) - so I will do things like practice not being impatient or yelling at the children, doing something specific every day that builds up my husband and therefore my marriage, absolutely not eating anything that I know is no good for my weight or health, making sure I do at least one extra thing every day towards maintaining the house or garden (apart from what usually gets done).

Marina in Kapunda, South Australia

Mostly I work to do my duty of state as a mother and teacher better by being more focused (avoiding things that will distract me from what I should be doing at that time) and be more loving and charitable to the children.

Mary Ann in Sainte Anne, Manitoba

We do both and try to encourage a spirit of humility through each.

Kristi in Lansing, KS

We do both and each of us offers something different. Both are beneficial.

Carla in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

What helps me the most is giving up that "one" thing that you KNOW is going to be very difficult to do.

Cindy in Jefferson, GA

I am a big penny pincher so, for me, giving alms is a great way to keep money in perspective. I try to volunteer throughout the year so I don't necessarily count it as helping me for Lent specifically. I do encourage anyone to find a talent and share it! I do make a conscious effort to not complain to my husband about all the little "bumps" in the road that I encounter on a daily basis during Lent. He always seems so much more relaxed and I am always so much happier as a result.

Veronica in King George, VA

I think offering something up is more beneficial to me personally. We live in a rural area so there are not a lot of opportunities to do acts of charity, like helping at a soup kitchen and things like that.

Minette in Wynot, NE

I think everyone should try to do both, because they are very powerful when they are combined.

Katrina in Cloquet, MN

I try to balance offering something up with giving alms. This year, I want to pray in front of Planned Parenthood during 40 Days for Life.

Kim in Helena, MT

I do both. Each time I follow through with my "giving something up," it is an opportunity for prayer that I do not normally take during the rest of the year.

Tricia in Merrimack, NH

We do both giving and fasting as a family...not always, but often the family will set out to fast from something and end up giving alms of money and/or service. Teaching the children to do things anonymously is vital in their own spiritual growth.

Karen in Slaton, TX

I try to do both. We often don't have much to give monetarily but I try and make a point to do something charitable for someone else with less or for a neighbor in need.

Evie in Orange Park, FL

I always give something up...usually something frivolous that is taking precious time away from family and prayer. But I also add extra prayer time, a few devotional books and daily Mass attendance. Daily Mass can be so hard with so many small children, that I have tendency to not go....but during Lent, I make it a point to go at least once a week with the children, and twice a week by myself.

Sarah in Streetsboro, OH

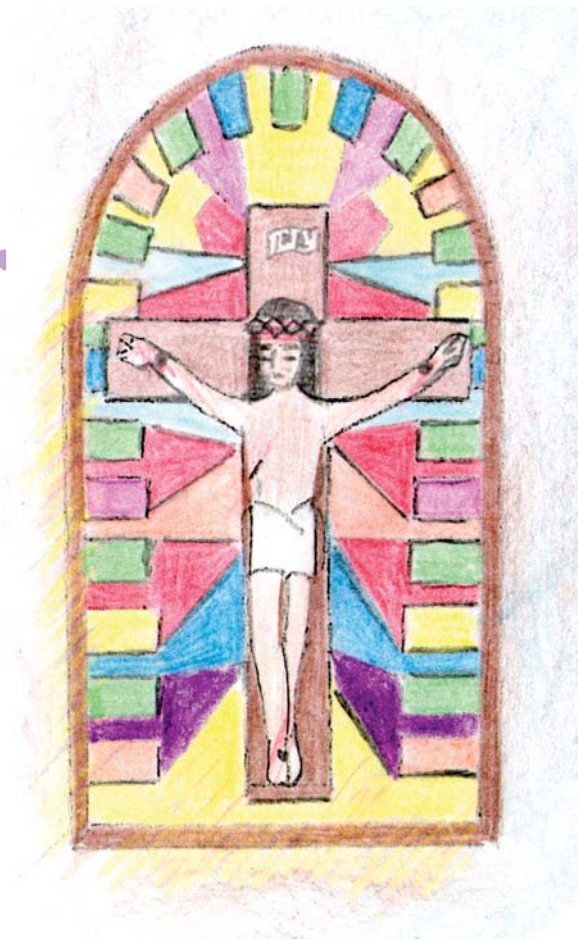
We try to do both. We encourage the children to follow our example, and knowing that you have 5 little mimics watching your every move certainly helps you to try harder. We remind them that Christ offered up His life and also did good works, and that we can help to "heal His boo-boos" by doing the same.

Bridget in Newark, NJ

Last year, I gave up Facebook for Lent, and that was wonderful. I plan to do it again. I like for us to find ways to give as well during Lent.

Erin in Rome, GA

Lenten Recipes



We absolutely love what we call “**BAKED MACARONI AND CHEESE**”. It’s a variation of a baked ziti, but meatless, and made extra yummy by the tons of cheese and tomato soup. :) Coming from a family of 16, Mom made many recipes her own by baking them more kid- and budget-friendly.

Feeds 4:

- 1 lb elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
- 2 cans of [preferably Campbell’s] tomato soup
- 1 lb sharp cheddar cheese, sliced
- 1 lb mozzarella, sliced

Spray a rectangular baking dish with cooking spray. Pour half of the macaroni into the dish, cover with one can of tomato soup, then top with rows of cheddar and mozzarella, using only half. Repeat. Cover with foil and bake for...about 25 minutes? I’m not really sure b/c while I write this I remember that I have never really made it with less than 2 lbs of macaroni (and twice the other ingredients as well). :) It is absolutely delicious.

Bridget in Newark, NJ

We are 98% meatless during the whole year so most of our recipes are not specifically Lenten recipes but we love Lentils for both meatless and Lent. Lentils mock meat well and are humble in my opinion. So unlike some more "gourmet" meatless recipes I find **ONION-VINEGAR LENTILS AND RICE** to be very fitting with the simplicity that should be part of the season as well. Who knows if that is why they are called Lentils? My lentils recipe is not the usual one you find online so I will share.

1) 3 cups Lentils covered in water. Bring to boil, cover, reduce heat and simmer until softened about 30 min (you can add more water of necessary but in small amounts)

2) Meanwhile take 1/4 cup olive oil and heat with 4 cloves of garlic minced. Once garlic is lightly browned add four onions sliced and cook until softened and caramelized.

3) Once onions are ready add 3 tablespoons vinegar (any kind you have on hand, I usually use red or white wine vinegar but apple cider or any can work also) and salt to taste.

4) then when Lentils are ready add the onion/oil mixture to the lentils and mix well. Continue to cook until it thickens and achieves desired thickness (should be thick and stew like).

Serve on top of any kind of rice. Simple and hearty. You could add carrots, celery or other vegetables to the lentils as long as it is not one with strong flavor it will not affect much more than texture.

Carla in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

Black beans and rice! I add 1 and a half cups of our favorite salsa to two cans of black beans (if you rinse your beans, add 3/4 cup of water too), heat on stove until hot and thick and served over a bed of rice. We add a salad on the side and a big loaf of crusty bread....it is a favorite of everyone!

Sarah in Streetsboro, OH

SHRIMP IN SUN-DRIED TOMATO SAUCE

This will serve 4.

Box of whole wheat Linguini
Large can of crushed tomatoes
One jar of Sun-Dried Tomato Alfredo Sauce
Shrimp frozen (bag of 150-300 at Wal-Mart)

*Sautee the shrimp in butter, garlic powder and dried parsley.

*Boil linguini.

*Mix together the crushed tomatoes and sun-dried tomato alfredo sauce.

****Serve the sauce and shrimp over the linguini and sprinkle with a little cheese of your choice.

Cindy in Jefferson, GA

Lentil soup is our favorite; most packages have a great recipe on the bag! We eat ours over brown rice and add in bread (home baked if possible).

Lisa in Atlanta, GA

TUNA PATTIES

1 large can tuna
6 bread ends, diced
2 eggs
1/2 stalk celery, finely diced (opt.)
salt & pepper
canola oil

Mix all ingredients and let stand for the bread to absorb the moisture. Then form into patties. Fry in oil over medium heat until done.

Heather in Cummington, MA

SALMON LOAF

The Ingredients:

2 Cans of Salmon (about 15 ounces each)
3 cups Crushed Saltine Crackers
Some Milk
1T Lemon Juice
1/4tsp. Ground Black Pepper
2 Slightly Beaten Eggs
1 cup of minced onions (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Drain the juice from the cans of salmon into a 2 cup measuring glass. Add enough milk to make 1 1/2 cups of liquid. Add the lemon juice, pepper, and slightly beaten eggs to the liquid mixture and set aside. In a mixing bowl pull apart the salmon and remove the dark "skin" and the spine bones. Flake the clean salmon with a fork and mix in the saltines, liquid mixture, and onions. Once everything is nicely combined, grease a 13x9 inch pan and press the salmon mixture into it. Bake, uncovered, for 30-45 minutes or until the top is lightly browned and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Our family likes to serve this dish with a side of apple-sauce, blackeyed peas mixed with spinach, and corn-bread.

Veronica in King George, VA

CREAM CHEESE ENCHILADAS

I am at work so do not have the recipe with me. I will post it on my blog (<http://www.olmysticalrose.blogspot.com/>) for anyone who is interested :o) I will try to post some others we like as well.

Minette in Wynot, NE

Cheesy lasagna! Zucchini grated in with the grated cheese - kids don't even know its good for them! We also make this on Christmas Eve.

Dawn in Brunswick, OH

We eat meatless often so I try to do more simple meals during Lent. We enjoy things like baked potato centered meals with all the fixings. ie beans, cheese, sour cream, butter, steamed broccoli. But here are some suggestions...

(Make sure you scroll down on some of these pages)

http://www.catholicmom.com/lent_recipes.htm

<http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food/holidays/recipes-for-lent>

<http://forums.catholic.com/showthread.php?t=133396>

<http://italianfood.about.com/od/holidaydishes/tp/aa010306.htm>

<http://spanishfood.about.com/od/holidaysfeasts/a/lentrecipes.htm>

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/23670/quick_and_easy_lenten_recipes.html

And, just a little more FYI,
<http://www.theorthodoxchurch.org/fastin-grules.htm> (I really liked that one. It is rules for fasting.)

<http://www.melkite.org/lent.htm>

Also keep in mind that pretzels are a good Lenten snack/meal, and they're easy to make. Another plus is that you can add pepperoni or pizza-like toppings for the young kids, or spinach and other toppings for yourself.

SOFT PRETZELS

1 tsp active dry yeast
Pinch of sugar
1/3 cup warm water
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tbsp white sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1 tbsp canola oil

3 tbsp baking soda
1 cup hot water (as hot as your tap can get)
Sea salt

Dissolve yeast into water with a pinch of sugar, let stand 10 minutes, until the mixture is creamy colored. Mix the yeast mixture with flour, sugar, salt and canola oil, and knead until combined (a few minutes, not even 5). Let the dough rise in a greased bowl until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. When the dough has risen, pinch off a handful and roll it out into a long strand. Set aside. Repeat with the rest of the dough, about 6 times. Once all the strands are rolled out, pick up the first one and stretch it out again (the gluten will have relaxed and it should stretch further now). Twist it into a pretzel shape and place it on a baking sheet lined with silicate or cooking spray. Repeat with the rest of the strands.

Dissolve baking soda into hot water and stir until dissolved. Quickly dip each rolled pretzel into the mixture and place it back on the baking sheet. Sprinkle all the pretzels with sea salt, to your preference. Bake for about 8 minutes, until pretzels have browned.

Karen in Slaton, TX

Lots! The easiest is **RED BEANS AND RICE**. Cook soaked red beans with some diced onion, cumin, and cilantro, and then serve them over cooked brown rice, topped with lots of shredded cheddar cheeses, and sour cream if desired. Corn bread makes a nice side.

Erin in Rome, GA

Which Lenten activity has been the most helpful in teaching your children about the Lenten Season of love and sacrifice?

Why is this activity your favorite?

Ever since my daughter was two, we have made a large, Lenten calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and goes through the Easter Vigil. Each year it is a little different, but we include drawings, colors and symbols for the special days in Lent, and at the bottom of each square we write in a special activity for that day, for example, "Sing a Lenten hymn," or "write a letter to someone far away," or "say a special prayer for priests." We often use watercolors to give the calendar a base color of lavender, and make the Sundays slightly darker purple, except for the one that is more pink. We draw a bowl with a black cross for Ash Wednesday, and cut out a green, construction-paper palm for palm Sunday. We use red ink for Holy Week, and stick a little towel cut from an old washcloth on Holy Thursday, and a birthday candle with the Alpha and Omega symbols drawn on it (and glitterglue dots for incense!) for the Easter Vigil. Each year it turns out a little different. Last, we cut out purple crosses from construction paper or card stock, and each day, my daughter sticks one on, to mark the days as they go by. The calendar is propped at the back of our family altar, which is covered in a purple cloth for Lent.

We also have, in the past, made and decorated little cards with "Alleluia!" the week before Lent, and hid them around the house. Then on Easter morning, after Mass, we go on an "Alleluia" hunt! One year, we found an Alleluia card about two months after Easter!

We have enjoyed this activity because from

an early age, it has given my daughter the possibility of seeing how the Church marks time, how seasons of the church year change, and learning how our little sacrifices can be united to the great sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.

Lenora in Carlisle, PA

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We like to pick out a charity to donate to during Easter (making food baskets, cards for servicemen, etc). It helps the whole family to look beyond ourselves and become more selfgiving.

Megan in Apex, NC

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Crown of Thorns - (Dried bread wreath with toothpicks that are removed one at a time for good deeds / sacrifices.) I like that we'll keep the Crown of Thorns on our kitchen table which keeps Christ's suffering in the forefront of our minds. I like that my children can reflect at the end of each day and physically remove one the "thorns" in the crown for their actions and attitudes during the day. Using the crown of thorns at the center of our house each day also connects me to Advent when our Advent Wreath is something that we gather around each day to reflect on Christ's birth so it helps with a pattern of devotion.

Andrea in Fort Collins, CO

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We enjoy doing the Rice Bowl charity during Lent, coming home at the end of the day and

putting any coins we have in the bowl adds up quickly. It helps to teach the lesson of putting others first, of taking from our plenty to give to someone who doesn't have much, of being a true servant.

Melanie in Iowa City, IA

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We begin by discussing together the things we have and what we actually need. Together we decide what to give up in sacrifice for Lent and choose something to add to our lives that will make us better people. We have a change jar devoted to collecting money to donate to a charity or someone in need. This is my favorite activity because it shows our children about how we are all in this world together and how important it is to love one another like Jesus loves us.

Nicole in Brook Park, OH

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A couple of years ago, I put together a Stations of the Cross box. Inside are items to represent each station (ex. a piece of white felt w/ Jesus' face on it for when Veronica wipes the face of Jesus). Our children take turns holding each item while we pray the Stations together. This really helps our children to understand the sacrifice Jesus made for our sins by having something they can see & touch.

Maria in Canal Winchester, OH

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Since our children are still small we have not done a lot with them yet. In years past, we have tried to attend Daily Mass at least once a week. This year we are going to start doing the Stations of the Cross on Fridays and maybe the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy. The Stations of the Cross has always been part of my Lenten upbringing so I am excited to start it with my children.

Janette in IL

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Being that my children are 4 and 2 our sacrifice bean jar has been a wonderful teaching tool. All lent we encourage the kids to make little sacrifices and each time they do they get to put a simple white bean in the jar. On Easter morning those beans "turn into" colorful jelly beans. Showing how our boring or difficult sacrifices we do here on earth are stored up as treasures waiting for us in heaven. I love that this is a simple yet very visual way to show how if we do things for and with Christ, he turns them into something so beautiful and rewarding - for others and for us.

Alysha in Newfield, NJ

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Last year, our new favorite activity came from Holy Heroes~we baked a salt dough crown of thorns, with toothpicks baked in as the thorns. For every act of charity or act of sacrifice, a thorn could be removed! We have five kids, so we placed A LOT of thorns in our crown! It was JOYFUL to watch the kids doing good deeds to take some of Jesus' pain away! It was an awesome 40 days of working together to do good. As a mom, I saw my children taking a sibling's laundry downstairs, cleaning up someone else's mess, writing cards to elderly relatives, not eating candy, leaving the TV off, and so much more~it all counts and it all makes a difference! We were all able to participate~from mom and dad and the older kids all the way to the two year old! This year will be even better since our crown will be made prior to Ash Wednesday!

Charlene in Kennewick, WA

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As a family, we collect change through Lent. At Easter we take our donation to the church. We also discuss the stations of the cross. Since we only have 3 of our 4 children every other weekend (they live with their mother) this gives us an opportunity to share our faith.

They learn what Lent is about and how to have a gracious, giving heart.

Savanna in Sweetwater, TX

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This is the season of the year where I work with my kids to look at all of their blessings and see if we can't give away some of the things that we have been blessed with to bless others. We give these things to our local homeless shelter. It shows my kids that they are not in their own world and that they can help others in need.

Jennifer in Dayton, OH

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Our family looks forward to the weekly Lenten Mass & Stations of the Cross at our small country parish. The three older children have really come to a deeper understanding of the sufferings of Jesus for our sins through the praying of the stations each week of Lent.

Jodi in Stewartville, MO

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We do a few things that focus on sacrifices. The children earn beans which go into a bean jar when they perform good deeds (on Easter morning the bean jar is replaced with yummy jelly beans). Our older daughter keeps track of how many beans she has earned with a string of good deed beads. We also cover a door with a cross that gets covered up with paper flower cut outs every time the children perform one of the works of mercy. The goal is to perform enough works of mercy to completely cover the cross with flowers (which have the merciful act the child performed written on it) by Good Friday.

Of the activities we do, my favorite is the merciful cross. I love how the children clamor to perform good works for others. Throughout all of Lent, they are truly focused

on trying to demonstrate their love for God by giving of themselves.

Everyone in our house offers something up for Lent. It could be a favorite food, television or video games or even the internet. We post our sacrifice on the door above our merciful cross for all to see. We also keep an Operation Rice Bowl in our kitchen to remind us to donate to those who are in need.

Karen in Williamstown, NJ

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Stations of the Cross and reading about the Passion of our Lord Great visual aides in showing how Christ suffered for us and how much He loved us to do so.

CeAnne in Aumsville, OR

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We make a salt dough crown of thorns. Each time they make a sacrifice or do something good they pull out a thorn (toothpick). By Easter we have all the toothpicks pulled out. We paint what is left gold and decorate it as a royal crown for Jesus. It's our table centerpiece all through lent as the crown of thorns then all through Easter as a royal crown. It's a tangible way to see the sacrifices happen and the family works together to remove all the thorns.

Julie in Manassas, VA

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We enjoy the St. Therese Sacrifice Beads and creating a crown of thorns made with removable toothpicks. These activities give the children, especially the younger ones, a tangible way to think about their small sacrifices and good deeds. When they keep track it seems to encourage more positive behaviors, thus creating better habits.

Monica in Newtown, CT

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My children are all 4 and under so we have kept it pretty simple so far. We go to Stations of the Cross on Friday nights at our church and we pray the rosary every night. This year I think we'll make a mercy cross. It teaches my children about how Jesus sacrificed Himself for us so that they are more willing to sacrifice for others.

Kim in Nashville, TN

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Giving up frivolous things we love to do and take for granted: watching tv and movies, video games, listening to music, eating goodies etc. We live such easy lives with everything geared towards our own enjoyment, choosing to give up these distractions gives us the opportunity to enrich our spiritual lives.

Colette in Bremerton, WA

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We have always had our children give something up for Lent, in addition to a family sacrifice such as TV or sweets. When they are young we sometimes make a path on paper (a square per day) and write in something to do for each day: praying for a particular person, doing something nice for a sibling, not playing with a favorite toy, going to Mass, listening to a saint story, etc.

The older kids have helped out at a homeless shelter a few years and also pray at an abortion clinic with other teens. We volunteer at the parish fish fries and attend stations of the cross. We also plan on doing the rice bowl thing this year.

My favorite activity for the kids thus far has been the traditional one of giving up something for all of Lent. I like it because it's difficult, and teaches them a bit about true

sacrifice. It has also been very inspirational to me, as they are often better at it than I am!!

Sharon in Shelby Township, MI

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Taking time to truly reflect on the Stations of the Cross. Gives my children the ability to have a personal encounter with Jesus and what He sacrificed for us.

Kim in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia

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Creating/baking a dough crown of thorns, festooned with many sharp toothpicks to mimic the dreadful thorns - as each child strives to make a better effort to perform extra acts of kindness to each other, and service to the family, they are allowed to break off a toothpick/thorn and instead wrap a pretty silk flower around the stump. The aim is that by the time Easter arrives the dreadful crown's thorns are completely replaced with a beautiful bouquet, representing the journey towards achieving goodness in all our lives.

It's an activity that has three stages, so continues to be a focus right from when we make/bake and thorn it, through the breaking of the thorns and festooning it with flowers, and culminating on Easter eve when it is broken to symbolize Christ breaking the bonds of death and releasing the souls from limbo.

Marina in Kapunda, South Australia

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The Eucharistic Crusade (in which children pray and sacrifice, and practice devotion to the Holy Eucharist; in reparation for sin and for various intentions such as Priestly vocations, the suffering souls in Purgatory). It teaches children that their prayers and sacrifices can make a difference to the whole

Mystical Body of Christ.

Mary Ann in Sainte Anne, Manitoba

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My older girls use their sacrifice beads on days they feel their focus needs to be on giving instead of receiving. Usually by the end of the day they are bursting to share the over ten sacrifices they made for Jesus. My younger boys use them during family rosary. It helps for them to move the ten beads across to the other side and know we are completing one more decade/mystery. They also may try to pick up ten toys, put away ten books, throw away ten trash items to coordinate with the ten sacrifice beads. All for Jesus. This activity, by moving the beads, is a kinesthetic way for the children to “see” the small things they can accomplish and know they can give that to Jesus just like He gave of Himself for them.

Kristi in Lansing, KS

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We make the Crown of Thorns bread, Black cross that we cover in flowers with each act of mercy, Alms jar, Lent calendar and The Stations of the cross meditations on Fridays. All have been wonderful activities which they have enjoyed but the most effective for my children have been the Crown of Thorns bread and the Stations of the Cross. These 2 activities especially made them realize the great sacrifice Our Lord made for us and just how much he loves us and how small the sacrifices we make even when they hurt are in comparison and why we should sacrifice. I could tell how much these activities worked in them because they often had tears in their eyes as they participate in them.

They are very visual and really give them a sense that they are very loved by god and that love is sacrifice even to the point of suf-

fering. It teaches them that true love doesn't think of yourself but others.

Carla in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

+

Years ago we made an Alms Can (from a large coffee can) and during Lent we save money in this can. Once we saved and cashed in aluminum cans too. My children get to decide where the money will be donated and/or who it will help out. I personally love to see their pure, innocent hearts at work! They truly love to help others and expect nothing in return.

A long time ago, we made a huge poster of a bare tree. Above the tree were the words, “I am the Vine, You are the Branches.”

During Lent we all have our very own purple lunch sack bag. In each are 40 slips of paper with different things to do or give up written on them. Each day we take out a slip of paper and complete it's activity then we glue each slip to leaves and place those on the bare tree. When Easter arrives, the tree is full of new leaves! (New Life)

Cindy in Jefferson, GA

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Our family was given a recipe for making a Crown of Thorns from a friend. We braid three strands of dough and form it into a circle. Before baking it, we put different colored toothpicks to represent the thorns in Christ's Crown. Each member of the family is assigned a different colored thorn and must do a work of charity or make a sacrifice that is age appropriate. When the work is completed, a thorn may be removed from the crown. We must have all of the thorns removed by Easter. The night before Easter we glue on “gems” and paint the crown to make it beautiful for our Lord.

This is my favorite Lenten activity for so many reasons. The children in our family feel like their works are not only benefiting others but that they are in some small way helping to “relieve” Jesus from those thorns. They have a deep sense of satisfaction every time they remove one of their thorns. They also benefit from setting goals for themselves and help their siblings try to think of a work that is worthy of pulling a thorn from the crown.

Veronica in King George, VA

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I made up a form on the computer with a box for each of the following sections: prayer, fasting, almsgiving. Each person in our family has a sheet to fill in 1 thing in each category that they are going to do during Lent. We hang them up or put them by our place at the supper table to remind us of our promise. My children learn to do something in each category instead of ‘just’ giving something up.

Minette in Wynot, NE

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The thing that has helped me teach my children about the Lenten Season is having them give something to another person (toys, help with something, sharing) and also reading them stories, working on art projects and praying together. It shows them the importance of our faith. It also teaches them sacrifice and love.

Katrina in Cloquet, MN

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very evening during Lent we put aside one food item (e.g., pasta, peanut butter, soup, etc.) that we donate to the food pantry at our church on Sunday. The children get to decide which item we will donate -- I let them pick something from our cabinets. We see the food accumulate during the week, then bring it to church on Sunday, and they get to

put it in the food basket.

Anne in Durham, NC

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We have participated in Stations of the Cross at various churches. It is difficult to bring small children because of the quiet atmosphere and lack of many children. I think it is for those exact reasons that the children feel the sorrow and true sacrifice of Christ for us. Also, visiting a different church allows us to focus in on a different aspect of the Stations that we may have missed at our own church. Each year, we color and post all the stations up our stairway wall. The children take pride in their work and feel a special connection to this devotion. I feel that the children are able to personally take part in the devotion, rather than just hearing a classroom lesson on how we ought to love this devotion.

Heather in Cummington, MA

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For my daughter, what is the most helpful is an alms jar. We get a little jar - either one we provide (washed out spaghetti sauce jar, for example) or the little paper “rice bowl” that Catholic Relief Services has. We let her “find” change to put in it or let her “earn” it. She can earn change for things like asking nicely as opposed to screaming, hugging her brother (11 months) as opposed to pushing him over, going to bed without fighting, and so on. We like it because she has a concrete idea of what’s going on: the change goes into the box for “the kids who don’t have anything”. It’s not abstract, and she loves being able to help “the kids”. At the end of Lent we let her give our change to the parish, and she knows that the parish will give it to “the kids”. She goes out of her way to earn change and to find it and likes to see how much we can collect before Lent ends.

Kim in Helena, MT

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We do the stations of the Cross, reflecting on different stations throughout Lent. This reflection time gives me the opportunity to teach more fully about the sacrifices made on our behalf. Then, together, we choose how we can show that love to others in acts of mercy, service, kindness, & compassion in our family & in our community.

Tricia in Merrimack, NH

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Our family enjoys the weekly Stations of the Cross as well as collecting money for the local crisis pregnancy center. The children help to fill plastic baby bottles with loose change to be used to aid local women and families. Our family is very active in the pro-life movement and by participating in the Stations of the cross and baby bottle campaign they understand how through the sacrifice of One, many can be saved!

Karen in Slaton, TX

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I think that the story of the Passion of Jesus has been the best learning tool. We have a felt board and pieces to tell the story. So I try to do the storyboard with my kids on Palm Sunday, Fridays and during the Triduum. This and the kid-friendly station of the cross matching cards have been a powerful tool for their learning about Jesus' love. It really gives them a visual understanding of the greatness of God's love for us and helps them see why we do what we do as Catholics. Why we go to church and why we meet Jesus in prayer.

Evie in Orange Park, FL

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We only pray the Sorrowful Mysteries on our rosaries during the family rosary in Lent. It helps us go deeper into our understanding of the sacrifice Jesus gave for us on the Cross. By Easter, it makes reciting the Glorious Mys-

teries all the more special.

Sarah in Streetsboro, OH

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This year one of the things we will be doing is a Jesus Tree (available from Leaflet Missal). It is the same concept as a Jesse Tree but New Testament readings/symbols are used. I would also like to try getting all of us to say a full rosary together daily as well as Stations of the Cross on Fridays. The children will be giving up electronics for Lent and focusing on good reading, games, etc. We enjoy the Jesus Tree because there is a Bible reading for each day and a symbol for one of the children to place on the Tree - need to take turns. We all need to work on sacrificing (by giving up various things) but it also gives everyone the opportunity to do other good things and requires them to think more about how to have fun and have something to play without being plugged in.

Teri in Delano, MN

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For our family, one of our favorite traditions is seeing the Living Way of the Cross. It helps us to understand the Passion as someone who was there.

Theresa in Greenwood, IN

Holy Week and Easter

Holy Week: Very little school work, except reading, Mass on Thursday, Friday and then our girls sing in our church choir on Easter morning.

Easter: We like to make soft pretzels every Friday during Lent. As for traditions, we have a home altar that is decorated with purple cloth, and each day of Holy Week we change the “props.” Bowl, towel, construction paper chalice and Host for Holy Thursday, crown of thorns and nails for Good Friday, these are kept on until Saturday evening. Then after the children go to bed, I replace it with a gold or yellow cloth and a statue of our Lord coming out of the tomb and a crystal cross. All the previous decorations are put away.

Angela in Jackson, WI

Holy Week: Cleaning in preparation for Easter, doing less school and more spiritual reading, going to

Mass several times.

Easter: Turning off all electricity from noon to 3 on Good Friday.

Dawn in Brunswick, OH

Holy Week: We try to attend the Chrism mass held by the bishop and archdiocesan priests at the Cathedral-usually on Tuesday of Holy Week here in Atlanta; we attend Mass on Holy Thursday, services on Good Friday and Holy Saturday morning, and the Easter Vigil.

Easter: we like to make homemade bread for Easter, we enjoy coloring the hardboiled eggs and sharing baskets of goodies with family members.

Lisa in Atlanta, GA

Holy Week: We boil school down to just religion and math (my kids read for fun, so I don't worry about reading), We go to Mass on Thursday and Friday, for the Holy Thursday and Good Friday services. Saturday, we clean the house until it is spotless. Also, on Saturday, we go the Blessing of the Food...this is a family favorite...we are all in anticipation of the feast on Sunday and the excitement of the Resurrection of Our Lord! We watch videos about the Passion of Christ, and read books to the little ones explaining Easter.

Easter: If you don't have a Blessing of the Food at your parish, ask your parish priest to start one. It is a beautiful ceremony. You take a sampling of each thing you are going to serve for the Easter

meal (some families bring all the food!). Most families use beautiful baskets that they have decorated. (My husband's family is Polish, and they have many traditions with the baskets and special white clothes to cover the food. The clothes are embroidered with symbols of Easter and Christ). The priest says a blessing and blesses the food with holy water. It is a favorite tradition that really sets the tone for the end of Lent and the beginning of Easter!

Sarah in Streetsboro, OH

Holy Week: We attend as many services that our church offers as well as doing our felt storyboard of the Passion. Our Catholic Families group offers children's stations of the cross which we always participate in...I try and say a rosary with the kids at 3 pm on Good Friday. This year I want to try and do hot cross buns. Saturday night I decorate for Easter and then we attend Morning Mass and the kids receive their baskets after mass.

Easter: I always make a butter mold shaped like a lamb as is traditional in my husband's family.

Evie in Orange Park, FL

Holy Week: We attend Holy Thursday & Good Friday services. We join our parish in an outdoor Stations of the Cross. We attend Easter Vigil.

Easter: We have an Easter egg hunt for all the children in our extended family BUT FIRST, all the children sit around the table, each with a part of the “Resurrection Eggs” set &



Alleluia!

Alleluia!

together we retell the story of our Lord's Passion, death, & Resurrection. Some of the children in our family would otherwise associate Easter with the Easter bunny only.

Tricia in Merrimack, NH

Holy Week: We celebrate Holy Week by participating as best as we can in the Church's Liturgy. My husband takes Good Friday off from work and we attend Church that day, and try to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy at the Mercy Hour. We try for more discussion of the Gospel readings and do our best to enter into them as fully as possible.

Easter: - Dyeing Easter Eggs with the Grandparents (usually putting Christian symbols on them, such as chi ro, crosses, the Tomb, angels)
- Easter Egg hunt put on by the City
- Easter Dresses (my mom did this to me growing up - finding those flowy, flowery gowns with big old hats)
- Special Easter Dinner

Kim in Helena, MT

Holy Week: We go to every possible event at church! It gets really busy, but I feel that Easter Sunday is so much more meaningful after fully participating in all the events of Holy Week.

Easter: On Holy Saturday, we have a blessing of Easter Foods at our Polish parish. A representative selection of foods that we will serve for our Easter meal is placed in a basket, and they are blessed at church by our priest. We also decorate pysanky (Ukrainian Easter Eggs, also done in Poland) for the

basket. Many of the foods are chosen for their symbolic meaning, and the butter lamb is also an important item! Preparing the pysanky, foods, and basket to bring them into church is the highlight of our Holy Week!

Heather in Cummington, MA

Holy Week: We start with a celebratory atmosphere on Palm Sunday, have a Seder on Holy Thursday, do Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, clean, bake, and otherwise prepare on Holy Saturday, and then have a joyous Easter Sunday.

Easter: I try to bake a lamb cake for Easter Sunday dessert.

Anne in Durham, NC

Holy Week: By going to the Holy Week services at our church. I would really like to give up TV & computer for all of Holy Week sometime...

Easter: nothing unique really...coloring eggs, Easter egg hunt, Easter baskets. I usually put religious gifts in the baskets. We don't do a lot of candy because they get so much from their grandparents. I often do a saint book or one of the "Girl" books that CHC offers or something like that.

Minette in Wynot, NE

Holy Week: We spend Holy Week with our in-laws every year. My Father-In-Law is a Deacon of the Catholic Church and his duties keep him so busy that we spend our time with him and my Mother-In-Law at their Church. It is fun for the kids to see their "Papa" participating in

the Mass. My Father-In-Law finds it a challenge to not wink at them during Mass :) .

Easter: We go to a traditional Easter Egg Hunt at my In-Laws Church where the children find eggs that are scattered throughout the lawn. What I like about their egg hunt is that some of the eggs have crosses painted on them and those eggs are empty to remind the kids that Christ's tomb was empty on Easter Sunday and that he is risen! Granted, my older children appreciate these eggs more so than the younger kids do.

Veronica in King George, VA

Holy Week: Mass, Stations, Soup (fast) , prayers

Easter: Each year a new small Saint statue arrives in each child's basket with a book about them and picture holy card. This saint is then "adopted" as their Holy friend for the year.

Kristi in Lansing, KS



Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter

Holy Week: We travel daily over an hour to a parish that is very ethnic (high Italian population) because I want to instill in my boys a wonder and awe for the richness of how Holy Week celebrations can be - with processions and incense, drapes and candles, chants and ceremonies, food and festas, that aren't necessarily as enthusiastically celebrated in many of the westernized churches.

Easter: Our Easter morning breakfast is planned to be quick/easy and simple so that I can be included in the celebrations, too. So we have strawberries and cream, hot buttery croissants with more jam and cream, and a non-Christmas version of egg-nog. We all sit down at the table at the same time, and it's not till after prayers and the meal that we let them loose on the Easter eggs.

Marina in Kapunda, South Australia

Holy Week: We go to church at least Thursday and Friday, and usually go to the Easter Vigil Mass. We try to watch Jesus of Nazareth, an hour or two at a time. We usually don't color eggs until Holy Sat.

Easter: Nothing very original; the kids' baskets are hidden the night before, we do an outdoor egg hunt Easter afternoon, we don't have a traditional dinner but we do usually have a big (egg) breakfast, and play "kingers" with the colored eggs.

Sharon in Shelby Township, MI

Holy Week: We do different projects each day to remember what the day is and to remember what is coming. We really enjoyed making a Holy Week / Easter lapbook a few years ago.

Easter: We make the Holy Saturday Cookies each year, but they do not always turn out exactly right, but they still taste good.

Julie in Manassas, VA

Holy Week: We are starting new traditions this year that will probably include additional fasting, additional reading especially about the Passion, extra prayers and focusing school work more on the events of Holy Week rather than the 3 R's.

Easter: For Easter we usually make roll out sugar cookies in the form of lambs, crosses and other religious symbols of the season. We also have our Paschal candle and flowers and we will be adding more traditions this year as we are new to celebrating fully the liturgical year. We are logging away our information finds and record of our

celebrations online at www.san-cutssimplicitus.com

CeAnne in Aumsville, Oregon

Holy Week: We do various arts and crafts that are related to Holy Week beginning with Palm Sunday. On Holy Thursday we attend Mass, and on Good Friday we go to confession and then to the service our parish has at 3PM.

Easter: We do an Easter egg hunt on Easter morning. Some of the eggs contain items that will foster our children's faith, such as rosaries or patron saint medals.

Karen in Williamstown, NJ

Holy Week: We usually take the week off from lessons. I usually try to have crafts & worksheets/ coloring sheets for them to do to keep them busy. On Good Friday we usually get out our stations of the cross eggs & look at those for a while then from noon until 3pm it is quiet time. They are only allowed to look at books of saints or something else of that nature. We go to mass as a family for all of the Holy Week services (our older 2 children as well as my husband usually help assist with masses).

Easter: I cannot really think of anything that we do that would classify as tradition. Maybe that should be one of my goals for this Lenten/ Easter Season is to come up with a new family tradition/recipe for the Easter Season.

Jodi in Stewartville, Mo

Holy Week: We attend church services through the Triduum. Quiet



Alleluia!

Alleluia!

is expected on Good Friday~esp. between noon and 3 pm. Watch "Jesus of Nazareth" as a family beginning on Palm Sunday. Hurry up to get the last thorns out of the crown so Jesus can have a pain free Resurrection!

Easter: Traditions for Easter~always start the morning off with Dad shouting "Christ is Risen!" We all respond, "Indeed He is Risen!" (Three times in a row!) This is repeated throughout all of Easter Sunday whenever Dad gets the urge! (Saw this done on Easter Sunday Mass in Pasco, WA in 1992~have never forgotten it and have done this ever since! LOVE LOVE LOVE!

Charlene in Kennewick, WA

Holy Week: We like to participate in the liturgical services as much as possible. I love the East Triduum as well as Stations of the Cross.

Easter: We like to decorate Easter eggs and have a nice family dinner. Not that Christ has risen we decorate our Crown of Thorns with ribbons to be a Crown of Victory. Something new this year we are planning to give our children caterpillars at the end of Lent and have them observe them through the change to butterflies and use that to connect all of the Easter images of spring, bunnies, chicks to Christ's Resurrection and our personal renewal through the Sacraments.

Andrea in Fort Collins, CO

Holy Week: Mass on Thursday and Good Friday

Easter: Resurrection rolls were a big hit with my kids last year. We

dipped marshmallows in cinnamon sugar and melted butter and wrapped them in Pillsbury crescent rolls and baked them. My girls were really excited when we pulled them out of the oven and they were empty!

Erika in Clarkrange, TN

Holy Week: Each day is centered around the Passion and death of our Lord, with hands-on activities that help the kids really "experience" this week.

Easter: We do love "hiding" the Alleluia on Ash Wednesday (my kids colored large bubble letters of the word, we cut them out and laminated them). They always have fun trying to find all of the letters on Easter Sunday while singing/ shouting Alleluia!

Megan in Pearland, TX

Holy Week: We try to avoid videos, extra snacks, etc. and try to attend the Triduum events at our church.

Easter: When 'living it up' during Easter (and Christmas), I remind the kids why we're doing so: we're celebrating Jesus! The fancy dishes, pretty napkins, candles on the table, perhaps an unexpected family outing to the park or lake or for ice cream!... these all go a long way to make a little ones eyes pop, and drive home the idea that something is worth celebrating here!

Polly in Grand Rapids, MI

Holy Week: We are all involved in a Passion Play in our local shrine which takes place on Good Friday. Some of the children are involved

with the music for the Good Friday liturgy and the week is spent doing the Divine Office morning prayers which set the scene for the day so to speak. We try to do extra things for this special week to reflect the character of the week and in preparation for the great feast of Easter. We also usually make our Easter buns and goodies for Easter Sunday at some stage in this week.

Easter: Just a roast lamb shared with friends. Our tradition seems to be another family gets together with us and we are all involved with the Passion Play. We make a lamb shaped cake for Easter Sunday.

Helen in Wingello NSW Australia

Holy Week: By going to our parish's Triduum liturgies and explaining them to our children.

Easter: We plant wheatgrass on Palm Sunday. By Easter it is has sprouted and is a nice decoration, as well as a reminder of the Resurrection.

Anne Marie in Saint Paul, MN



Alleluia! Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter

Holy Week: We take that week to renew our focus on lent. Depending on the year (babies, sick kids, etc...) we try to participate in special events at our church- stations of the cross, Holy Thursday mass, Friday services and the Easter vigil. Most years we can't do everything, but it is wonderful to have all these opportunities available.

Easter: My children's favorite thing to do on Easter morning is to go to dawn mass. Even when my husband and I have not been able to make it that early, our older children go. Our traditions are just to spend the the with family.

Laura in Campbell, CA

Holy Week: We attend Holy Week masses together as a family and read scripture daily to get a better understanding of exactly why it is SO important. We tend to make things very minimal for this week



and do not schedule any extra activities that may deter from our focus.

Easter: I am part Swedish and we make a traditional Swedish Easter bread that I always shared with my father as a child. My three boys love to cook and bake and we always enjoy doing this together. In our home, it is not about the Easter bunny it is about rejoicing that our Lord has risen!

Ann-Marie in Rome, NY

Holy Week: attended services

Easter: wrap a marshmallow inside a biscuit... cook and it disappears! just like Jesus from the tomb

Jeannette in Washington, LA

Holy Week: It is tradition to attend church services beginning on Thursday and ending on Easter. As a family we always attend the big "Passion Play" here in downtown San Antonio and attend the "Passion Play" at our parish church of St. James the Apostle. Children are the actors of "Passion Play" at church and it is a powerful reenactment.

Easter: In San Antonio, it's a full fledge Texas Bar-B-Que! We celebrate the Easter season by having a bar-b-que outside. We set up picnic tables outside (family style), we have a piñata filled with candy. We have an Easter egg hunt and we turn the radio up just a bit more than usual. We also have the traditional confetti eggs that the children play with as well as some adults. It is very important that we have family around and each fam-

ily member brings a covered side dish and helps with preparing our meal.

Adela in San Antonio, TX

Holy Week: We pray the Stations together, attend Mass and attend the Triduum services on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and of course Easter Sunday. We try to refrain from any high-celebratory activities except when my son's birthday falls at that time. We also watch the Passion movie.

Easter: Easter Cake

One lemon cake mix

One box lemon pudding mix (not instant)

Coconut flakes

Green food coloring

Jelly beans (small bird eggs)

Make cake according to directions in round pans, cool, split layers.

Make pudding according to directions according to directions and cool with plastic wrap laid across top when it gets cool enough to not melt the plastic (this prevents a skin from forming while cooling).

Spread lemon filling on bottom layer, then place top of that cake layer on next and spread filling.

Continue until all layers are spread and stacked. Dye some coconut with green food coloring for "grass nest". Just before serving make nest on top of cake and fill with jelly beans.

Karen in St. Louis, MO

Holy Week: We have been drawn to celebrate Holy Week by recreating a scene of Christ's last days on Earth. The children try to collect

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

the largest stone they can find outside for the tomb and with our plastic set of miniatures they “play and pray”.

Easter: Our neighbors (non practicing Christians) once surprised us on our way to Easter mass. On our lawn they had placed dyed eggs with each of our Children’s names. We have repeated their kindness by adding symbols of Christianity on the eggs and surprise neighborhood families by hiding them in their lawns early in the morning.

Holly in Miami, FL

Holy Week: Since we don’t have school that week, we do lots of fun crafts that we don’t usually have time for - all centering around Holy Week and Easter.

Easter: We have started the tradition of inviting our shut-in elderly neighbors over to eat Easter Dinner with us. The kids practice their best manners and are always excited to have guests.

Brianne in La Grange, TX

Holy Week: The core of our Holy Week is the liturgy. We find ourselves at church daily to participate fully in public worship or to spend time in the Eucharistic chapel. Other than that, the details vary by year. In our large family, it seems that someone is often sick (strep seems to be popular during Lent!) and we add enrichment activities as we are able.

Easter: Our primary Easter tradition is to attend the Easter Vigil. It is very long but it is important for us that the kids participate in this amaz-

ing liturgy. We want them to see the new converts received into the Church and remember dad holding them up to see the paschal fire. A sign of maturity is getting to hold your own candle. We dress in our very finest and make sure we congratulate all of the new Catholics at their reception after Mass. We stay until the very end and help clean up if we can. The kids all agree that anything after that liturgy is just icing on the cake. They come home singing and hungry and it is usually well after midnight before we sleep. We go all out with feasting. This is the greatest feast and no detail should be spared! We always come up with a special goody or favor to wrap up and set at each person’s place at grandma’s house. All the families bring some of their colored eggs to share at the table.

We do not do the Easter Bunny but do give small gifts, usually religiously themed. Books are popular but we have given fun, non-religious gifts when we’ve found something special. There is no tradition for this. Sometimes we’ve given a lot, sometimes just a little. All to give glory to God! We do not give candy since Grandma and Grandpa give a ton!

Melody in North Royalton, OH

Holy Week: We take the week off of school for the most part, spring clean as best we can and get ready for the Triduum.

Easter: We like to make Easter Egg Bread. Here’s a great recipe for it: <http://allrecipes.com//Recipe/braid->

[ed-easter-egg-bread/Detail.aspx](http://allrecipes.com//Recipe/braid-ed-easter-egg-bread/Detail.aspx)

We even took orders and sold them once to raise money for a well in Haiti -- but we only did that once! :)

Samantha in Whitmore Lake, MI

Recipe: Resurrection Rolls:

crescent rolls

olive oil- blessed is best! (or melted butter)

cinnamon

marshmallows

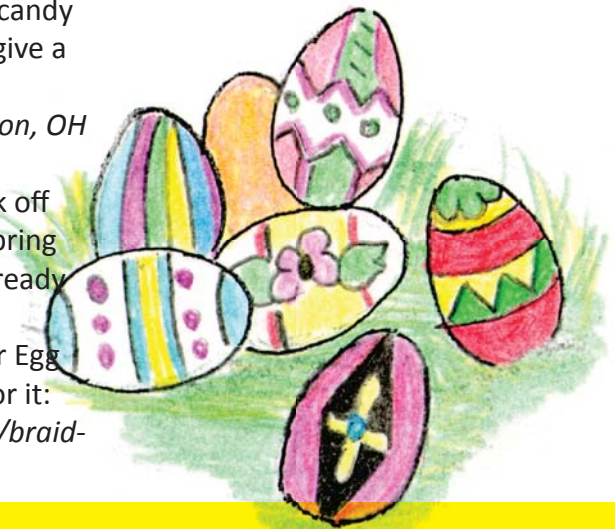
The marshmallow represents the body of our Lord, the oil the anointing oils, the cinnamon the spices, and the rolls the tomb.

Coat the marshmallows in the oil and dip in cinnamon, then roll it up in a crescent roll. Close ends to close the tomb. Everyone saw Him go in...

Bake as per package directions and let cool. When you open the tomb, He is resurrected! No more marshmallow!

Holy Week: We like a good procession whenever we have the chance!

We also like to cover our statues in purple or lace, and just talk a lot about what would have been happening to Jesus at the appropriate time.



Alleluia! Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter

We like to observe strict silence on Good Friday from noon until 3. We live near a "Grotto of the Resurrection Shrine" with a stations of the cross path, so we started walking it at noon and did the stations quietly last year. A protestant girl came with us last year and she seemed to really enjoy trying not to talk and the reverence that isn't a part of her ordinary world. I think we have a tradition!

Janice in Canton, OH

Holy Week: We try to participate in all of our parish Masses/services during Holy Week.

Easter: Stuffed Potatoes go so well with ham for Easter dinner...

5 lg baked potatoes
1 c. each plain yogurt and shredded cheddar cheese
3 T. butter

2 T. each milk and minced onion
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
paprika, dried parsley

While potatoes are baking, measure remaining ingredients into mixing bowl (except parsley and paprika). Cut hot potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out pulp into mixing bowl, reserving skins. Mash or beat all ingredients until smooth. Stuff the skins with potato mixture (or discard skins and bake in greased 2-qt. casserole). Garnish with paprika and dried parsley. (May be refrigerated or frozen at this time). Reheat (defrosted) potatoes in 400-degree F oven for 15 minutes.

Julie in Paris, KY

Holy Week: We try to attend all of the Holy Week services.

Easter: On Easter we go to Mass and take Easter family pictures outside in the church's grotto.

Angela in Knightdale, NC

Holy Week: We celebrate Holy Week by trying to attend Mass as often as possible, as well as by retelling the Passion and Easter stories to our children. We try to put it into language they can understand making it have more of an impact so that when they are able to understand it the foundation is already laid. We also bake and prepare for the Easter season by remembering what we have done during Lent.

Easter: For Easter, we spend as much of the day as we can

with family, namely, one of my sister's and her family. We all go to the same parish, so we go to our normal Sunday morning mass, then over to her house for delicious french toast and an epic egg hunt. After a break for naps, we all meet up again for a fabulous dinner. One rule for dinner, especially with picky eaters: there's no crying on Easter! If a kid doesn't like the dinner, they get something they do like to eat. :) Only time that happens is on major holidays.

Bridget in Newark, NJ

Holy Week: We try to be more peaceful, and we discuss Holy Thursday and Good Friday in-depth with the kids.

Easter: We like making resurrection rolls the day before and having them for breakfast on Easter morning. The dough is wrapped around a marshmallow, which melts when baked, so when the roll is bitten into, it is hollow like the empty tomb. Last year i made a coconut cake shaped like a lamb, which might just have to become a tradition!

Erin in Rome, GA



Alleluia!

Alleluia!