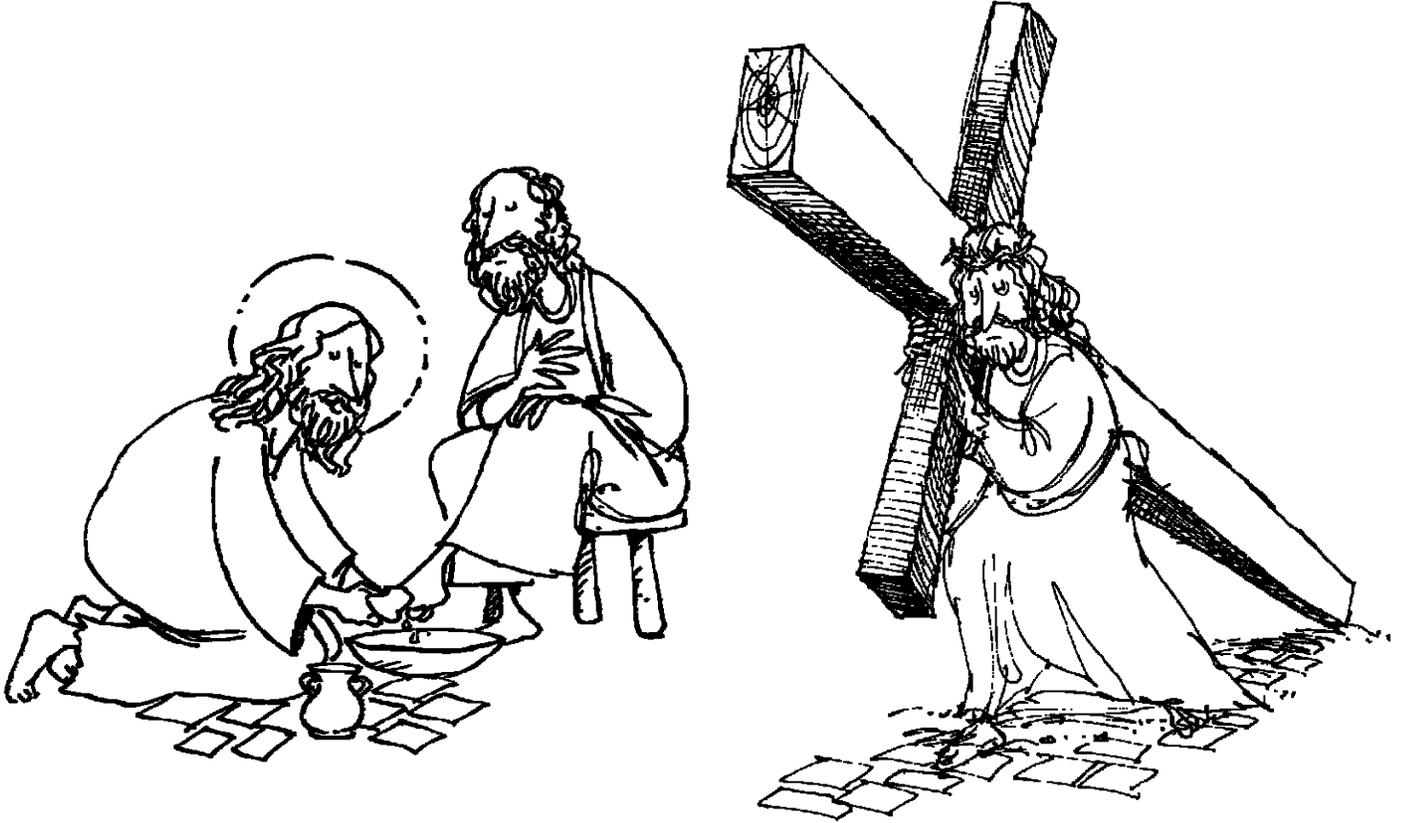


# We Celebrate the Easter Triduum



## Three Great Days

# Easter Triduum

The Season of Lent ends on Thursday of Holy Week. Then the Church remembers the death and resurrection of Jesus during the Easter Triduum. These three days are the most important time of the Church year.

The Easter Triduum begins on Holy Thursday with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, is continued through Good Friday with the celebration of the Passion of the Lord on Holy Saturday, reaches its high point in the Easter vigil, and concludes on the evening of Easter Sunday.

In this newsletter we will explore the three days of the Easter Triduum to help families celebrate more fully this great feast of our church year.



## Holy Thursday

Jesus had eaten many meals with his disciples and friends. But on Holy Thursday he shared the most special meal of all with them. We call that meal the "Last Supper".

Jesus knew that his life on earth would soon be over. But he still had many important lessons and gifts to share with his friends on that Thursday night.

While they were at table, Jesus took a bowl of water and a towel. He went around and washed the feet of each of his disciples. Jesus did this to show us that no person is greater than another person. Jesus did this to teach us that we should love other people just as he loves us.

Finally, he shared the most important gift of all. He took a piece of bread, blessed it, and thanked God for it. "Take and eat; this is my body", he said. Then Jesus took a cup of wine. He blessed it, thanked God for it and said, "Take and drink, this is my blood." The bread and the wine were now Jesus' own Body and Blood! At the Last Supper and at every Mass since then, Jesus shares with us his own Body and Blood. This is the food and drink we need to keep spiritually strong and healthy.

On Holy Thursday, we go to Mass to celebrate the Last Supper. We thank God in a special way for the gifts of the priesthood and the Holy Eucharist.

# Did You Know ?

## Eucharist



Eucharist is our shared meal as a family of God. Eucharist calls us to love and unites us as the Body of Christ.

Eucharist is the “source and summit” of our faith experience. To allow Eucharist to continually nourish our spiritual lives, we must connect its meaning to our every day living. This understanding is formed during preparation for First Eucharist.

We celebrate many of the most important moments in our lives with a meal. Births, graduations, birthdays, weddings, new friendships and special family occasions are times when we sit at a table and share food with each other. Usually we eat with people we know; people who we care about. Jesus gave the gift of himself to his friends at a table in the sharing of the bread and the wine. Eucharist is given to us as a community. We remember the story of the last supper and through the Holy Spirit, the story is made real in our midst. We don't just remember that Jesus gave Eucharist to his disciples. We live the reality that as Jesus' disciples today, we are given Eucharist to nourish us, to guide us, to make us one and to strengthen us for our mission of love to the world.

*Excerpts from “Generations of Faith”*

# Family in Action

## Celebrate a Special Meal

On the night before he died, Jesus shared a special meal with his friends and family. We call this meal the Last Supper.

When we celebrate the Eucharist, we do what Jesus did at the Last Supper. We share a special meal with our church family. We come together to give thanks and celebrate the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist.



## Celebrate a Special Meal

When we share meals with our friends and family, we are nourished by the food and by one another. Put in order from 1 to 10 the steps to show how you and your family can celebrate a special meal at your home.

- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Say a prayer, giving thanks to God.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Place special decorations on table.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Gather special decorations, such as a candle, flowers, placemats, etc.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Buy the groceries.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Eat, drink and have fun.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Set the table.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Invite your friends and family to a special meal.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Set out the food and drink.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Plan the menu.
- Step # \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare the food.







Holy Thursday - The Lord's Supper

# Good Friday

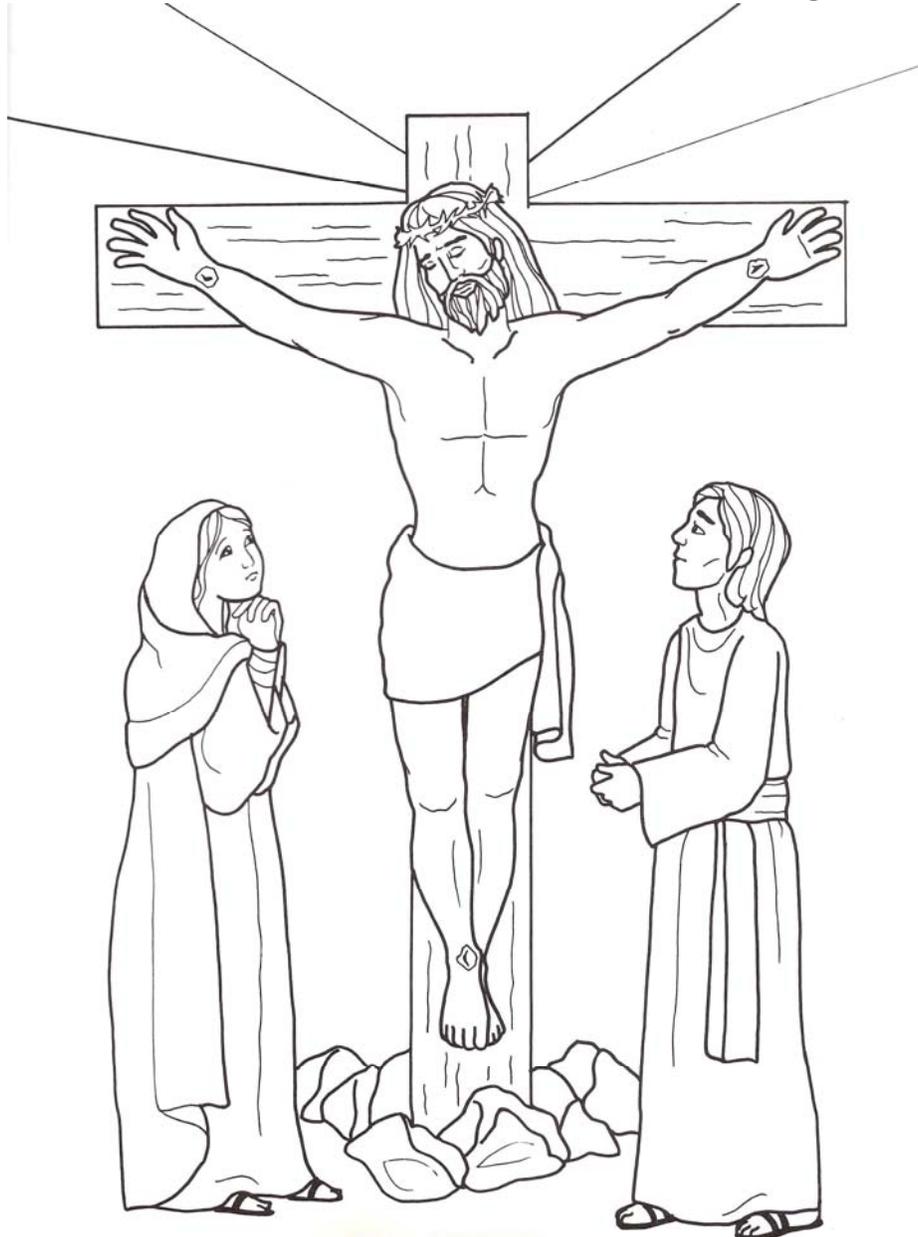
Good Friday is both a sad and a glad day for us. It's sad because it's the day Jesus was nailed to a wooden cross and died. But it's a glad day because we know that Jesus died out of love for us.

Jesus freely accepted his death on the cross to save us from our sins. He offered his life to God the Father so that we could go to heaven one day.

It's important to go to church on Good Friday to remember how Jesus suffered and died for each one of us. He wanted to show us how much he loves us all! We want to show Jesus that we will stay by his side when others turn against him. We want to thank him for suffering his painful death for us.

On Good Friday we listen to the reading of the Passion of our Lord (the Gospel story of how Jesus died for us). We walk to the front of the church to kiss the cross and, if old enough, receive Holy Communion. The red vestments the priests wear remind us of the suffering of Jesus.

At home we eat simple food and do not eat meat on this day to share in Jesus' sorrow. All day long we try to be quieter and stay close to Jesus in our thoughts and prayers. We can even pray the Stations of the Cross. We learn about true love from Jesus, who loved us so much that he gave his life for us.



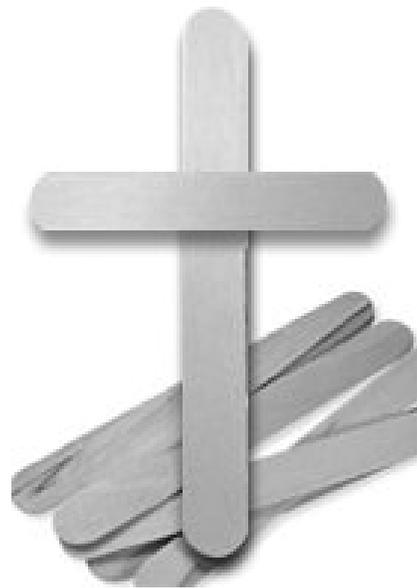
# Family in Action

## Popsicle Cross Craft

The cross reminds us that Jesus loved us so much that he died for us.

### Materials Needed to Make This Project:

- 2 Popsicle sticks per cross
- Green modeling clay or play dough
- Red felt (or scrap material)
- Small artificial flowers
- Brown marker
- Craft glue
- Scissors



1. Color the two Popsicle sticks with the brown marker.
2. Form a cross with them by placing one stick perpendicular to the other and gluing them together. Allow the glue to dry before handling.
3. Mold a small ball out of the clay and flatten it on the bottom so it sits level on a surface.
4. Cut a small, thin strip (approximately 10 inches long and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide) out of the red felt. Drape it over the cross and secure it on both sides with small amounts of the craft glue.
5. Place the cross in the center of the clay base while the clay is still moldable and add a few small artificial flowers around the cross. Allow the clay and glue to dry before handling.

# Easter Vigil



On Holy Saturday the Church meditates on the suffering and death of Jesus. Then at night the Church gathers to celebrate the Easter Vigil. The Easter Vigil has four parts: The Service of Light; the Liturgy of the Word; the Liturgy of Baptism; and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

During the Service of Light, all the lights in the church are turned off and a fire is prepared outside the church. Then the fire is blessed and the Paschal Candle is lighted from the new fire. The candle is carried into the dark church. It is a sign of Christ, the Light of the World, who has overcome the darkness of sin and death. The lighted Paschal Candle provides the only illumination. Then, from the flame of the Paschal Candle, members of the congregation light the small candles that they are holding. The flame is passed from person to person until everyone is holding a lighted candle. The light from the Paschal Candle and all the small candles provides the only illumination in the church during this portion of the liturgy. This section concludes with the singing of the Easter Proclamation, called the "Exultet".

During the Liturgy of the Word, the story of God's great love for us is proclaimed in readings from the Old and New Testaments. There are seven Old Testaments texts. The readings recall the great events of salvation, beginning with creation itself and were selected to help people to celebrate the sacraments of Christian initiation with great faith.

During the Liturgy of Baptism, those who have been preparing for Baptism and their godparents are called forward. After the candidates are baptized, all present stand with lighted candles and renew their baptismal promises as a sign that they share the new life of Jesus through his resurrection. There are also others who are confirmed and received into the Church this evening. The newly baptized and confirmed await their first sharing in the Eucharist.

The Easter Vigil concludes with the celebration of the Eucharist. This is a joyous sharing in the sacrificial meal of Jesus Christ, Lord and Risen Saviour.

# Light of Christ Card

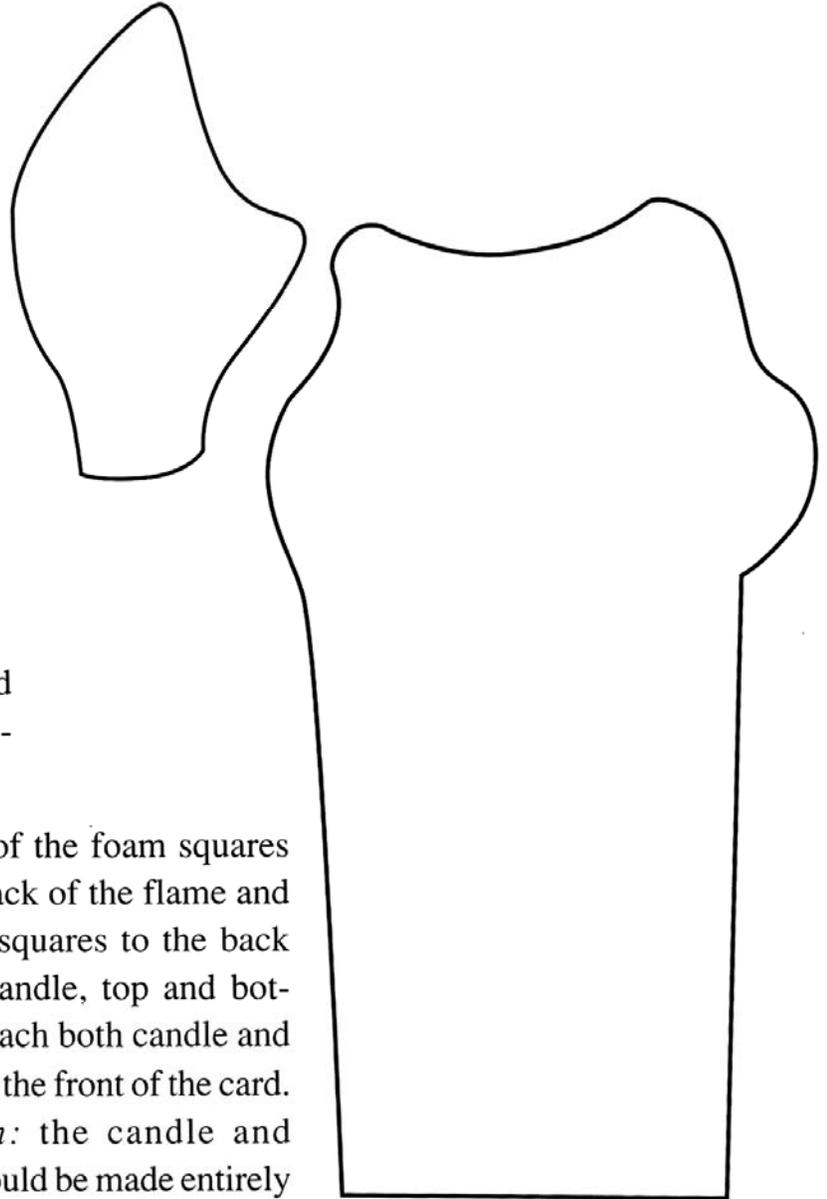
During Lent, we prepare to renew our baptismal promises. We renew our life of faith. This craft reminds children to thank those who helped them to grow in faith.

## Supplies needed:

white, yellow, and peach card stock  
3 1/2" square pieces of foam sheet  
craft scissors with patterned edges  
glue stick  
pearl glitter glue

## Directions:

1. Have children fold peach card stock in half to form card.
2. Cut along the open edges using scissors with patterned edges.
3. Cut candlestick out of white card stock and a flame out of yellow card stock, using templates provided.



4. Glue 1 of the foam squares to the back of the flame and 2 foam squares to the back of the candle, top and bottom. Attach both candle and flame to the front of the card. (*Option: the candle and flame could be made entirely out of foam sheets.*)
5. Decorate the candle with glitter glue. Allow to dry.
6. On the inside of the card, children can write a message to their godparents or someone in the parish or school who has helped them to grow in faith. The message could be as simple as, "Thank you for sharing your light of faith with me." Have them mail or deliver their cards.



"He has been raised; he is not here."

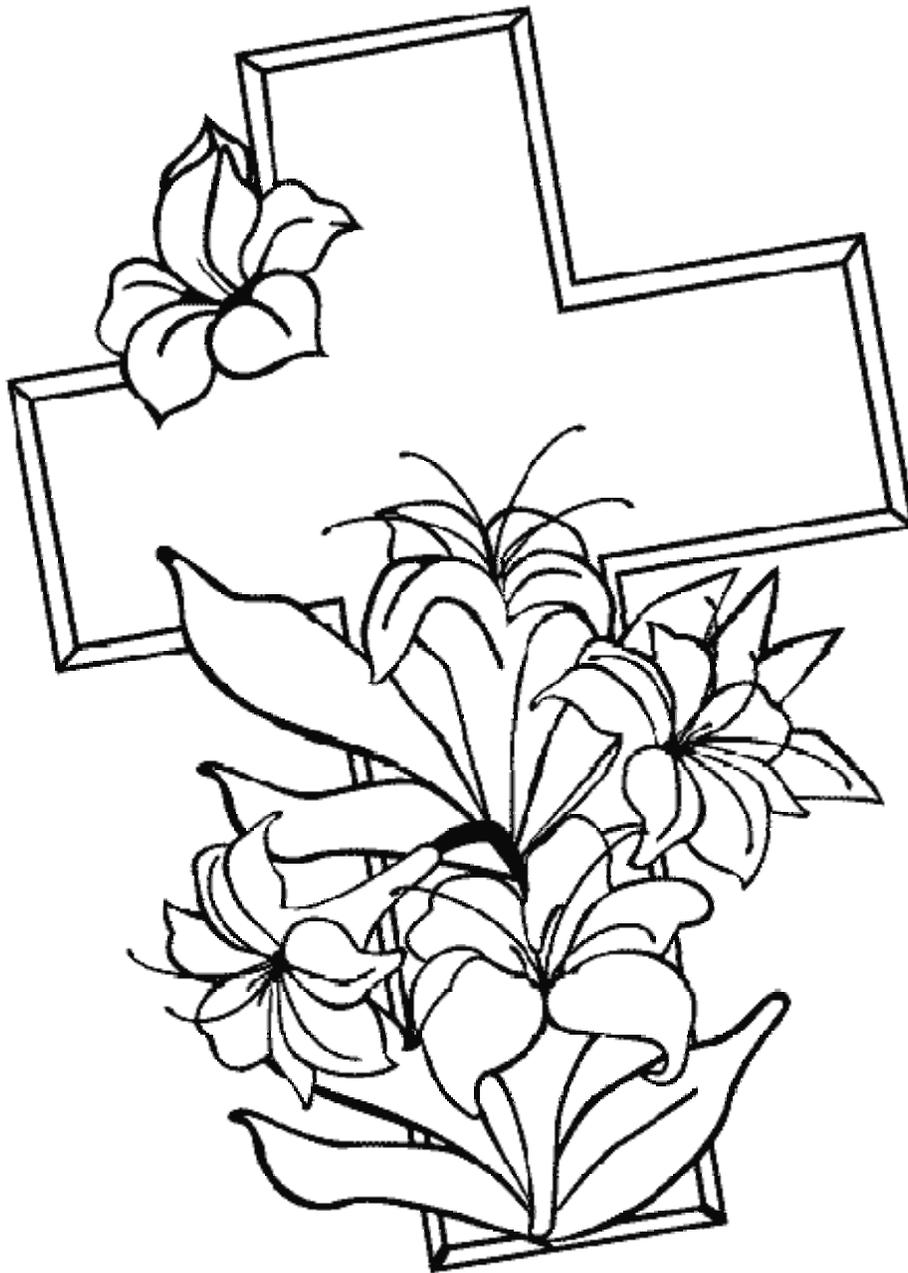
# Easter Sunday



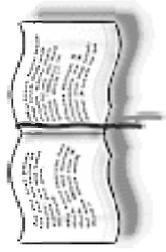
Easter Sunday is the day on which Jesus won a new life for all people by rising from the dead! Jesus' rising is called the *Resurrection*. It is amazing and wonderful! We celebrate Jesus' resurrection with great joy and thanks on Easter Sunday and on every Sunday of the year.

By dying and rising from the dead, Jesus made it possible for us to live forever with God in heaven. He fulfilled God's promise to send a Saviour who would give us everlasting life.

On Easter we celebrate and sing, "Alleluia!" which means, "Praise the Lord!" The season of Easter lasts fifty days. We can be "Easter People" by showing our joy to all, by treating others with love and kindness, and especially by sharing the message about the new life Jesus has given us.



# Faith Sharing Reflections



Gospel

John 20:1-9

## Easter Sunday



These activities are based on the Sunday Readings and you may want to use the following format:

- 1) Gather together as a family, preferably on a Friday or Saturday.
- 2) Read the Gospel reading followed by silence.
- 3) Introduce the short commentary and do the activity.
- 4) After returning from Sunday Mass (great activity for the way home) ask everyone to say one thing about the readings and remind them of the weekly activity.

## Commentary

On Friday afternoon when Jesus died, the women had not been able to finish the customary preparation for burial. The Sabbath began at sundown on Friday, so Mary of Magdala hurried to the tomb Sunday morning to complete her task. She found the tomb empty. Certain that Jesus' body had been stolen, she ran back to get the other disciples. Peter and the other disciple also found an empty tomb but with Jesus' clothing rolled neatly and placed where his body had been. The disciples still didn't understand about the resurrection and Mary wept. As she cried, two angels appeared asking why she was crying. She then saw a gardener and asked him where the body might be. When he called her by name, Mary immediately recognized Jesus.

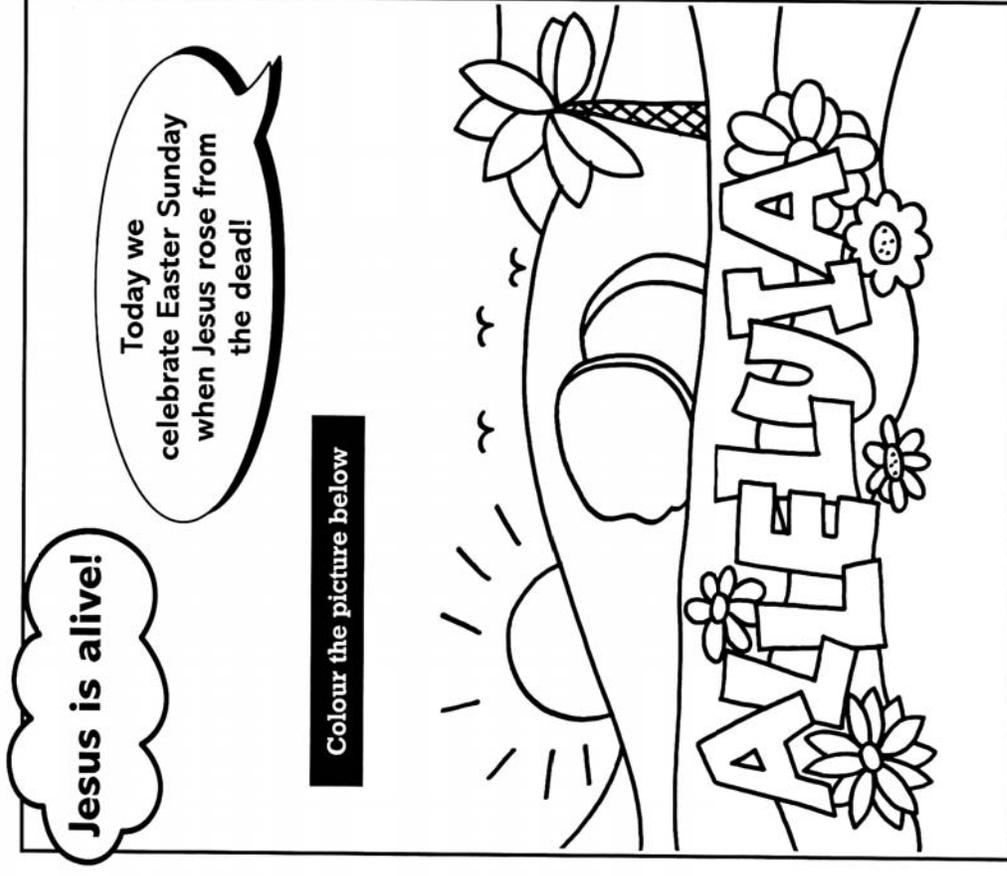
### Question of the Week:

Jesus is with us today. How can you see him in the people around you?

EASTER SUNDAY (B)



John 20:1-9



# Did You Know ?



The butterfly has long been a Christian symbol of resurrection, for it disappears into a cocoon and appears dead, but emerges later far more beautiful and powerful than before.

As a symbol of Christ's resurrection after three days in the grave, the butterfly is seen especially around Easter. But the butterfly is also a symbol of every Christian's hope of resurrection from the dead.

## Family in Action

### Butterfly Craft

#### Materials:

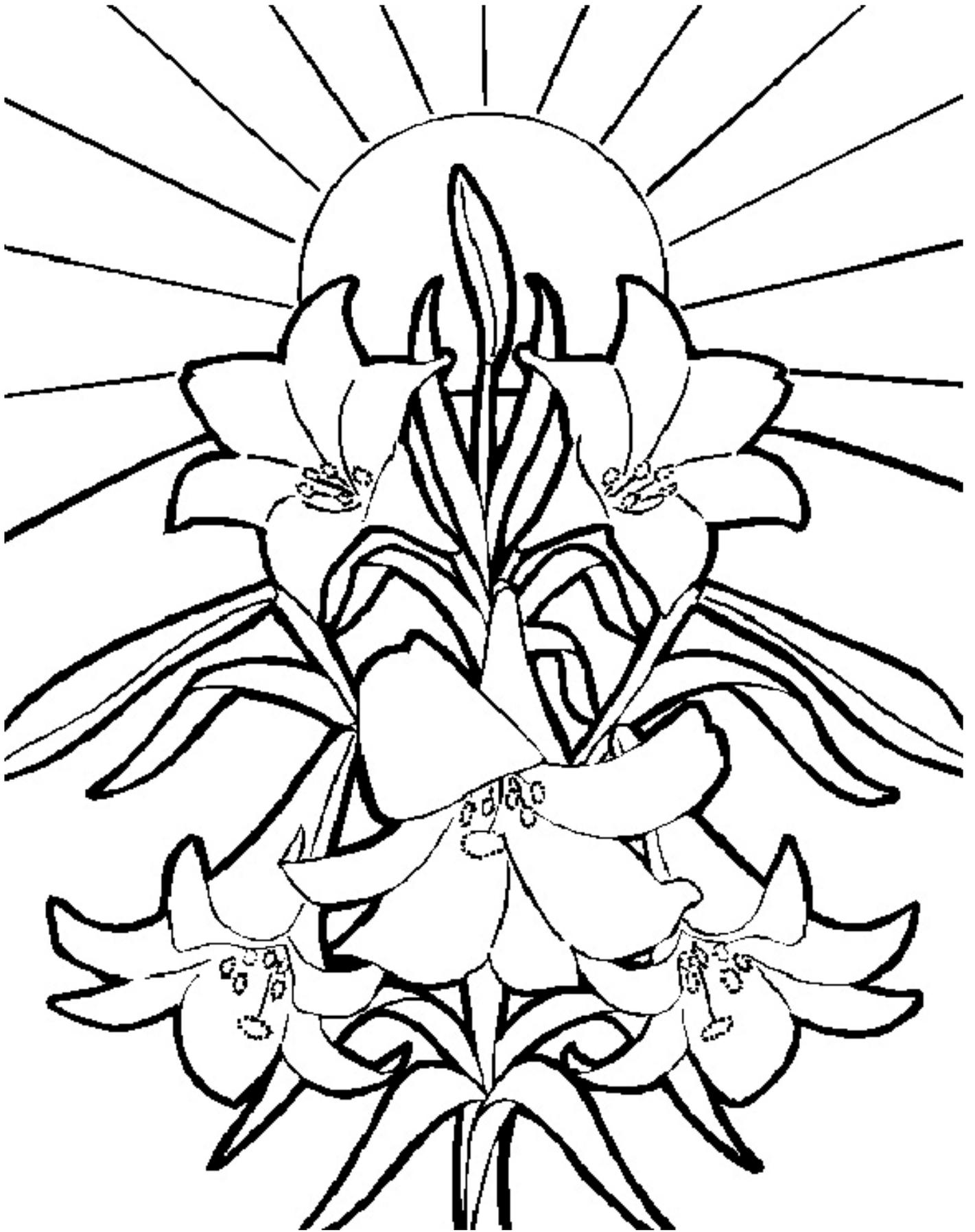
- coffee filter
- washable markers
- squirt bottle or small glass of water
- pipecleaner



#### Instructions:

1. Flatten out a coffee filter on a plate.
2. Scribble the filter with washable markers.
3. Use a squirt bottle to spray the coffee filter 2 or 3 times. Squirt water right in the center of the filter and then sit and watch the water wick the colours over the filter (this takes 4 or 5 minutes) Try not to over wet the filter... the project still works, but it won't turn out quite as pretty (the colours tend to blend too much if you soak the filter). You can always add more water later if it doesn't get wet all the way to the edge after 5 minutes or so. Let dry (this takes about 1/2 an hour)
4. When dry, scrunch the coffee filter so you can wrap a pipecleaner around the center.
5. Twist the pipecleaner to hold the coffee filter tightly. Leave the ends of the pipecleaner about the same length.
6. Trim the pipecleaner as you like (usually about 2 inches) so the antenna are the length you like and the pipecleaner ends are matching lengths.
7. Curl the pipecleaner (if you like) to make nice antenna
8. Fluff the wings a little bit to make a perfectly lovely little butterfly!

Alleluia!



During the Three Days, the Church celebrates that Jesus died and rose to new life.

Draw a line to match.



- We welcome new members into the Church.



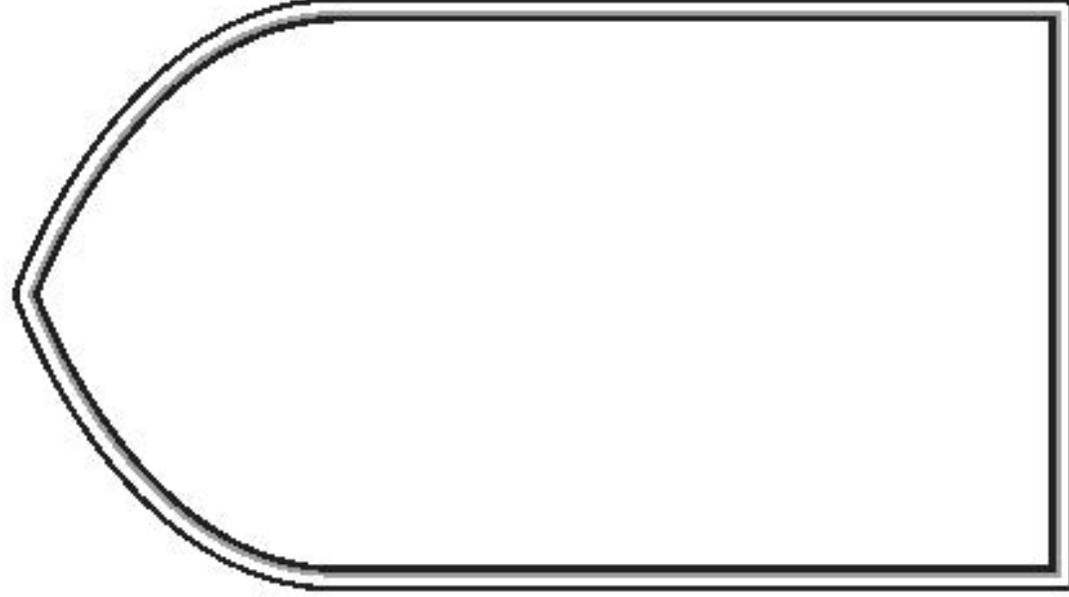
- We pray before the cross.



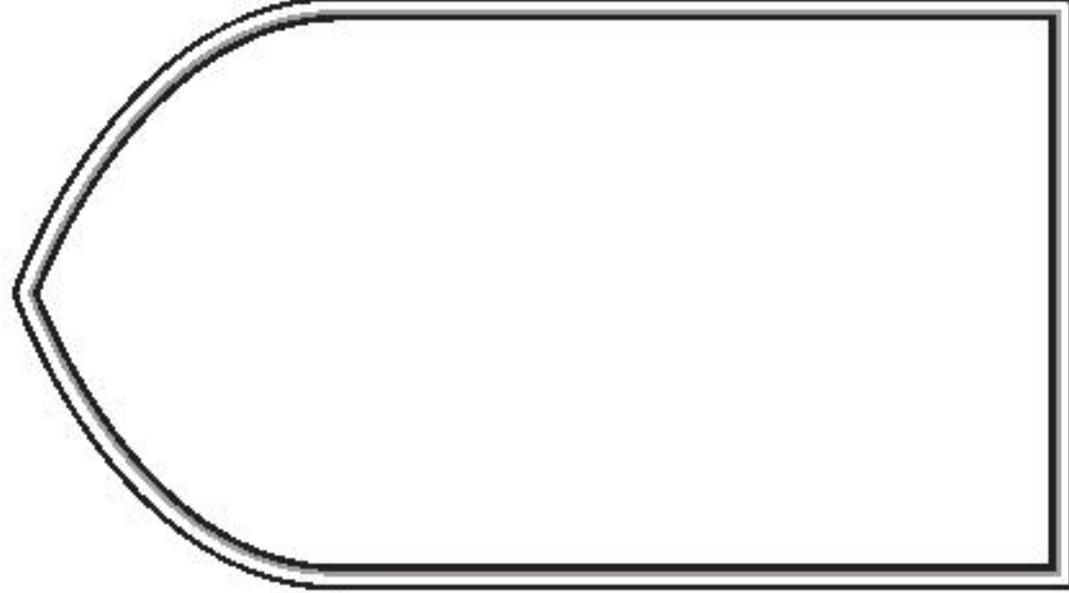
- We remember that Jesus gave himself in the Eucharist.

Think about the things we do as a parish to celebrate the Three Days.

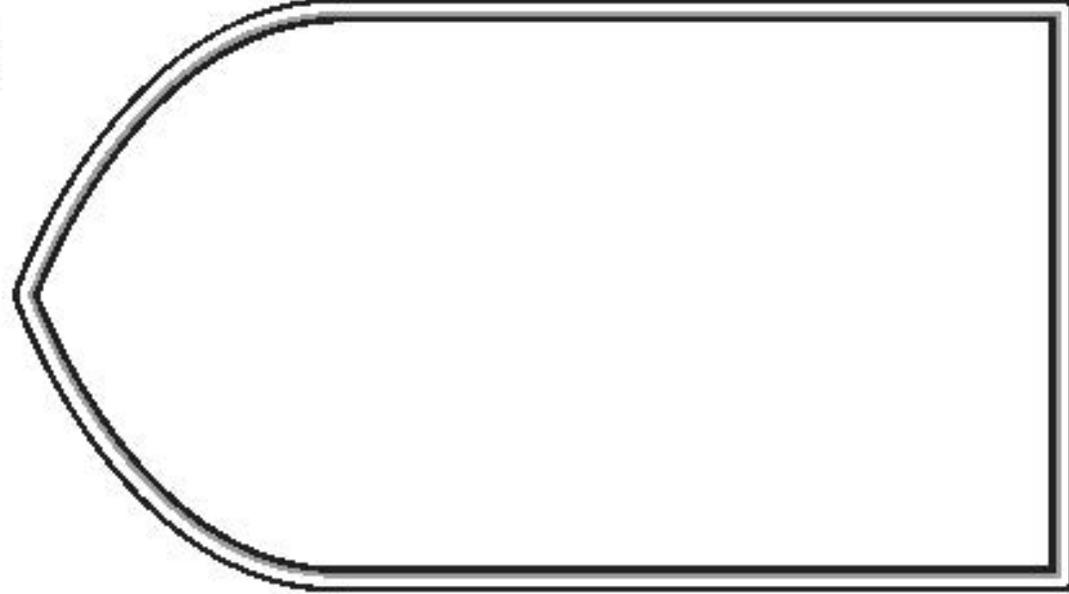
Draw pictures to show how we celebrate the Three Days.



**Holy Thursday**



**Good Friday**



**Holy Saturday**

# Triduum Prayers



## HOLY THURSDAY



On this day, Jesus, we remember your Last Supper. At that meal you gave your apostles special food - your Body and Blood. You also give this food to us at every Mass. Thank you, Jesus! Receiving you in Holy Communion helps us be strong and good. Let us always receive you with love and thanks and praise. Amen.

## GOOD FRIDAY



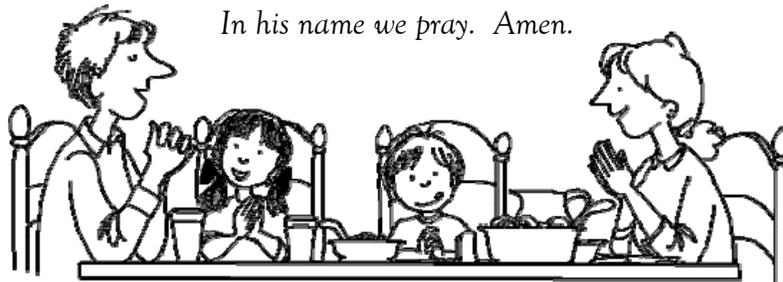
Today, Jesus, we celebrate your greatest sacrifice, made out of love for us. You died to give us new life. Thank you, Lord! My heart is sad as I remember your pain. Let me help you carry your cross, Jesus. I can carry your cross by caring about others, by obeying your word, and by trying to always be loving and good. This is what I want to do. Amen.

## EASTER

Alleluia! You have risen from the dead, Lord Jesus! You have won new life for us! We praise you and thank you for your life, for your words, and for your death and resurrection. Help us to follow you, Jesus, so that one day we'll live with you forever in the joy of heaven. Amen.

## EASTER TABLE PRAYER

God of all creation,  
The emergence of spring brings the wonders of new life.  
This life enfolds in us as we celebrate the joy of Easter.  
As we move through this sacred season, strengthen our faith  
and show us how to be people of generosity and compassion.  
May the peace of Christ dwell within us throughout these Easter days.  
In his name we pray. Amen.





# Discovering the New Life of Easter

## Seeing with New Eyes



The Easter season is one in which the Church celebrates the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost as one continuous feast day. The

celebration of the Easter season encompasses the Ascension, the return of Jesus Christ to his Father in heaven, and Pentecost itself. As Easter has been called “the Great Sunday,” so every Sunday—especially those of the Easter season—is “a little Easter.” With every celebration of the Lord’s Day, Christ’s rising is made present once again in the faith community.

The signs of new life in Christ surround us throughout the year, but they take on particular meaning during the Easter season. On the second Sunday of Easter, the Gospel tells of Thomas who would not believe unless he could see with his own eyes and touch with his own hands the risen body of Jesus. We are not able to see, hear, touch, and talk to Jesus the way Thomas and the other disciples did. We can, however, discover signs of wonder within our daily surroundings. By opening ourselves to discovery, we become better attuned to recognizing these signs as we make our way through one of the Church’s most sacred seasons. It is a time to pay attention, a time to be still, a time to be immersed in the wonder of God’s love and the closeness of Christ’s presence. It is the season to celebrate new life!

### Jesus, the Good Shepherd

**God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, though your people walk in the valley of darkness**

**no evil should they fear;**

**for they follow in faith the call of the shepherd**

**whom you have sent for their hope and strength.**

**Attune our minds to the sound of his voice, lead our steps in the path he has shown, that we may know the strength of his outstretched arm**

**and enjoy the light of your presence for ever.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Collect for the 4th Sunday of Easter**

taken from [www.churchyear.net/easterprayers.html](http://www.churchyear.net/easterprayers.html)



## Daily Discoveries

“It is a known condition that when you begin to pay attention to something you’ve never really looked at before you will begin to see it everywhere. You eventually begin to feel as if the thing is out to find you instead of the other way around.”

Keri Smith, *How To Be an Explorer of the World*

## Five Ways to Celebrate the Easter Season

1. Read and reflect on the Sunday readings. For a link to these readings, visit [www.webelieveweb.com](http://www.webelieveweb.com).
2. Visit a park or botanical garden, and look for signs of the emergence of spring.
3. As part of spring cleaning, set aside clothes, toys, books, and other items that you no longer use for donation to a charity that serves those in need.
4. Plan an Easter feast with members of your household, friends, or neighbors. Set a festive table, and add touches of spring, such as a centerpiece or pastel-colored place settings.
5. Set aside a period of time each day to spend in silence and solitude. Let this time of prayer and stillness refresh your spirit and open your heart to God’s gentle presence.

