



# Easter Vigil

## FAMILY CELEBRATION OF HOLY WEEK AND EASTER TRIDUUM AT HOME

1. During Holy Week the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation accomplished by Christ in the last days of his life on earth, beginning with his messianic entrance into Jerusalem” (Paschalis Solemnitatis, 27).
2. “The greatest mysteries of the redemption are celebrated yearly by the Church beginning with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday until Vespers of Easter Sunday. This time is called “the triduum of the crucified, buried and risen”[42]; it is also called the “Easter Triduum” because the Paschal Mystery is celebrated, that is, the passing of the Lord from this world to his Father. The Church by the celebration of this mystery, through liturgical signs and sacramentals, is united to Christ her Spouse in intimate communion” (Paschalis Solemnitatis, 38).
3. As we cannot gather in large numbers during this period of social distancing, we will return to the practice of the early Church of celebrating the liturgy in the homes of Christians. These celebrations are based on the church document; *Celebration of Easter Triduum in the Absence of the Priest and the Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*.
5. A member of the family will lead the household in prayer for the evening liturgy of Holy Thursday, the afternoon liturgy of Good Friday, and the liturgy of Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday.
6. For the washing of the feet on Holy Thursday a member of the family washes the feet of the other family members. Traditionally, gifts for the poor are brought during the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper. Project Compassion donations collected during the season of Lent can be sent to the Church later if contact is currently not possible. [Caritas Australia](#)
7. On Good Friday the members of the family can venerate their cross at home.

At the Easter Vigil the Church keeps watch meditating on the wonderful story of God’s work of creation and salvation.

On Easter Sunday the assembly in the absence of a priest renew their baptismal promises. The family Easter candle is lit.

# **FAMILY CELEBRATIONS OF HOLY WEEK AND EASTER TRIDUUM AT HOME**

We reflect back to the experience of the early Church when Christians gathered to worship at home.

## **EASTER VIGIL**

Prepare a candle that could serve as the family Easter candle and a reminder of the triumph of the Paschal Mystery in any human struggle of crisis.

The family members participate in the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

After the renewal, as a reminder of Baptism, they can trace the sign of the cross at each other's forehead.

A family meal is shared after the celebration.

The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall on Saturday nor end after daybreak on Sunday.

The night Vigil is arranged in the following format:

1. Service of light.
2. Liturgy of the Word, when the Church meditates on all the wonderful things God has done for the world.
3. Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

### **Preparation**

Table with a white cloth. Place on the table:

- Candles and matches
- Bible
- Decorate with flowers
- Decorated Easter candle
- A variety of bells



## SERVICE OF LIGHT

All the lights in the house are turned off. There is an option to prepare a bonfire at a suitable place outside the house if the local laws permit. The family prepares a candle that can serve as the family Easter candle.

### Leader:

On this holy night  
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,  
we come together in solemn vigil and prayer in union with the whole Church  
and with our parish community. This is the Passover of the Lord:  
if we keep the memory of his death and resurrection by hearing his word and celebrating his sacraments, then we may be confident  
that we shall share his victory over death and live with him forever in God.

### Leader:

Let us pray.  
Lord God,  
we share in the brightness of your glory through your Son, the light of the world.  
Make this new fire holy.  
Through this Easter celebration,  
purify our minds and inflame us with new hope,  
that we may come one day to the feast of eternal light. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The leader invites a family member to light the Easter candle from the new fire saying:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,  
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

After the lighting of the Easter candle the leader holds it high and says:  
Christ our light.

The members of the family answer:

Thanks be to God.

The members of the family light their candles from the Easter candle.



A member of the family sings or recites prayerfully the Easter proclamation (Exultet) with other members of the family holding their lighted candles.

Music Link: [Exultet](#)

### THE EXULTET

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,  
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,  
let the trumpet of salvation  
sound aloud our mighty King's triumph!  
Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,  
ablaze with light from her eternal King,  
let all corners of the earth be glad,  
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.  
Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,  
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,  
let this holy building shake with joy,  
filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.

It is truly right and just,  
with ardent love of mind and heart  
and with devoted service of our voice,  
to acclaim our God invisible, the almighty Father,  
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the eternal Father,  
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,  
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover,  
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,  
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,  
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,  
from slavery in Egypt and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night that with a pillar of fire  
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night  
that even now, throughout the world,  
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices  
and from the gloom of sin,  
Leading them to grace and joining them to his holy ones.



This is the night,  
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death  
and rose victorious from the underworld.

O wonder of your humble care for us!  
O love, O charity beyond all telling,  
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault  
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!  
The sanctifying power of this night  
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,  
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners.

O truly blessed night,  
when things of heaven are wed to those of earth,  
and divine to the human.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,  
accept this candle, a solemn offering,  
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,  
an evening sacrifice of praise,  
this gift from your most holy Church.

Therefore, O Lord,  
we pray you that this candle,  
hallowed to the honour of your name,  
may persevere undimmed,  
to overcome the darkness of this night.

Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,  
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.  
May this flame be found still burning  
by the Morning Star:  
the one Morning Star who never sets,  
Christ your Son,  
who, coming back from death's domain,  
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.

After the Easter proclamation, the candles are blown out  
and all lights are turned on.



## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### Leader:

We have begun our vigil.

Let us now listen attentively to the Scriptures.

They tell how God saved a chosen people  
in the course of history and, in the fullness of time,  
sent his only begotten Son as our Redeemer.

Let us pray that our God will bring to completion  
the saving work of the paschal mystery.

### READING      Exodus 14:15-15:1

A reading from the book of Exodus

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried, 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!'





‘Stretch out your hand over the sea,’ the Lord said to Moses, ‘that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.’

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh’s whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:  
The Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**    **Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18**

**YouTube Link:** [Psalm](#)

**R.**    **Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!  
Horse and rider has thrown into the sea!  
The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.  
this is my God and I extol him,  
my father’s God and I give him praise.

**R.**    **Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name.  
The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,  
the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.  
The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone.

**R.**    **Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**





Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,  
your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.  
In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe.

**R. Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

You will lead your people  
and plant them on your mountain,  
the place, O Lord, where you have made your home,  
the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.  
The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

**R. Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

## **PRAYER**

**Leader:**

God of ages,  
through the light of the new covenant,  
you unlock for us the meaning of those  
marvels you worked in ancient times:  
the waters of the Red Sea  
prefigure the waters of baptism,  
and the Israelites you once freed from slavery  
become a sign of your Christian people.  
Grant that every nation by virtue of its faith  
may inherit the same privilege you bestowed  
on Israel and receive new birth through the gift of your Spirit.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**



The candles on the family altar are now lit and the Gloria is sung or recited while bells are rung.

Music Link: [Gloria](#)

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.



**Leader:**

Let us pray.

O God,

you brighten this most holy night  
with the radiance of the risen Christ.

Quicken within your Church the spirit of adoption,  
so that, renewed in mind and body,  
we may dedicate our lives wholeheartedly to your service.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, you Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 117: 1-2, 16-17, 22-23R.**

**Music Link:** [Alleluia](#)

**R.** Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say:

‘His love has no end.’

**R.** Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Lord’s right hand has triumphed.

his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live

and recount his deeds.

**R.** Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

**R.** Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.



## GOSPEL Luke 24:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, 'Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?' And they remembered his words.

When the women returned from the tomb they told all this to the Eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. The other women with them also told the apostles, but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them.

Peter, however, went running to the tomb. He bent down and saw the binding cloths but nothing else; he then went back home, amazed at what had happened.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**Leader:** Let us spend a few moments in silence to reflect on what we have heard in the readings.

**Silent Reflection**

**Leader:** Would anyone like to share their thoughts?



## RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

All stand holding lit candles to renew their baptismal promises.

### Leader:

Through the paschal mystery  
we have been buried with Christ in baptism,  
so that we may rise with him to a new life.  
Now that we have completed our Lenten observance,  
let us renew the promises we made in baptism  
when we renounced sin,  
and promised to serve God faithfully  
in the holy Catholic Church. And so we pray:

### All:

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ,  
his only Son, our Lord  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
Was crucified, died and was buried;  
He descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father almighty;  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

After the renewal of Baptismal Promises and as a reminder of Baptism,  
the members of the family may wish to trace the sign of the cross at on  
each other's forehead.



## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

### Leader:

The light of the risen Christ  
shines forth from the Easter Candle.

May the flame of faith in our hearts inspire us  
as we offer prayers for the needs of all our brothers and sisters.

For each petition, we respond:

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

### A member of the family:

For the Universal Church,  
that, with our Pope and Bishops, we may proclaim the saving mystery of Easter.  
We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For the nations of this world,  
that the kingdom of the risen Lord may spread through all societies and cultures.  
We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who have been baptized at this time, that,  
freed from slavery of sin, they will live in the new life of the risen Christ.  
We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For this our worshipping community,  
that we will share the joyous news of the Resurrection with those we meet.  
We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For the people of Ukraine, that they will have courage to support each other in  
peaceful ways during this time of adversity: Let us pray to the Lord.  
We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.



For those who have been affected by floods recently; that governments and other service agencies will respond generously to their needs.

We pray.

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Leader:**

Father,  
receive the prayers of your Church,  
family celebrating the glorious victory  
of your risen Son, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Leader:**

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

**After the Lord's Prayer the leader invites the members of the family to offer a sign of peace to each other.**

**Leader:** Let us pray.

**All:** Lord God of all creation.  
Give us the capacity to taste the richness of the feast you give us.  
Give us the peace to live with uncertainty, with questions, with doubts.  
Help us to experience the resurrection anew with open wonder and an  
increasing ability to see you in the people of Easter.  
Amen.





*All stand*

**Leader:**

Let us pray.

Eternal God,

watch over your Church with unfailing care, that we who have received new life

through the paschal mystery of Christ may come to the glory of the resurrection.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now that we have celebrated the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us go and proclaim the Word we have heard

and live according to the call to be people of faith, hope and love.

May almighty God bless us,

The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:**

Let us go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.

**All:** Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

## **FINAL SONG**

**Music link:** [Jesus is Risen! Let us Sing!](#)

[Hymn Lyrics](#)

**The family may like to share an Easter meal together.**

