

A Home Liturgy for Holy Week

Some words and actions for each day in Holy Week to be used perhaps at a mealtime, or whenever is helpful to you. It can be used as a household or by yourself, knowing that others are also participating.

You will need six tealights or small candles, one of them red if possible, plus a special one for Easter Day. Each day has its own object to help focus our thoughts; a palm cross, the words of the Lord's prayer, a bottle of perfume or cologne, a purse full of money, a bowl of perfumed water and a towel, a cross, and the makings of an Easter Garden. If all that is not possible then still follow the readings and use the pictures as a focus as you use the liturgy.

Palm Sunday



Arrange your six candles in a circle and light them. Place the palm cross in the centre.

Reading: Mark 11, 1-11

Question: Why do we have six candles and this palm cross on the table today?

Answer: Because this week is Holy Week. In six days it's Good Friday and Easter is coming. Today we remember how all the people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem by waving palm branches.

Holy Monday



Light five of the six candles. Place a copy of the Lord's prayer in the centre of the circle.

Reading: Mark 11, 15-19

Question: Why do we have five candles and the Lord's prayer on the table today?

Answer: Because this week is Holy Week. In five days it's Good Friday, and Easter is coming. Today we remember that Jesus threw the money-changers out of the temple. "My house shall be called a house of prayer", he told them. His special prayer is for us all. *Say the Lord's prayer.*

Holy Tuesday



Light four candles. Place a bottle of perfume or cologne in the centre.

Reading: Mark 14, 3-9

Question: Why do we have four candles and some perfume on the table today?

Answer: Because this week is Holy Week. In four days it's Good Friday and Easter is coming. Today we remember the woman from Bethany who anointed Jesus's head, who recognised that he was the King of kings and would soon die.

Holy Wednesday



Light three candles. Place a purse filled with money in the centre of the circle of candles.

Reading: Mark 14, 10-11

Question: Why do we have three candles and this purse full of money on the table today?

Answer: Because this week is Holy Week. In three days it's Good Friday, and Easter is coming. Today we remember that Jesus was betrayed for money, and that Jesus wants us to give what we can to help those in the world who are poor.

Reflect on, or discuss, right and wrong ways of using money, in the light of today's and yesterday's readings.

Maundy Thursday

Light two candles. Have a bowl of warm water and a towel on the table between them. Wash each others' or your own hands before the meal which could include elements of a Passover meal (unleavened bread, wine....)

Reading: Mark 14:22-26, John 13: 2-5, 12-15



Question: Why do we have two candles and this towel and water on the table today?

Answer: Because this is Holy Week. One candle is for Good Friday and one is for today, Maundy Thursday. Today we remember the last Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples. Our communion service derives from this meal.

Good Friday



The one red candle is lit and then blown out. A wooden cross is placed on the table. The palm cross is blu-tacked to the front door until the Sunday after Easter (or Pentecost).

Question: Why did we blow out the candle today?

Answer: Today is Good Friday. This is the day we remember that Jesus died and went home to God.

Reading: Mark 15: 21-39

Everyone is quiet for a few minutes.

Holy Saturday



Reading: Mark 15: 42-47

Make an Easter garden on a tray or a plate. An Easter garden includes a cave, with a stone that can be rolled away on Easter Day. (The cave represents the tomb where Jesus was buried). Spring flowers and greenery are traditionally included. Let your creativity play.

Easter Day

You could greet Easter Day by lighting your candles and rolling away the stone at dawn following with the reading and questions. Dawn is at 6.30am this year. You could even light a fire from which to light your candles. If you can, post a picture to our WhatsApp page.



Light seven candles (the circle of six and the special Easter candle in the centre of the circle. Roll away the stone from the cave/tomb and light a candle beside it. Place it in the circle. Add whatever you have - flowers, Easter eggs etc. to make the table festive.

Reading: John 20: 11-18

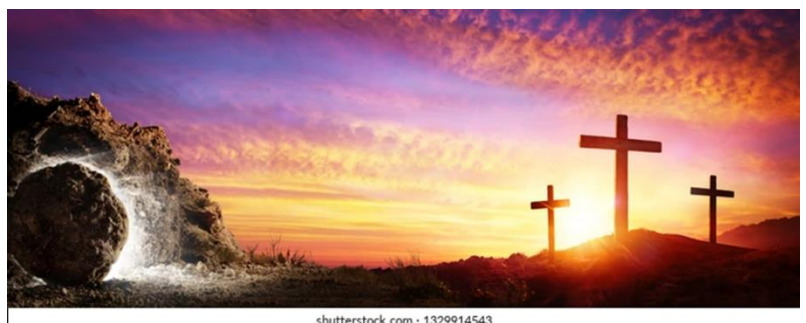
Question: Why do we have Easter eggs and all these flowers and candles today?

Answer: Because today is Easter Day. Today we remember that Jesus rose from the dead and showed us the new life God offers all of us, not just after we die but through the difficult bits of living now.

'The first gold of dawn
The long day
stretched into night
and time crept onward
towards the new day.

With the first gold of dawn
came a resurrection,
a new hope that grew
with the rising sun,
and went out to a waiting world.'

Jean Murdoch



Let the people shout 'Alleluia'

Liturgy adapted from Chris Polhill (Eggs and Ashes)