



Palm Sunday

Holy Week Suggestions for Families

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the most solemn week of the Church's liturgical year. During Holy Week, the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation accomplished by Christ in the last days of his earthly life, beginning with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

For nearly 40 days, the Christian faithful have practiced the disciplines of Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Now the Church invites us to an even deeper spirit of prayer as we follow Christ on his journey to the Cross.

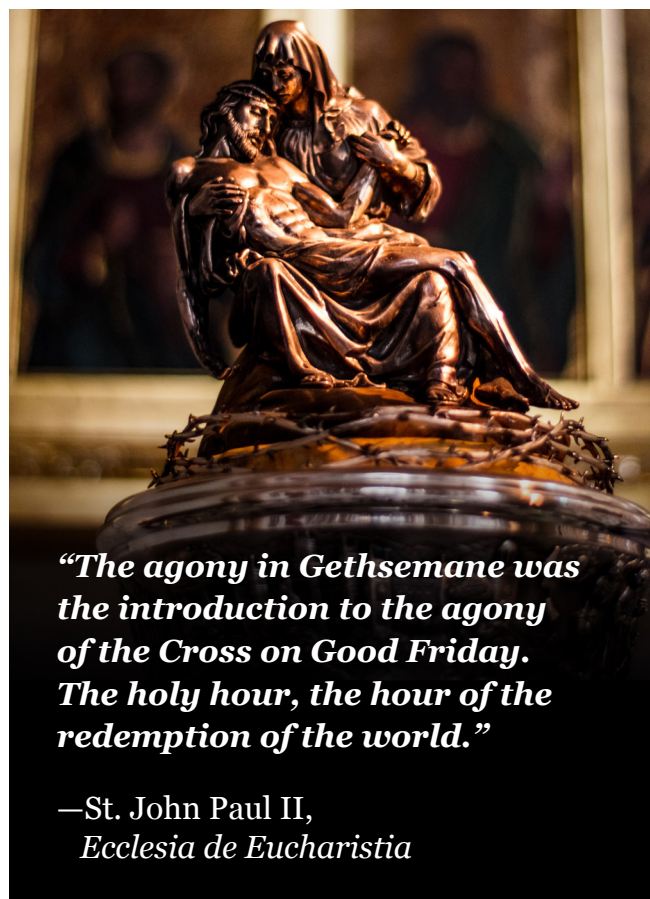
Here are some suggestions for families to use this week as an opportunity to grow in holiness as individuals and as a family.

1. During the week, pray the seven Penitential Psalms together (Psalm 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143; www.usccb.org/bible/psalms/6). These are especially appropriate during Lent. Prayerfully reciting these psalms helps us to recognize our sinfulness, express our sorrow, and ask for God's forgiveness.
2. Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance if you haven't already done so during Lent.
3. Attend a service together on Holy Thursday and/or Good Friday. On Thursday, the Church recalls the Last Supper and Jesus' gift of his Body and Blood.
4. On Holy Saturday, pray for those who will be received into the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil. Pray, too, for a deepening of your own faith and the grace to endure the suffering and celebrate the joys of married life.

From an Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday

Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear.

—Office of Readings on Holy Saturday,
Liturgy of the Hours



“The agony in Gethsemane was the introduction to the agony of the Cross on Good Friday. The holy hour, the hour of the redemption of the world.”

—St. John Paul II,
Ecclesia de Eucharistia