

Easter Family Blessing in Celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord



For all Christians, Easter is the holiest day of the year. Today, we celebrate with great joy the Resurrection of the Lord. The word “***Easter***” come from the spring festival of new life, but in the Christian world has taken on a whole new meaning. In Latin, it is referred to as *Pascha*, coming from the Hebrew word *Pesah* meaning “***Passover***.” In Spanish it is “*Pascua de Resurrección*”- making the link between Passover and Christ’s resurrection all the more evident.

For the Jewish people, the feast of Passover recalled the liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt. On this Easter Day, we recall our liberation from the slavery of sin and the threat of total alienation from God. Our Easter Passover recalls how Jesus Christ passed from death into fullness of life in the mystery of his resurrection.

As we pass through these days of crisis, we find ourselves celebrating this great feast around the family table- How appropriate as it truly is a family feast- a time for all of us to recall and give thanks for the great web of relationships that we are part of in the Risen Christ. Unable to join the greater community at Mass- let us make our family table the Lord’s table through our celebration and our prayer.

Preparation for the Meal: As you gather for your Easter dinner, maybe one of the following suggestions will add to your celebration:

- Place a candle or the image of a lamb at the center of your table. *The candle reminds us of Christ who is the Light of the World; the image of Lamb speaks of Jesus as the Lamb of God who died for our sins, so that we might have life.*
- Many nations have the tradition of blessed food and so they share bread and other items such as bread, wine or boiled eggs with their Easter meal. *Each of these foods has a special meaning- reminding us of the gifts of the Eucharist and life. If you have children, you can allow them to decorate or color the eggs with dyes or use colored paper (if there are shortages of eggs) and to create the table centerpiece.*
- Place some flowers on the table to celebrate the resurrection and to brighten your family table.
- Use your best china and other family heirlooms, especially if they have been passed down- it a good time to recall past generations and to know that they are still close to us in spirit.
- Begin your meal with a time of sharing and expressing thanks- this Gospel passage might help, especially in this time of uncertainty!

Prayer and Scripture:

Leader: Christ is risen. Alleluia.

All: He is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

From the Gospel of St. Luke

(Lk: 24:13-35)

The gospel passage recalls how two of the disciples met the Risen Lord on the road to Emmaus- note how their fear and confusion changed to joy and excitement when they met the Jesus.

That very day, the first day of the week,
two of Jesus' disciples were going
to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus,
and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred.
And it happened that while they were conversing and debating,
Jesus himself drew near and walked with them,
but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.
He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?"
They stopped, looking downcast.
One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply,
"Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem
who does not know of the things
that have taken place there in these days?"
And he replied to them, "What sort of things?"
They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene,
who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over
to a sentence of death and crucified him.
But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel;
and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place.
Some women from our group, however, have astounded us:
they were at the tomb early in the morning
and did not find his Body; they came back and reported
that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive.
Then some of those with us went to the tomb
and found things just as the women had described,
but him they did not see."
And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are!
How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!
Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"
Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,
he interpreted to them what referred to him

in all the Scriptures.

As they approached the village to which they were going,

he gave the impression that he was going on farther.

But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over."

So he went in to stay with them.

And it happened that, while he was with them at table,

he took bread, said the blessing,

broke it, and gave it to them.

With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him,

but he vanished from their sight.

Then they said to each other,

"Were not our hearts burning within us

while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?"

So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem

where they found gathered together

the Eleven and those with them who were saying,

"The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!"

Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way

and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Prayer of Blessing

God of glory, the eyes of all turn to you

as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death.

Bless us and those who are dear to us.

Bless the food of our Easter meal

and remember in your kindness those who go without.

May we who desire to gather at the Lord's Table,

celebrate the joy of his resurrection in our homes,

sharing the good news of Jesus Christ,

and living so as to be admitted finally to his heavenly banquet.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

A Blessed and Happy Easter to you all!