

# Good Friday

## VENERATION OF THE CROSS

Catholics traditionally attend the Veneration of the Cross at 3:00 p.m. on Good Friday. This practice has been around since the fourth century. The veneration of the cross is a solemn practice. Music is not played or is very somber and a Mass is not said, although there may be a communion service. From Holy Thursday Mass until Easter Vigil Mass, Jesus is removed from the tabernacle to remind us of how he spent three days in the tomb.

According to tradition, St. Helen discovered a fragment of the cross on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The cross was brought forward and placed on an altar where the priests and people could pay homage to the relic. It is said that the people pressed their eyes, brows, and lips to the cross as the priest repeated: "Behold, the wood of the cross." Similarly, we gather to venerate the cross at the church.

If you cannot attend a local service, you can venerate a crucifix or wooden cross in your home this Good Friday. Before beginning, explain that Catholics venerate the cross, but we do not worship the material of the cross. We are paying homage to the instrument of salvation and proclaiming our adoration of Christ's ultimate sacrifice.

You can hold a small cross or crucifix and invite your family members to venerate the cross by taking turns kneeling before it, kissing the wood, or placing their forehead on the cross. As each family member comes forward, say: "Behold, the wood of the cross."

You can also consider adding the stations of the cross or a moment of silent prayer before or after your home veneration.

# Holy Saturday

## RESURRECTION COOKIES

These cookies will help you learn about the Passion and Resurrection of Christ through baking!

Note: The cookies should be made on Saturday night so that your family can celebrate the resurrection with an "empty tomb" Sunday morning. Using a physical Bible for this activity is very powerful. If you don't have one, use a Bible app or online Bible. <http://www.usccb.org/bible/>.

## INGREDIENTS

- + 1 cup whole pecans
- + 1 tsp. white vinegar
- + 3 egg whites
- + pinch salt
- + 1 cup sugar

## SUPPLIES

- + mixer
- + 1 Ziploc bag
- + strong wooden spoon
- + wax paper
- + cookie sheet
- + masking tape
- + Bible for readings

# Holy Saturday (continued)

## DIRECTIONS

+ Preheat oven to 300°F.

+ Place pecans in the Ziploc bag. Have your family beat the pecans with the wooden spoon to break them into small pieces.

Reading: John 19:1-3

Explanation: After Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers.

+ Let each person smell the vinegar, noting the pungent smell. If they want, have them just taste it on their finger. Put 1 teaspoon of vinegar into the mixing bowl.

Reading: John 19:28-30

Explanation: When Jesus said "I thirst" when dying on the cross, the soldiers gave Him vinegar to drink.

+ Add egg whites to the vinegar. Eggs represent new life.

Reading: John 10:10-11

Explanation: Jesus gave His life to give us life, and on Easter Sunday He came back to life.

+ Sprinkle a little salt into each person's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl.

Reading: Luke 23:27

Explanation: The salt represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin.

+ So far the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar.

Reading: Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16

Explanation: The sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him.

+ Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed.

Reading: Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3

Explanation: The color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been washed clean by Jesus' sufferings and death.

+ Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto wax paper covered cookie sheet.

Reading: Matthew 27:57-60

Explanation: Each mound reminds us of the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid.

+ Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each person a piece of tape and seal the oven door.

Reading: Matthew 27:65-66

Explanation: Jesus' tomb was sealed with a large stone and soldiers guarded the entrance.

+GO TO BED!

Reading: John 16:20 and 22

Explanation: The family may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight without seeing or tasting the results right away. Jesus' followers were in despair and longing for Jesus when the tomb was sealed.

*Recipe is courtesy of CatholicCulture.org.*

## Easter Sunday

Happy Easter! Alleluia! Alleluia! (Notice we can say that again!)

REMEMBER THOSE RESURRECTION COOKIES? On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow like the empty tomb!

ON EASTER SUNDAY... Get dressed up, have a nice meal, celebrate with family, and remind them that even the candy hunts are reminders of the sweetness of Jesus' sacrifice and that eggs remind us of the empty tomb. Spend some time thanking Jesus for following God's plan and saving us from sin and death.