



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA**



Easter, Our Hope

April

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer

Leader: During this Easter season, we celebrate the great joy of the Resurrection! Jesus died, but he rose again. Let us reflect together on this joyous occasion, and the great hope it gives us for life with Jesus!

Suggested Song: "Jesus Christ Has Risen Today" (<https://tinyurl.com/42zxr9x>)

Leader: In this song we repeat the phrase, "Jesus Christ has risen today. Alleluia!" Alleluia is a word we say with great joy in the Church. In today's prayer your response will be, "Christ has risen. Alleluia!"

Lord Jesus, today we remember the great joys of your Resurrection and all that you have done so we can be close to you! Together we pray....

All: Christ has risen. Alleluia!

Leader: Jesus, we ask that you help us to remember that in all things we can have hope with you. While we may face trials, we remember that you conquered death and in that we rejoice. Together we pray...

All: Christ has risen. Alleluia!

Leader: We pray that we may be witnesses of your love to all we encounter. May they see our joy and through that see you, Lord. Together we pray...

All: Christ has risen. Alleluia!

Leader: We thank you, Jesus, for this time of prayer and for the great example of love you are to all of us. Help us to be more like you, to learn more about you, and to always draw nearer to your most sacred heart.

In your most Holy name we pray, Amen.



Popular Graphic Arts, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Reading of Sacred Scripture

Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow. The guards were shaken with fear of him and became like dead men. Then the angel said to the women in reply, “Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ Behold, I have told you.”

Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Fra Angelico, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Gospel Reflection

In the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus we celebrate Easter, a day of joy and happiness. We are reminded that Jesus' death on the cross is not the end because Jesus is raised from the dead. What does this mean? Jesus had to go through suffering and pain for us so that our sins would be forgiven. When Jesus came out of the tomb on the third day, which is Easter Sunday, that shows us that our sins are forgiven and that we can live forever with God—a truly wonderful thing!

Easter also gives us hope. Hope in knowing that even when things are hard, God loves us and hope in knowing that he is always with us through our suffering and pain. Jesus shows us that carrying our cross won't be easy, but he promises to help us. Easter is the greatest joy, and we can share that hope with others all year long.

How could you share the joy of Easter with someone? What could you share about Jesus being raised from the dead in the Resurrection?



Workshop of Pieter van Aelst, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Faith in Action

Do you know what hope means? Hope means trusting that something good is coming—even when things feel hard. And do you know the best reason for hope? Jesus is alive!

On Easter Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead. That means that love is stronger than anything—even sadness, pain, or death. When we feel worried, left out, or afraid, we can remember that Jesus is always with us, bringing us hope and joy.

In 2025, the Church celebrated a special event called the Jubilee of Hope. A “jubilee” is a time to remember God’s love and joy. And because Jesus rose from the dead, we have the greatest reason to celebrate hope—his love will never end!

When Jesus rose on Easter, he showed us that:

- Love is stronger than sadness.
- Life is stronger than death.
- We will never be alone—Jesus is always with us!

Even when things are tough—if we feel different, left out, or frustrated—Jesus wants us to know that we are loved, important, and part of his family. That’s why the Jubilee of Hope was so special. It reminded us that no matter what happens, Jesus’ love is forever!



Image from Vecteezy

Every Easter season can be a Jubilee of Hope and we can share our hope with others as a family. Here are a few ideas to put our faith in action:

Kindness Stones: Find smooth stones and paint them with simple messages of hope, such as “Jesus is Risen” or “God Loves You.”

- Leave these stones around the neighborhood, park, or church for others to find.
- This small act of evangelization helps children understand how sharing faith can bring joy and encouragement to others.



Image from Canva

Adaptations: To simplify, find religious stickers with messages of hope. Spray paint the rocks in advance and adhere stickers after they dry.

Resurrection Hope Notes: Write and decorate uplifting notes with messages of hope such as “Jesus is Risen!” or “God loves you.”

- Deliver these notes to nursing homes, homeless shelters, or hospital chaplains to distribute to persons in need.
- Families can also place the notes in library books, grocery store shelves, or community bulletin boards as a surprise reminder of hope for others.



Image from Vecteezy

Adaptations: Make each note a family effort. Have a “writer” who pens the words and a family member who contributes with decorations, drawings, and delivering the notes.

Easter Blessing Baskets for Persons in Need: Create small Easter baskets with essentials and treats to bring joy to others.

- Include hygiene items, socks, and non-perishable snacks for the unhoused.
- Make a version with Easter treats and handmade cards for neighbors, first responders, or homebound parishioners.
- Deliver the baskets as a family and pray for persons receiving them.



Image from Vecteezy

Activities with Children

Re-tell the story of Holy Week:

Set up a special place in the house where the children can see and interact with the items from Holy Week to learn about Jesus' journey, betrayal, and Resurrection. On seven pieces of paper write the names of the days of Holy Week. Use pictures, visuals, and items to help retell the events of Holy Week that lead to our salvation.



LToman, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

- Palm Sunday: Commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
 - ◇ Example items: palm, donkey, city, coats
- House of Prayer Monday: Commemorates Jesus' cleansing of the temple.
 - ◇ Example items: church, bible, table, money, doves
- Holy Tuesday: Commemorates Jesus' teaching in parables.
 - ◇ Example items: heart (Jesus' teaches us unconditional love), bible, sheep, vines, wheat
- Spy Wednesday: Commemorates Judas' betrayal.
 - ◇ Example items: coins, perfume (the women poured perfume on Jesus), Judas picture
- Maundy Thursday: Commemorates the institution of the Eucharist (Last Supper).
 - ◇ Example items: bread, wine, friends, Last Supper pictures, basin of water and a towel



Bottle, Perfume. CC0, Accession number 70138. National Museum of American History.



The Last Supper by Mowbray. CC0, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mr. Hugh McK.Jones.

- Good Friday: Commemorates the Passion and death of Christ.

- ◊ Example items: nails, cross, crucifix, pictures of Crucifixion, pictures of Calvary

- Holy Saturday: Commemorates Christ's burial.

- ◊ Example items: rock, tomb, cloth, pictures of the guards at Christ's tomb

- Easter Sunday: Celebrates Christ's Resurrection.

- ◊ Example items: purple, Jesus, empty tomb, pictures of joy



Image from Vecteezy

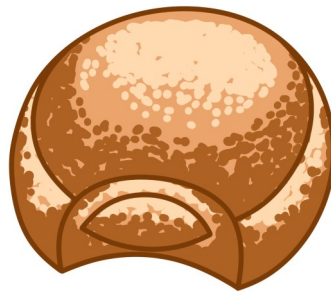


Image from Vecteezy

Read the Scripture:

Read the Scripture that retells Jesus' journey through Holy Week:

Sunday: Matthew 21:1–11, Mark 11:1–11, Luke 19:28–44, John 12:9–19.

Monday: Matthew 21:12–22, Mark 11:12–19, Luke 19:45–48.

Tuesday: Matthew 21:23–26:5, Mark 11:27–14:2, Luke 20:1–22:2, John 12:37–50.

Wednesday: Matthew 26:6–16, Mark 14:3–11, Luke 22:3–6.

Thursday: Matthew 26:17–75, Mark 14:12–72, Luke 22:7–71, John 13:1–18:27.

Friday: Matthew 27:1–61, Mark 15:1–47, Luke 23:1–56, John 18:28–19:42.

Saturday: Matthew 27:62–66.

Sunday: Matthew 28:1–20, Mark 16:1–8, Luke 24:1–53, John 20:1–21:25.

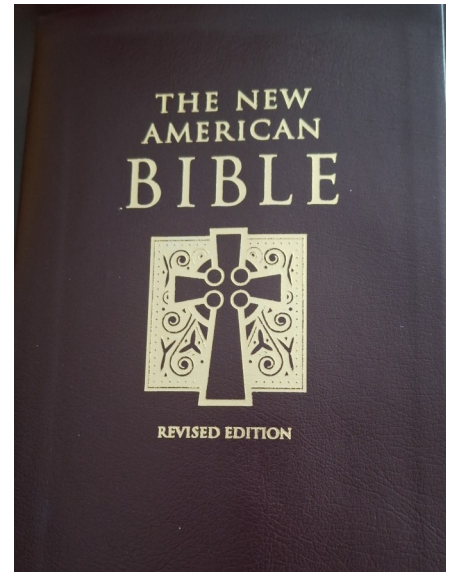
Easter Sensory Bins:

Sensory bins can help children with hands on learning. This month use a sensory bin focused on the Hope that Holy Week offers us.

Items can include materials from the Holy Week Activities, rocks, dirt, sand, water, crosses, psalms, etc.

Holy Week Craft: While Jesus' journey through Holy Week ends his human life, we are still given hope and joy that he was able to conquer death for our sins.

Stained glass crosses: Cut out cross shapes from construction paper or cardstock and have children glue colored tissue paper or torn pieces onto them to create a vibrant stained-glass effect.



Saint for April

Saint Lydwine

Feast Day April 14

St. Lydwine, also known as Lydia and Lydwine of Schiedam, lived in the Netherlands from 1380 to 1433. St. Lydwine is the patron saint of persons who are very sick. She is also invoked by persons seeking relief from prolonged pain and suffering because St. Lydwine herself had many illnesses in her lifetime including nausea, headaches, chronic pain, fever, muscle spasms, and blindness. Many believe she is the first-ever recorded patient with multiple sclerosis.



Agaath, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Lydwine had eight brothers and sisters and a lot of love to give, especially to give to God. From an early age Lydwine said daily prayers and was very devoted to our Blessed Virgin Mary. Lydwine became bedbound due to a broken rib after an ice-skating accident when she was 15. Her broken rib never healed, so the sore and pain spread to the rest of her body. Her health got worse and, although she suffered tremendously, she continued to pray to Jesus and continued to be joyful.

Many people became believers in Lydwine's spiritual gifts after seeing her suffering and her hands bleeding, also called the 'stigmata' or the wounds of Christ. Lydwine didn't complain about her pain and suffering and instead accepted and shared her suffering with Jesus' Cross. She prayed with and for others, many of whom were themselves healed.

Top 5 facts about St. Lydwine:

- Lydwine was born in 1380 at Schiedam, Holland and had eight siblings
- At age 15 she broke her rib while ice skating and developed several disabilities
- She grew closer to God by prayer and fasting, and was known to have healing powers
- Lydwine suffered pain and symptoms of nausea, vomiting, fever, headaches, toothaches, and blindness
- Even though she suffered until she died, Lydwine grew in holiness and love of God while she offered up her suffering for the conversion of others.



Johannes Brugman, Vita Lijdwine (Schiedam 1498)., Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Activity: Being Like St. Lydwine

Have you ever been sick in bed and had to stay home from school? Imagine being confined to bed like St. Lydwine. Make a list of some things you can do while resting that will bring you closer to God. Put your list in a safe place where you can find it to use on your next sick day.

Here are two suggestions to get you started:

- Pray the Rosary
- Read a book about Jesus

Information about St. Lydwine from saintoftheday.com/st-lydwine/

April Resources

Bothum, K. April 12, 2017. Easter treats and crafts for family time. CatholicPhilly.com. <https://catholicphilly.com/2017/04/catholic-spirituality/easter-treats-and-crafts-for-family-time/>

Catholic Icing. Resurrection garden: How to make one fast, cheap, and easy! <https://www.catholicicing.com/resurrection-garden/>

Catholic Icing. Resurrection set. <https://www.catholicicing.com/resurrection-set/>

GetDrawings. Resurrection coloring pages. <https://getdrawings.com/resurrection-coloring-pages>

Saddleback Kids. Jesus' Resurrection—Bible Story for Kids. YouTube video. April 12, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VtcF_fOoWY