



# *Easter@Home*



**A HOLY WEEK GUIDE FOR CHRISTIAN FAMILIES**

by Grietjie Thorne



**All glory to God our Father and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

**'n Nota aan Afrikaanse gebruikers:**

Hierdie gids is tans net in Engels beskikbaar, maar ons werk aan 'n pragtige Afrikaanse weergawe vir volgende jaar. Intussen sluit ons met liefde 'n paar voorstelle in vir Afrikaanse liedere by sommige dae se liedjie-keuse. Die Afrikaanse resepkartjies vir die Opstandingskoekies, asook 'n stel Afrikaanse servetringe, is beskikbaar om uit te druk in die aanhangsel wat die laaste deel van hierdie PDF-gids beslaan.



## TERMS OF USE

- **Easter@Home** is the intellectual property of and is copyrighted to Grietjie Thorne.
- Permission is granted for families to use the guide for personal use.
- Please do not publish this PDF guide or parts of it on your website, blog or social media platforms and no printed copies may be sold without written permission. Please email us at [hello@thornewood.co.za](mailto:hello@thornewood.co.za) to obtain permission.
- You MAY share the link to the download page!
- You MAY share photos on social media of how you use the guide (please use **#easterathome**)
- Other congregations who wish to use share this with their members, are welcome to contact the author at [hello@thornewood.co.za](mailto:hello@thornewood.co.za) for permission.
- Please do not forward this via email or other electronic devices and platforms, but kindly share the **LINK** to the webpage where the guide may be downloaded. This helps us keep track of how many people are using it, and will help us to improve future guides by knowing what the level of interest is. You may download this guide at [www.thornewood.co.za](http://www.thornewood.co.za)

**Please heed these terms and conditions. Failure to do so is stealing.**

# Easter@Home



## A HOLY WEEK GUIDE FOR CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

### Introduction

The week between Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday is often called Holy Week or Passion Week. In April 2020, this week fell right in the middle of our national lockdown due to Covid-19.

I wrote this guide as a gift to our small congregation during that very tumultuous time, but the Lord had bigger plans for my very humble offering, and in the end this PDF was downloaded over 3000 times. So many people have consequently contacted us to request an updated version and I am all too happy to oblige if it means a furthering of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Each day for the next 8 days, please join us as we daily reflect on a piece of Scripture that tells the story of Jesus in the last week before His death and resurrection. Listen to the selected piece of music for that day, and participate in a hands-on activity to help us have an even more direct experience as we contemplate our Saviour's love for us. Please share your thoughts, experiences and photos using #easterathome

### A note for older children or single adults:

Some of the activities in this guide may seem to be aimed at younger children, but we want to encourage you to still give them a try. Or come up with an alternative idea! We would LOVE to see how YOU interpret the day's craft or activity in a creative way. Can you draw or paint? Then please do an illustration to share on our church Whatsapp group! Do you prefer writing a poem about today's experience, or can you maybe knit/crochet a small ornament to add to your Holy Week path? You may decide to give it as a beautiful, handmade gift to someone special! Does something in your garden remind you of what we are reflecting on? Why not add it to your path? Your example and participation may just inspire someone else to also take this time to reflect on the amazing hope of the Gospel through your contribution to this journey!

# Easter@Home



## TO PREPARE BEFORE PALM SUNDAY:

1. Decide where you will set up your special **Easter@Home** corner. This can be on your dinner table, coffee table, windowsill or on a shelf. We will add a symbol to each stop along the way – one symbol for each day of this week.
2. Print out the Holy Week path, cut and glue as per the instructions and set your path in the special place where everyone in the family can see it this week.

OR

### Create your own path! If you don't have a printer you can use any of these ideas:

- Draw a path on a piece of paper and paint eight circles onto it - one for each day of this week. Use the open end of a toilet paper roll to draw your circles and space them about 5 or 6 cm apart. You can colour each one a different colour, if you wish.
  - Place eight matchboxes in line on your table. Leave about 5cm between each one. Each matchbox represents a day of this week and you will place a symbol on them each morning this week.
  - Drape a beautiful piece of cloth (maybe a pretty scarf) on a side table or as a centrepiece on your kitchen table. Add 8 tea light candles in glass votive holders in a curvy line and light a new one each morning this week.
  - Place a branch from the garden in a pot and use it to hang your daily symbol on.
3. Look ahead. The recipes in the **APPENDIX** may require some ingredients you will need to purchase ahead of time.

### 4. Collect a few 'craft' supplies from around the house. You will need:

- Two clothes pegs
- Green paper (or white paper and colouring pencils/crayons)
- Newspaper / brown paper/ egg cartons
- A candle
- An empty glass jar
- Fruit like apples, oranges etc.
- Toilet paper rolls

# Palm Sunday

## READ

John 12:12-15 and Luke 19:28-44



## TODAY'S SYMBOL: Palm leaves and clothing

- Print out the palm leaf ornament and add it to the first stop on your Holy Week path.

### OR

- Draw a palm leaf on paper, colour it and cut it out. Add little scraps of fabric to represent the clothes strewn before Jesus as He entered Jerusalem.



## LISTEN: "Jerusalem, the Holy City"

Here are a few beautiful versions. Why not share your favourite version with a friend or family member to encourage them to join you in remembering Jesus' sacrificial love during this special time?

1. **JOHN STARNES** – BEAUTIFUL! (don't bother about watching the video – just enjoy the music!)
2. **ANDRE RIEU AND THREE TENORS**
3. **DAME VERA LYNN** – this is a beautiful version. Close your eyes and enjoy her beautiful voice – the images on this clip is just of her during various stages of her career
4. A version by **MAHALIA JACKSON** from 1960!
5. For our Afrikaans members: A beautiful rendition by **JANNIE MOOLMAN AND RINA HUGO**



**DO: Activity for families with children:** Act out the triumphal entry! Will Dad be the donkey? Who can put together the best costume? Throw some rags or old clothes on the path for the donkey to tread on. Remember to shout Hosanna! Take photos!

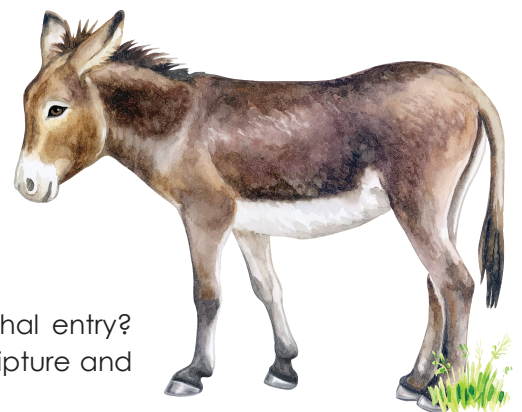
**Activity for someone with a palm tree in their garden:** Find instructions [HERE](#) and practice folding a cross from a palm leaf! Many churches across the world actually present a procession with real palm leaves during the service on Palm Sunday and congregants are then given a palm leaf cross to keep as a bookmark in their Bibles for the year to come.



## MAKE: Make a donkey!

Print the donkey from the [APPENDIX](#) onto card and cut it out. If you do not have a printer, draw a donkey (without legs!) onto some card and colour it. Look for a slightly sturdier card to work with – the thickness of a Weetbix box works great!

**Older children/teens:** Can you do a sketch of the triumphal entry? Write a poem? Do a voice recording of the piece from Scripture and send it to a grandparent?



# Monday

## READ

John 12:20 – 26



### TODAY'S SYMBOL: A stalk of wheat

- Print the picture of the stalk of wheat, colour and add to the second stop on your Holy Week path.

#### OR

- Find a grass plume outside and place it at your second stop.

#### OR

- Do you have a packet of soup mix in the house? Pick out a few grains of whole wheat from there and place it in a small bowl on your Holy Week path.



### LISTEN: Bringing in the Sheaves (Click [HERE](#) to view on YouTube.)

A story to go with the music! – Please see the **APPENDIX** for the background story and how this song can encourage us today!



### TASTE: Barley Soup (see the **APPENDIX** for the recipe)



**DO:** Open a fruit like an apple/orange/pomegranate/fig and count the seeds inside (If you have a dried stalk of wheat on hand, even better!) Reflect on how each of those seeds can produce a plant that can in its turn produce hundreds, if not thousands, of fruits! Read today's passage again and consider how the seed in your fruit is like the grain of wheat we read about.

**FUN FACT:** Most wheat stalks contain around 50 grains (genetically modified varieties can have up to 200 per stalk!) It takes 150g of wheat berries to produce one cup of flour.

# Tuesday

## READ

John 12:35 – 50



### TODAY'S SYMBOL: Light!

- Print and colour and cut out the picture of the candle and add it to your path.

#### OR

- Place a candle at the third stop on your Holy Week patch. If you have a matchbox, a small birthday candle and its plastic holder in the house, gently push the stem of the little plastic holder down into the top of the matchbox. Now you have a tiny little candle and candle holder!



### LISTEN: Turn your eyes upon Jesus

Jesus tells us that He is the Light of the world and that if we believe in Him, we will not remain in the darkness of our sin. Right now the world is looking like a very dark place to us. The answer is to **TURN TO THE LIGHT!** May you enjoy this beautiful hymn by three very talented local Christian artists, Loyiso Bala, Neville D and Ivan Siegelaar. (Click [HERE](#))

Another favourite version is by a quartet of Indian singers who call themselves The Living Stones. How beautiful is that deep baritone in the second verse?! (Click [HERE](#))



### MAKE: Glass lantern (see the [APPENDIX](#) for instructions)

**Older children:** Set your family's dinner table with your most beautiful candles, or place a candle in a glass-covered candle holder next to your bed tonight. As you look at the light in the darkness, reflect on what today's Scripture portion means to you during this time.



**TASTE:** If you have marshmallows in the cupboard, tonight is the perfect time to roast some of them over a candle!



# Wednesday

## READ

John 13:3-17



### TODAY'S SYMBOL: Water

- Print the jug of water and colour, cut out and add it to your Holy Week path
- OR**
- Fill a small jug or glass jar with a little clean water and add it to your Holy Week display.



### LISTEN:

- [Come, Thou fount of every blessing](#) (Click [HERE](#))
- [The Servant song](#) (Click [HERE](#))



### DO: Foot washing

**For those in families:** Gather together and read today's passage from Scripture together. Have you been obedient to Jesus's command to serve one another? If not, take a few moments for silent prayer to repent and ask God for His forgiveness. Think of practical ways you can serve each other in the days ahead. Then take turns washing each other's feet, gently serving one another in love as you do so.

**For those who live alone:** There are ways we can serve each other even while we live alone and in isolation. Can you think of someone who might be served with a loving whatsapp message, or even better: a phone call? Have you been keeping quiet about a compliment that you wanted to pay to someone? Now is the time! There are SO many people in our lives who are in need during this lockdown. Some of them do not have enough airtime to stay in touch with the rest of us. Consider serving them in love by transferring some mobile data to their account? If you are young and healthy, could you reach out to an older neighbour or acquaintance who might need something from the grocery store the next time you go? Serve them with love by slipping a little treat into the bag for them, and please sanitise before dropping it at their door.



**TASTE:** Flavour a jug of water and serve one another in love! (Our children love to pretend that they are waiters at a fancy restaurant. Maybe take turns being the waiter!) Here are some ideas of things to add to plain drinking water: lemon slices / cucumber slices / orange slices / a few mint leaves / kiwi slices / fresh peeled ginger. Add plenty of water and a pretty paper straw if you have some on hand!

# Thursday

## READ

Luke 22:7-22



## TODAY'S SYMBOL: Bread and Wine

- Print the picture of the bread and wine, cut out and add it to your Holy Week path
- OR**
- Fill an egg cup or tiny glass bottle with grape juice or even water to which you just add a drop of red food colouring. Place a small piece of bread next to it on your Holy Week display.



**LISTEN:** *Come to the table of mercy* (Click [HERE](#) to view on YouTube.)



**MAKE:** *Salt dough cup and bread* (and something extra for the weekend)

Use salt dough (see recipe in the **APPENDIX**) to make a tiny loaf of bread and a cup. Dry it in the oven and add it to your Holy Week path once it has dried. Use the rest of your salt dough to make a tomb and stone for Saturday and Sunday.



**TASTE:** Make *flatbreads* to enjoy as you remember the night before Jesus was crucified. There are two recipes in the **APPENDIX**.



**DO:** For today's activity, please allow me to share from our own traditions. May it inspire you to think of ways your own family may celebrate.

The Thursday night before Easter is a very special time for our family. We start preparing our home and our hearts early in the day to make sure that there will be no distractions once evening falls. We like to dress up in Bible-time costumes (nothing fancy – we drape ourselves in bedsheets or table cloths and use towels for head gear. Scarves always come in handy!) We also set a low table (An old door on bricks. A low coffee table can also be used) and set our table with foods that are mentioned in the Bible: dates, olives, pomegranates, figs, bread, olive oil, raisins, grape juice etc. See what you can come up with! We set up a basin with water in which to wash our hands, and then gather around the table to read about the Lord's Table from Luke 22:7-22. We sing 'Come to the table of mercy' together and Mike then leads our family in partaking in the Lord's Table. We try to keep things very quiet after that. We may read about the rest of that terrible night, or only focus on Peter's betrayal and use some quiet time to search our own hearts in prayer. For us this is the start of a quiet weekend where we do not mourn – no! Jesus is not dying again! It is finished and He is seated on the right hand of God in heaven! – but we **REMEMBER**.

# Friday

## READ

Luke 23:32 – 55 and John 19:1-42



## TODAY'S SYMBOL: The cross and crown of thorns

- Print out the picture of the cross, colour it, cut out and add to your Holy Week path.

### OR

- Make a cross from two twigs. Use a glue gun to glue them together, or wind some cotton twine / thread around the cross piece to secure the two pieces together. Weave a small, wreath-like 'crown' from a long, supple piece of grass, or make a circular crown from a thin piece of rolled-up brown paper. If you have toothpicks in the house, you can snip off the sharp ends and glue them to the crown as thorns.



**LISTEN:** Take time today to listen to a few different songs. Here are some suggestions

- Alas, and did my Saviour bleed? (Click [HERE](#))
- The Old Rugged Cross (Click [HERE](#))
- Via Dolorosa (Click [HERE](#))
- Via Dolorosa - a beautiful Afrikaans version by Jan de Wet. (Click [HERE](#))
- Also for our Afrikaans members: Houtkruis (Click [HERE](#))



### DO:

## Option 1 He was pierced through for our transgressions

Make a cross from two pieces of scrap wood **OR** cut it from the sides of a cardboard box. Take time to reflect on what SIN is. (A simplified definition for young children: sin is anything we do that goes against God's law, or rebellion against God. His law is: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind, and your neighbour as yourself. See Matt 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10: 27.

Take time to think of any unconfessed sin in your life right now and write it on a slip of paper. Young children can draw a picture. Fold the paper in half so its contents remain private between you and God.

Now turn to Isaiah 53. It is oh, so worth it to read this whole chapter at this point, but families with young children may choose to only read verses 4 and 5. Discuss how Jesus took the blame and punishment for YOUR and MY sin.

If you are using a wooden cross, take turns to hammer your sin paper to it with nails. If you are using a cardboard cross, toothpicks and the back of a spoon should work well. As you do this, remember that Jesus had already paid the price for that sin all those many years ago on the cross...all we have to do about today's sin is repent and ask for God's forgiveness in Jesus' Name. Please be very certain to explain to little children that we do not gain forgiveness from sin by nailing our sins to this little cross – this activity is just a SYMBOL or REMINDER that Jesus had been “pierced through for our transgressions” many, many years ago. Now turn to 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness.” And Isaiah 1:8: “ ‘Come now, and let us reason together’, says the Lord, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they will be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.’”

## **Option 2** A simple object lesson to show that Jesus took our sin away

**Please note: if you choose to do this object lesson, please practice it on your own before doing it with your children so that you can experiment with the amount of water to use.**

### **You will need:**

- A coin (20c or 50c will do)
- A flat dinner plate or platter
- A small clear drinking glass or glass jar
- A drop of food colouring
- A small candle that will easily fit under the glass

### **Instructions:**

- Place the coin on the flat dinner plate, a little to one side. Tell your children that the coin represents us.
- Now pour a little of the coloured water onto the plate – this represents sin. Make sure to cover the coin with the water, just like we are covered with sin before we repent and believe.
- The candle represents Christ. Place the candle in the middle of the plate and light it – because, remember, Jesus is the Light!!
- Now place the drinking glass or jar over the candle and watch what happens...The water will begin to draw away from the coin and be sucked into the glass.
- Isn't that AMAZING? Jesus took the punishment for ALL my sin on the cross and when I come to Him and ask for forgiveness, he takes it all away from me!

## **Option 3** (suitable for all ages)

Tape a note on your bedroom or bathroom mirror – the one most members of the family is likely to use today. The note should say: **“THIS IS WHO JESUS DIED FOR.”** Every time you look in the mirror, take a moment to thank the Lord for His amazing love for you.



**TASTE:** At mealtime today, have a tiny bit of vinegar for everyone to taste (a few drops in an egg cup for each person). As you taste it, remember how cruelly Jesus was treated when He was thirsting on the cross. Thank Him for so willingly enduring all of that for our sake.



# Saturday

## READ

Luke 23:56, Matt.27:57 – 66



### TODAY'S SYMBOL: The tomb

- Print out, colour and cut out the picture of the tomb and add it to your Holy Week path.

#### OR

- Use the salt dough tomb you made on Thursday. Add it to your Holy Week display and place the 'stone' in front of it.



**LISTEN:** *Amazing Love* (Click [HERE](#) to view on YouTube.)



### MAKE AND TASTE: Resurrection Cookies

#### You will need:

- A Bible
- The recipe cards from the **APPENDIX**
- Masking tape
- A wooden spoon
- An electric beater
- An oven

Follow the instructions on the recipe cards to prepare a very special treat for tomorrow morning!

# Resurrection Sunday



## READ

Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-18



## TODAY'S SYMBOL: Flowers and an empty grave!

- Place a candle on the last stop of your Holy Week path and decorate with any fresh flowers or greenery you can find – even pretty weeds like dandelions will do! The plants are a symbol of LIFE!

### OR

- Move your salt dough tomb to today's spot on your Holy Week path and roll away the stone to show an empty grave! Decorate with any green leaves or grasses or flowers you can find, or make your own from paper!



## LISTEN:

- [He's Alive](#) (Click [HERE](#))
- [Up from the grave He arose](#) (Click [HERE](#))
- [Christ the Lord is risen today!](#) (Click [HERE](#))



## DO:

1. Rush to the oven to remove your resurrection cookies! If you bite them open, they will be hollow inside like an empty tomb!
2. Greet each other with "He is Risen!"
3. No matter how simple your meal might be today, make it a celebration meal! Use the best of what you have and set a table that speaks of joy!



There are **printable napkin rings** in the **APPENDIX** – cut them out and glue the ends together. Think of inexpensive ways you can decorate your table. Here are some ideas:

- Use pages from a magazine or newspaper. Cut it into strips and glue the ends of one strip together to form a circle. Now loop the next strip through the first and glue its ends together. Keep going until you have a beautiful festive paper chain!
  - Write a card for each member of the family and add a picture of flowers or an empty tomb.
4. Share the gospel today! Send a whatsapp or a voice note or an email. Make a phone call. Send it on a paper plane over the wall to your neighbour!