

April 15-21 "O Grave, Where Is Thy Victory?"

EASTER COUNTDOWN



1. Video/Book: Start on Sunday the week before Easter with watching a short video or reading a quick book explaining Easter such as this one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY2NH8Wpoog> . Remind them of the real reason why we celebrate Easter and discuss the hope and joy we can have because of Jesus Christ.
2. Banner Pieces: Have the banner triangles cut out and put together. Either use them as is, put patterned paper underneath to make them more colorful and punch holes in the corners to place on a string/ribbon, or get one of these banners from Hobby Lobby to glue them onto (<https://www.hobbylobby.com/Party-Baking/Themed-Party-Collections/Bright-Ideas/Mint-Striped-Banner/p/80808196>). We'll probably print it on cardstock, laminate all of the pieces, and put Velcro on the pictures so we can reuse them, but you could just use regular paper and glue if you don't want to reuse them.
3. Daily Descriptions and Pictures: Have the daily descriptions (text from <https://www.mormon.org/easter/easter-week>) and pictures cut out and put in separate labeled envelopes/large plastic eggs/boxes/some kind of container for each day. Can put the pictures on gold/patterned paper to make them stand out more. Laminate and put Velcro on the back of the pictures so they can be placed on the circles on the Easter Banner. We'll probably throw a little treat or snack into each daily envelope/container and place them all in an Easter basket to make it more fun (or put the treats in plastic eggs in the basket and the kids can choose one plastic egg each day and eat those treats while we read the scriptures).
4. Countdown to Easter: On each day (starting the Sunday before Easter), open the envelope/container, read the description of what happened that day, sing the song that goes with it, and then read/discuss the corresponding scriptures as they look at the picture. Place the banner somewhere where it can be seen all week to help the family remember why we celebrate Easter.

Additional Ideas:

- "Easter Footstep" map of places Jesus went/what He did in His last days: <http://media.ldscdn.org/pdf/lds-magazines/liahona-april-2012/2012-04-27-for-young-children-eng.pdf>
- Resurrected Christ appearing to people: <https://www.lds.org/bc/content/ldsorg/children/resources/topics/easter/He-Lives!-2007-04-friend.pdf>
- Additional fun crafts/activities to do with the daily descriptions and pictures: <https://www.theredcrystal.org/blog/easter-o-grave-where-is-thy-victory-april-15-21>

SUNDAY

Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem

(Matthew 21:6-11)

Jesus Christ rides triumphantly into Jerusalem, His followers reverently laying down cloaks and palm fronds in His path. It is not the first time He has entered the city. His three-year ministry took Him across the Holy Land, where He taught, worked miracles, and spread the light of His gospel. But this time, Jesus Christ is preparing to perform His most important miracle of all.

Like everything He did, Jesus Christ's entrance fulfills prophecy. His arrival in Jerusalem is powerful evidence that God keeps His promises to His children. Our Heavenly Father provided a way for us to overcome sin and death – through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Song: "Hosanna" (Children's Songbook)



MONDAY

Cleansing the Temple

(Matthew 21:12-16)

After entering Jerusalem, one of the first things Jesus Christ does is go to the temple. There, inside His Father's house, Jesus sees merchants buying and selling to those passing by. Speaking with unmistakable authority, He commands them to leave.

The cleansing of the temple at Jerusalem was an act of bravery. We can take courage knowing that Jesus Christ did what He knew to be right, whether it was popular or not. When we follow Him, we receive the strength to do the same.

Song: "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" (Children's Songbook)
Or "I Love to See the Temple"



TUESDAY

Teaching in Jerusalem

(Matthew 21-23)

Jesus's presence in Jerusalem did not go unnoticed by the authorities. Seeing Jesus as a threat, they seek to discredit Him. On the Temple Mount, they question Jesus in hopes of finding something they can use against Him. But Jesus's inspired answers reveal no crime, and His enemies only discredit themselves.

Despite incredible opposition, the work of Jesus moved on. Because of His great love for us, we don't have to face life's obstacles alone. When we seek His help, we can overcome even the greatest of challenges.

Song: "I Believe in Christ"



WEDNESDAY

Continued Teaching

(Matthew 24-25)

The events of Wednesday are unknown. But instead of focusing on where Jesus was, we can focus on what Jesus taught during His ministry.

Jesus was the Master Teacher. By opening our hearts to Him, we can find answers to life's most important questions. But to do so, we must be as His disciples were – humble and sincere.

Song: "Seek the Lord Early" (Children's Songbook)



THURSDAY

The Passover and Garden of Gethsemane

(Matthew 26)

Jesus observes the Passover with His Apostles in what is often referred to as the Last Supper. He shares His love for them, through both His words and His actions. Then together they depart to a quiet garden called Gethsemane. But what happens next Jesus must endure alone. He prays and is overcome by unfathomable agony. This is the beginning of the culmination of Jesus Christ's sacred mission. He takes upon Himself the sins of the world.

Even though He lived a perfect life, Jesus Christ paid the price for all our sins. It was a sacrifice only He could make, and He did so willingly – for you, for all of us.

Song: "Gethsemane"



FRIDAY

Trial, Crucifixion, and Burial

(Matthew 27:1-61)

In the early hours of the morning, Jesus is betrayed into the hands of the local authorities. After a series of one-sided trials, He is sentenced to death by crucifixion. He dies on the cross that afternoon, with His disciples and accusers present as witnesses.

Because Jesus Christ experienced such profound suffering, He has perfect empathy for us when we are in pain, be it physical or spiritual. Because He overcame death to live again, He has the power to help us rise above the challenges in our lives, no matter how dark and difficult things may seem.

Song: "He Sent His Son" (Children's Songbook)



SATURDAY

Christ's Body Lies in the Tomb

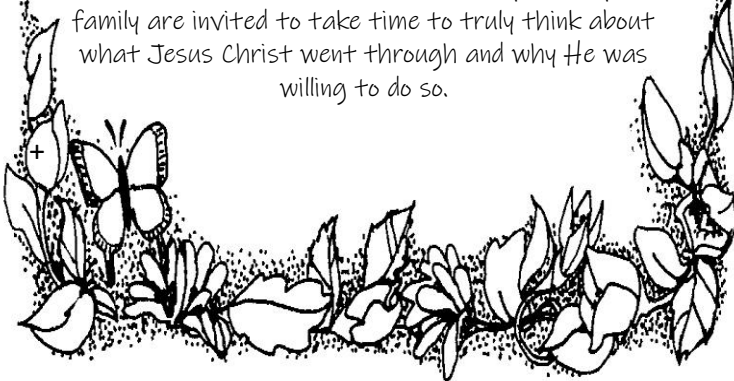
(Matthew 27:62-66)

While His Spirit Ministers in the Spirit World

(D & C 138)

The night before, Jesus Christ's body had been placed in the tomb. The scriptures are mostly silent on the day after His crucifixion.

Likely, this was a day of deep reflection for His followers and their families. Likewise, you and your family are invited to take time to truly think about what Jesus Christ went through and why He was willing to do so.



Song: "To Think About Jesus" (Children's Songbook)
or "I'm Trying to Be Like Jesus" (Children's Songbook)



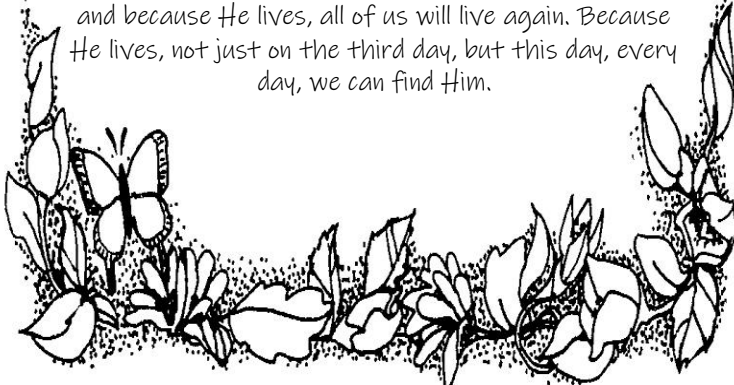
SUNDAY

The Appearance of the Resurrected Christ

(Matthew 28:1-10)

Early in the morning, Mary Magdalene, a friend and follower of Jesus, comes to the tomb to care for Jesus Christ's body. To her astonishment, she finds the tomb empty. But she is not alone. A man addresses her, a gardener, she supposes. But then He says her name, "Mary." And she sees. He is Jesus. The Christ lives.

Jesus Christ overcame death and was resurrected, and because He lives, all of us will live again. Because He lives, not just on the third day, but this day, every day, we can find Him.



Song: "Did Jesus Really Live Again?" (Children's Songbook)



Banner Pieces: Start and end with the ones with squares, and put the middle ones in order to spell "EASTER." Each day of the week before Easter, read about what Jesus did on that day and place the picture on the Easter Banner to help the family remember throughout the week. Laminate and use Velcro to make it reusable.

