



Sunday Celebrations

Sixth Sunday of Easter | **May 17, 2020**

Welcome to Sunday Celebrations, a free resource from RCL Benziger to help you celebrate Sunday with your family, in your home.

Each Sunday's celebration focuses on the Gospel of the day, and encourages family members of all ages to join in singing, praying, sharing, and celebrating. Suggested songs (search the internet for recorded versions) and craft activities help enliven and extend the celebrations.

Here are three simple ideas to help you get started:

1 Choose the place where you will gather for your Sunday celebration. It may be around your living room coffee table, around your kitchen or dining room table, outdoors at your picnic table, or any place that works for your family!

2 Decorate your chosen place with symbols of faith. These might include a placemat, napkin, or cloth in the color of the liturgical season; a Bible; a candle; a cross or crucifix; and a plant or flowers. Other suggestions will be offered on each Sunday Celebrations outline.

3 Each Sunday Celebrations outline is based on the flow of a Liturgy of the Word with children. Feel free to adapt the outline to best suit the ages and attention spans of your family members. It is most important simply to set aside time to pray and reflect on God's Word.

RCL Benziger prays that by taking time for Sunday Celebrations, families of all ages will be encouraged and strengthened by God's Word. Our prayers are with you as you lead your family in Sunday Celebrations and the Good News of Jesus Christ.





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Gospel Reading

John 14:15-21

(Reading is available at usccb.org/bible/readings.)

Symbol (optional)

Bowl of water, vase of spring flowers or an Easter lily, basket of cutout hearts (see last week's session)

Get Ready

Begin by inviting family members to name those who showed them love this past week and the ways in which those persons did so. Then ask, "In what ways did you show love to others?"

Remember to invite family members to again bring noisemakers with them. It is still the joyous Easter season!

Begin

- Light a candle and make a joyful noise with your noisemakers as you sing "They'll Know We Are Christians," "This is a Day of New Beginnings," or "Jesus in the Morning."
- Make the Sign of the Cross together, then pray:
**Jesus, open our ears to hear your Word for us today.
Help us to do what your Word asks us to do. Amen.**

Listen and Reflect

- Again, use your noisemakers as you sing "Alleluia!"
- Before proclaiming the Gospel, ask family members to listen for what Jesus is asking us to do.
- Proclaim today's Gospel.
- Spend a moment in silent reflection. Then ask family members what Jesus is asking us to do. (*Follow his commandments*) How many times does he ask us to do this? (*Twice; at the beginning of the Gospel and at the end of the Gospel*) What are we showing Jesus when we follow his commandments? (*That we love him; our love for him*)
- Invite family members to recall some of Jesus' commandments. These are best reflected in the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, but also in Jesus' life as revealed in the New Testament, where he taught love, forgiveness, mercy, compassion, and care for others by example.



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- After recalling some of Jesus' commandments, remind family members that all of the commandments and laws can be summed up in what Jesus called the New Commandment: "Love one another as I love you."

Connect

- Take the basket of hearts from the prayer table and have each family member take several hearts from the basket.
- Explain that this week's Gospel challenge is to show love to each other as Jesus has shown love to your family. Every time a family member sees someone do or hears someone say a loving thing to another family member, he or she is to give that family member a heart. Ask family members to keep the hearts they are given in a special place.
- Invite a family member to make a reminder that says "Love one another as I love you" and to hang the reminder on the refrigerator or in a place where family members will see it. Place the basket with additional hearts near the reminder and refill the basket as needed.

Conclude

- Lead your family in praying for the world, the Church, those in need, the sick and those who have died, and for your prayer intentions. Respond, "Lord of love, hear our prayer," leading your family in raising hands, palms up, to Jesus.
- Pray together the Lord's Prayer.
- Make the Sign of the Cross and conclude by singing the song you sang at the beginning of this celebration.





Sunday Celebrations

Celebrating Sunday Throughout the Week | **May 17, 2020**

This week's invitation is to love others as Jesus loves you. Here are four simple suggestions for continuing today's Sunday celebration.

- Extend the love of Jesus to family members and friends by sending ecards or written reminders that you are thinking of them and that Jesus loves them.
- Encourage your neighbors by doing some sidewalk chalk art this week using words and symbols of love. Work together to choose favorite Scripture passages, saint quotes, and song lyrics about love and loving others.
- Before Friday or Saturday night dinner, ask family members to gather near the "Love one another as I have loved you" reminder and to bring their hearts with them. Invite them to share who they gave their hearts to and why. See which family member has the most hearts. If you have simple costume supplies on hand, crown that person the queen or king of hearts!
- Bake and decorate heart cookies this week or bake a heart-shaped cake for Friday or Saturday night dinner.

Prepare to Celebrate *Next Sunday*

In preparation for next week's celebration, do an internet search for Catholic missionary efforts throughout the world. Here are three places to start: maryknoll.org; crs.org; and unbound.org. If you have older children in the family, invite them to share in doing the research. Be prepared to share just a bit of your findings at next week's Sunday celebration.

