



Sunday Celebrations

Seventh Sunday of Easter | **May 24, 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 17:1-11a

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

Symbol (optional)

Bowl of water; vase of spring flowers or an Easter lily; a globe or a map of the world (if available); research on Catholic missionary efforts such as Maryknoll, Catholic Relief Services, and Unbound (see last week's session)

Get Ready

Invite family members to share the names of countries they have learned about in school, heard about on television or through other media, or traveled to. Ask them to share a little something about the countries they recall.

Invite family members to again bring noisemakers with them.

Begin

- Light a candle and sing “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands,” “All the Ends of the Earth,” or “I Send You Out.”
- Make the Sign of the Cross together, then pray:
**Jesus, your family is in every part of the world.
May all people give you glory and praise now and for ever. Amen.**

Listen and Reflect

- Use your noisemakers as you again sing “Alleluia!”
- Before proclaiming today’s Gospel, invite family members to listen for what Jesus has to say about *eternal life*.
- Proclaim today’s Gospel.
- Spend a moment in silent reflection. Then invite family members to share what Jesus said about *eternal life*. (*Eternal life is knowing God and Jesus Christ.*)
- Brainstorm with family members all the ways they have learned about God and Jesus. (*Responses will vary, but may include: by hearing his Word proclaimed; by reading the Bible; by going to Church; through their parents; through another friend or relative; or through a teacher.*)
- Name the ways that family members have helped others learn about God and Jesus. (*For example, many of the activities you have been encouraged to do throughout the Easter season sessions—sidewalk chalk messages of faith; signs and banners expressing faith; written and email reminders to have faith; and other kindnesses for neighbors, elderly relatives, and friends—have been ways to share the message and the love of God and Jesus with others.*)



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Connect

- Explain that the Church's mission is to help everyone in the world learn about and come to believe in God and Jesus Christ. Missionaries are people who share their faith through preaching and works of charity. Just as your family does this in your neighborhood and with your relatives, classmates, and coworkers, many missionaries travel to other parts of the world to share Christ's message of Salvation with all people.
- Share examples of Catholic missionary efforts such as the Maryknolls, Catholic Relief Services, and Unbound. Choose examples that your children will relate to. Also remind your family of the missionary efforts your parish supports, such as an annual mission trip within the United States or abroad, support of a school or clinic in another country, or local efforts such as the community food bank or Habitat for Humanity.

Conclude

- Lead your family in praying for the people of the world who still need to hear about God and Jesus Christ, the missionaries of the Church, those in need, the sick and those who have died, and for your prayer intentions. Respond, "Savior of the world, hear our prayer," leading your family in raising hands, palms up, to God.
- Pray together the Lord's Prayer.
- Make the Sign of the Cross and conclude by singing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Invite family members to form a large circle with their arms and hands as they sing, "he's got the whole world" and to lift their hands, palms up, as they sing, "in his hands."





Sunday Celebrations

Celebrating Sunday Throughout the Week | **May 24, 2020**

Here are four simple ways to continue to celebrate the message of today's Sunday Celebration.

- Display a globe, a map, or print a world map from the internet and post it on the fridge or in a place where all family members will see it. Near the globe or map, place a small sign that says: "He's got the whole world in his hands." Encourage family members to pray this week for Catholic missionaries and for those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus.
- Throughout the coming week, as you read or hear about different countries of the world, locate together the location of those countries. If you do so before dinner each night, take a moment to pray for those countries before saying Grace Before Meals.
- If you are able to do so, make a contribution as a family to one of the Catholic missionary efforts you discussed in today's session or sponsor a child or elderly person through Unbound.
- For Friday or Saturday night dessert, bake a round cake and decorate it with the names of the various countries you talked about this week. Decorate the cake with a cross as a reminder that Jesus is the Savior of the world!

Prepare to Celebrate *Pentecost Sunday*

Next Sunday is Pentecost Sunday! Dig through your craft supplies to find red paper, fabrics, crayons, ribbon, and such. Create banners to hang on your front porch, pinwheels to plant in your front flower garden or along your walkway, and ribbon streamers to wave throughout next Sunday's celebration.

Invite every family member to think about a red garment he or she could wear to next Sunday's celebration and throughout the day.

Locate or create a template for dove-shaped sugar cookies to bake as a special dessert for next Sunday's meal. Or, prepare a special cake to celebrate the birthday of the Church!

