



Sunday Celebrations

Fifth Sunday of Lent | **March 29, 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, 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 11:1-45 (long form) or John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45
(Readings are available at uscgb.org/bible/readings.)

Symbol (optional)

A heavy stone

Get Ready

Invite family members to share times they had to move something that was heavy and hard to move. Then invite them to name things that would be heavy and hard to move today, such as their beds, the TV, the family car, or your family home!

Explain that, in today's Gospel, something heavy is moved in order to help another person. Ask everyone to listen for who that person was, and for what was moved.

Begin

- Light a candle and sing a familiar song about God's Word or about Lent, such as: "Open Our Eyes, Lord"; "Return to God"; or "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."
- Make the Sign of the Cross and pray: **God of power, we ask you to move anything that might get in the way of our hearing your Word. Open our ears and our hearts to your special message for us today. Amen.**

Listen and Reflect

- Sing a Lent Gospel Acclamation ("Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.") As you sing, lift your hands in praise to Jesus the King.
- Proclaim today's Gospel.
- Spend a moment in silent reflection. Then invite family members to share their favorite part of the Gospel and why it was their favorite part. Recall: what was moved (*the stone*); who was helped (*Lazarus*); and how Lazarus was helped (*he was brought back to life*).

Connect

- Continue the conversation by asking family members to name people your family can help this week and how you can do so. As a family, choose one or more ways to be helpful to others.

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. As you respond, "Lord, hear our prayer," lead 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 the song you sang at the beginning of this celebration of the Word or another song of your choosing.





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Celebrating Sunday Throughout the Week | **March 29, 2020**

Helping Others

1. Create a two-column chart to post on the refrigerator or in another spot family members will see.
2. Label one column “Who I/We Helped” and the other column “How I/We Helped.”
3. At the end of the week, gather the family around the list and celebrate all the ways you followed in Jesus’ example of “rolling the stone away” so that others would be helped.

Roll the Stone Away

1. Fill a basket with small stones or paper cutouts of stones. Put the basket on the coffee table, the kitchen table, or wherever family members will see it.
2. Explain that, this week, family members may remove one stone from the basket each time they help someone. Each family member should keep his or her stones until the end of the week.
3. On Friday or Saturday night, take a few minutes to gather and see how many stones each person has rolled away by his or her good actions. Celebrate with a favorite game or special dessert!

Prepare to Celebrate *Palm Sunday*

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday! We may not yet be able to gather with our parish communities for the distribution of and procession with palms, but we can prepare to celebrate by creating our own palms. Here are two simple suggestions.

Using Paper and Cardboard Tubing

1. Use green paper, or invite family members to color white paper in shades of green.
2. Cut slits 1" apart two-thirds of the way down each sheet of paper.
3. Wrap the paper around cardboard tubing, such as a toilet paper roll, or a gift wrap or paper towel roll cut down to size, letting the slit end of the paper hang over the edge of the roll.
4. Staple or tape the paper in place at the base.

Using Ribbons and Pencils or Rulers

1. Cut green ribbon into twelve-inch lengths.
2. Tie several pieces of ribbon around a pencil or ruler.

