



Ten ways to Bask in the Joy of Easter

The resurrection. A story too good to be true? Even Jesus' disciples found it difficult to believe at first. But then the reality began to sink in: He is risen from the dead! Death is not the end. Our sins are forgiven. Peace is a real possibility. Life can be filled with a hope which no one, not even the most evil of evils, can take from us. With our faith in the resurrection, we are assured life in the Spirit of the risen Christ, now and eternally....

1. Remember your awakening in faith

Think back on your journey of faith. Was there a special moment of conversion? An 'Ah ha!' moment when it all made sense? Who first taught you the story of Jesus? Get in touch with these precious easter memories and allow them to affect you in the present.

2. Adorn your home

Fill your home with easter symbols of light and life. Play 'alleluia' songs, light candles, add potted colour or a gold and white festive tablecloth. Build an 'easter garden' in the backyard with the kids. Springclean your sacred space and open up your bible to the story of the resurrection.

3. Throw a party

Now that your home is looking good, throw a 'resurrection party' for your fellow believers and invite the neighbours. It needn't be a huge bash. (Then again it might be!) Let your neighbourhood know that Christians really have something to celebrate.

4. Send out warm messages

Fill your Easter season with smiles, warm handshakes, affection, looks of love. Plant 'I love you' notes around the house where family members will find them. Or

add a special 'easter treat' in your child's lunch box. Romance your spouse in a special way this Easter.

5. Have some fun

Rumble the kids. Dance with your three-year-old. Challenge the family to a backyard cricket match. Hold a fancy-dress family meal. Anyone for a game of trivial pursuit? Share some laughs. If you can get a smile (okay, a look of amusement) out of your sceptical teenager, you've succeeded big-time.

6. Make prayer time special

Light a candle at the end of your family meal and sing an 'Alleluia' verse.

Make a pilgrimage to a sacred place or shrine. Say a prayer on your journey.

If you are grieving a sorrow, bring your tears to Jesus at the foot of the cross.

7. Touch a sorrow with life

Reach out to someone who is finding it hard to feel joyful this Easter. Drop in a card or a pot-plant to a grieving family. Invite a lonely person to a family meal. Give a practical gift (e.g., mow a lawn, mend a fence, cook a casserole) to a person who is ill or struggling.

Visit somebody who is housebound, or perhaps in hospital, or in jail.

8. Celebrate Sundays well

Every Sunday is the 'Day of the Lord', our 'weekly Easter' when we remember and celebrate the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. Make Sundays during the Easter season extra special: a time for prayer, family and friends.

9. Welcome the sun

Get up very early one morning to greet the sunrise and to read the Gospel account of the discovery of the empty tomb (Jn 20:1-9). Or find another way to prayerfully enjoy God's creation.

10. Listen to the newly baptized

Those who were baptized at the Easter Vigil have their own special 'resurrection story' to share. Invite a new member of your faith family home for a cuppa and ask about his or her story. This is a stunning way to hear the Good News proclaimed in your own living room.

Sing Alleluia!

Helpful Hint

Easter is a season, not just a Sunday. Make the most of these weeks in the Church's calendar (right up to Pentecost), a season of joy and celebration. Perhaps we don't think of 'enjoying ourselves' as a particularly spiritual thing. And yet, if the world is to recognize us as a people of the Good News, it is vital that they see and hear tangible evidence of this fact! Our joy cannot be muttered words of piety, it must be felt in the glow of our smiles, in the warmth of our welcome, in outreaching hands and hearts. Enjoy Easter!