



Ten ways to Have a Holy Holiday

What difference can our Catholic faith and values make to a holiday? Pool your best ideas. Here are ten to get you started...

1. Plan it with prayer

God can bring a dimension to our holiday that we could never have created by ourselves. Bring all holiday plans and decisions to prayer. Consult with some prayerful people.

2. Travel as pilgrims

Pilgrimage—the tradition of travelling to a sacred place, praying as one goes—is a beautiful practice in our faith heritage. Why not look at your holiday travel as a kind of pilgrimage? Include some prayerful stops (e.g., a visit to an historic church, or to the home of a holy person) and say the rosary or other prayers on your journey.

3. Bless your holiday abode

Upon arrival at your destination, pause to thank God for getting you there safely. Pray together (perhaps at your first meal) that this 'home away from home' will be a place of joy and peace. Invite those gathered to express their thoughts and feelings about the holiday period ahead.

4. Live your values

Especially for the young, holidays are an opportunity to try new and exciting activities with new friends. Wonderful! But be discerning. Choose activities and relationships that draw you closer to, not away from, your Christian values.

5. Make it to Mass!

You're on holidays and it's Sunday. Finding the nearest church, checking Mass times and organizing the kids may not be easy. But make the effort. Keeping the Lord's Day holy is all part of our commitment to God and to each other. In fact, to celebrate the Eucharist with a 'foreign' local community can be a refreshing eye-opener to the unity and diversity of God's people.

6. Enjoy God's creation and treat it well

A holiday is often a chance to appreciate the magnificence of God's creation: a magical sunset, a mountain-top view, the sounds of the bush. Soak up God's glory! Let your inner thoughts of awe and wonder find expression in verbal praise and thanksgiving. Teach your children that prayer is as natural as watching the surf.

7. Share fond memories, as you make new ones

Holidays often allow us time and space for things which are squeezed out of our normal weekly routine: time to reminisce, revisit fond memories of holidays gone by, remember loved ones

who are no longer with us. Perhaps your holiday can bring healing to your past and hope to your future.

8. Share your faith

You're far from home and you're a committed Christian. In some sense that makes you a travelling apostle! Be alert to everyday ways to share your faith and gospel values with people you meet on your holiday.

9. Mealtime magic

Mealtimes on holidays are more relaxed than usual. People sit around the table and talk for longer. Capitalize on this opportunity; it is a chance to enjoy some laughs, share memories, learn more about each other, make new resolutions, hold values-oriented discussions and pray together.

10. Enjoy. Simply enjoy!

Real joy is 'joy in the Lord'! You don't have to be wealthy to have a fantastic holiday. Simplify your holiday lifestyle. Is there a way to share your wealth and resources to help somebody else who would enjoy a much-needed break?

Helpful Hint

The tourist brochures tell us that holidays are supposed to be perfect; but we all know that they can be stressful. It may mean travelling with a crying baby, coping with a sullen teenager or feeling trapped by the expectations of a parent. For others, holidays can be a lonely time. Let go of the expectation that we 'should' be happy on our holiday all the time. Feeling sad, pressured, anxious is all part of being human, even on holidays. What's important is that God is with us every moment of our lives. Just because we are having 'time off', doesn't mean that God is.

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