

*celebrate
the beasts*

YOUR SUPER SIMPLE GUIDE TO
CELEBRATING THE LITURGICAL
CALENDAR

BY KATIEWARNER.COM

WHY CELEBRATE FEASTS?

In their book, *The Feasts: How the Church Year Forms Us As Catholics*, Cardinal Donald Wuerl and Mike Aquilina write, **“Christian life revolves around the calendar that Christians share. The calendar and its feasts remind us who we are. If we want to know ourselves, it is important for us to imagine how this works – how feasts form us, what they teach us, how they guide and direct our emotions, our thoughts, and our spiritual growth.”**



Sadly, many Catholics today don't even celebrate solemnities and feast days at home throughout the liturgical year (Christmas and Easter usually excepted). But why not? **Celebrating the feast days of the Church not only “directs our spiritual growth,” but it’s just plain FUN.** Being Catholic offers us opportunities for penance and reflection, for certain, but it also gives us lots of reasons to party...and that’s where solemnity and feast day celebrations come in. So, if you aren’t already celebrating feast days on your own or at home with your family, here is some simple help to get you started.

HOW TO CELEBRATE THE FEASTS

1

Decide which feasts that you'll make a special effort to celebrate at home. There are a lot of feasts days in the

Church, so I recommend you first focus on celebrating solemnities, feasts days of the highest rank in the liturgical calendar. This means a rough average of a couple of celebrations per month, which is doable for most of us! You can also add in a few feast days that may be particularly meaningful to your family. For example, we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at our house, since she's always been a special intercessor for us. Another good idea is to celebrate the days of the saints whom your children are named after, or a confirmation saint day.

2

Put them on the calendar and plan ahead. Take note of when the feast or solemnity will occur. NOTE: Some

dates fluctuate a little from year to year, but I've given you a rough date guide on the next of page. Double check before celebrating (on the USCCB's website, on your diocesan website, or in a liturgical calendar - there are so many great ones to choose from!) in case a feast is moved because it conflicts with another observance in the Church. This happens! Circle, highlight, or put a check mark next to the feasts that you'll aim to celebrate on the coming pages, remembering to aim for the solemnities first. Set a digital or written reminder a few days before the feast to get your celebration activity, food, prayers, songs, and so forth in order.

Solemnity Calendar

(some dates subject to change; please reference USCCB liturgical calendar or a great liturgical planner!))

January 1 – Mary, The Holy Mother of God

January 6 (or closest Sunday) – Epiphany of the Lord

March 19 – Saint Joseph

March 25 – Annunciation of the Lord

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

Sunday after Easter – Divine Mercy

40 days after Easter – Ascension of Jesus (this celebration's date can vary by diocese – check with yours!)

50 days after Easter – Pentecost Sunday

Sunday after Pentecost – Most Holy Trinity

Sunday after Trinity Sunday – Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)

Friday after Corpus Christi – Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

June 24 – Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

June 29 – Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles

August 15 – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

November 1 – All Saints Day

Last Sunday of Liturgical Year – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (Christ the King)

December 8 – Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Other Popular Days to Commemorate

January 25 - Conversion of St. Paul

Fill in your family's saint days, baptism days, or name days with dates:

Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday

March 17 - St. Patrick

4th Sunday of Easter - Good Shepherd Sunday

September 14 - Exaltation of the Holy Cross

September 29 - St. Michael the Archangel

October 2 - Guardian Angels

November 2 - Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, All Souls' Day

Advent

December 6 - St. Nicholas

December 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe

December 30 - Holy Family

Now visit the blank planning page and Favorite Resources page at the end of this guide for help in planning your celebrations/commemorations of these special days!

HOW TO CELEBRATE THE FEASTS

3

Learn about the solemnity or feast you'll be celebrating. It helps to know at least some basic

information about the feast day, so you can understand why you're celebrating and share that with your family. Read some articles about the history of the feast day, ways in which the Church celebrates it, and ideas for bringing the feast day to life in your home in a fun, practical way. Use the ideas, articles, and resource recommendations in the rest of this guide to help you in learning about these celebrations! (Please note that the internet is ever-changing and links sometimes break. If a link doesn't work, try to type the title in a Google search, or reference one of the favorite websites/blogs/books listed for info instead. Also, the GREEN links are clickable and follow through to related content. The BLACK text contains suggestions, but not meant to be clicked on.)



4

Prepare your feast day celebration(s). Put your grocery list or craft supply list together a few days ahead and shop for what you need. Select any prayers or songs you might pray/sing on that day and print out copies of the prayer or lyrics for the family. I've included fun ideas to celebrate in this guide, along with some of my favorite websites and blogs to help me in this prep stage. JUST PICK ONE OR A FEW things to do - know what you can reasonably do as a family.

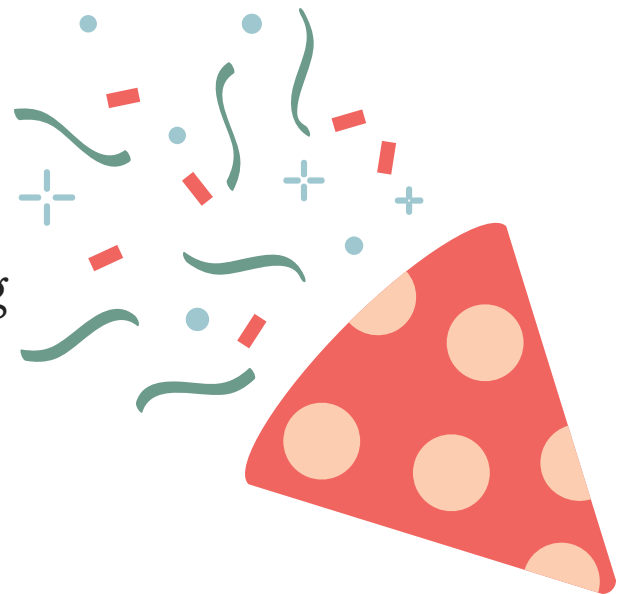
HOW TO CELEBRATE THE FEASTS

5

Now, celebrate the feast! Make a big deal about it on the feast day or solemnity that you've prepared for (or, just aim to make it seem a little less like an ordinary day and more like a special day, because it is)! Get the family excited for the planned festivities and try and be in good moods as you celebrate throughout the day. Treat it like the holiday (holy day) it is, enjoying the celebrations, however complex or simple they may be.

Sometimes, though, even the best laid plans to celebrate a feast day are hard to execute amidst the unexpected twists and turns of daily family life. I recommend that as a backup plan, you do at least one small thing to acknowledge the feast day at home. If it's a Marian feast day, pray a decade of the Rosary. If it's not a Holy Day of Obligation, go to Mass anyway.

These simple ways to celebrate don't take any preparation, but help turn your focus to the importance of this day on the Church calendar, and bring your family one step closer to living a vibrant, liturgical, and fun Catholic life at home.



Advent

Advent begins the Church's liturgical year, encompassing the four Sundays leading up to the Solemnity of Christmas, and is a time of preparation that directs us to ready ourselves not only for the coming of Christ this December 25, but also for His coming at the end of time. As the Directory on Popular Piety and Divine Liturgy describes, "Advent is a time of waiting, conversion, and hope."

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

Read This

[10 Things You Need to Know About Advent](#) by Jimmy Akin

[Bishop Barron Advent Reflections](#)

Adult books:

[The Advent of Christ: Scripture Reflections to Prepare for Christmas](#) by Dr. Edward Sri

[Advent and Christmas with Fulton J. Sheen](#) by Judy Bauer (editor)

Children's books:

Grab my Advent/Christmas book recommendations for kids here:

[The Catholic Children's Picture Book List](#) (*This is not anywhere close to an exhaustive list, but a great place to start!*)

Try This

[Advent wreath](#)

[Jesse Tree](#) (if you're not the crafty type, you can buy beautiful ornament sets for this on Etsy!)

[Giving Manger/Good Deed Manger](#) (you can also make one or buy at a Christian bookstore)

[Advent calendars](#)

[St. Nicholas Day & St. Lucy Day](#)

[Nativity set](#) (but wait to put Jesus in at Christmas, and wise men arrive on the Epiphany!)

[Keeping the tree simple](#) (we decorate with ornaments on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning)

[Advent Crafts and Activities for Kids](#)

Christmas

On Christmas Day, we celebrate with immense joy the Word of God coming into our world. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14). In the Christmas story we see God's outpouring of love and generosity - bringing His Son into our world, born of a young virgin, to save us from our sin and open the gates of heaven to us.

We also celebrate Christmas as the story of a family. Dr. Scott Hahn explains, "The Christmas story has an unconventional hero - not a warrior, not a worldly conqueror, not an individual at all, but rather a family. The family is the key to Christmas. The family is the key to Christianity. Pope Saint John Paul II noted that everything good - history, humanity, salvation - 'passes by way of the family.' When God came to save us, he made salvation inseparable from family life, manifest in family life."

Read This

[9 Things You Need to Know About Christmas](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[Joy to the World: How Christ's Coming Changed Everything \(And Still Does\)](#) by Scott Hahn

Children's books:

Grab some of my

Advent/Christmas book

recommendations for kids here:

[The Catholic Children's Picture Book List](#)

Try This

Prepare a [Christ candle](#) as a family

Make a birthday cake for Jesus and sing Happy Birthday together.

Make sure every family member receives some faith-based gift for Christmas.

Watch [this commercial](#) to remind you that Jesus is the reason for the season.

Plan to celebrate all days of Christmas (leading up to Epiphany) with [fun family activities](#).

Mary, Mother of God

"The Mother of God is the first of the blessed...In the words of the liturgy: 'without losing the glory of virginity, [she] brought forth into the world the eternal light, Jesus Christ our Lord' (Preface I of the Blessed Virgin Mary). Mary is the mother and model of the Church, who...offers herself to God as the 'good soil' in which he can continue to accomplish his mystery of salvation." -Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Today we celebrate Mary, Mother of God, who was declared "Theotokos" - God-bearer - at the Council of Ephesus in the fifth century. The Virgin Mary was given the most honorable title of "Mother of God" early on in Church history, as this name reflects our belief in the Incarnation. Through Mary, Jesus, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, took on human flesh (John 1:14). In 407, St. John Chrysostom wrote, "It is truly just to proclaim you blessed, O Mother of God, who are most blessed, all pure and Mother of our God...You who, without losing your virginity, gave birth to the Word of God. You who are truly the Mother of God."

Read This

9 Things You Should Know about how the Church celebrates January 1st by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

Walking with Mary: A Biblical Journey from Nazareth to the Cross by Edward Sri

Children's books:

Mary: The Mother of Jesus by Tomie dePaola

Hail Mary by Deneux and Bus

Try This

Have every person in the family choose one of [Mary's beautiful virtues](#) to model more intentionally this year (ex: purity, humility patience...).

Sing a Marian hymn, like the [Salve Regina](#).

In honor of the Blessed Mother and her example of heroic motherhood (especially in the face of suffering), help another mother who may be suffering or in need. Consider donating to a crisis pregnancy center or [pro-life organization](#), making a meal for the mother of a newborn, etc.

Epiphany

On this feast of the Epiphany, we celebrate the end of the Christmas season, with the visit of the Wise Men, the Magi, to the infant Jesus. The Epiphany is the manifestation of Jesus to the entire world, as the Savior of all people.

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh" (Matthew 2:10-11).

Today we stand in awe before the Christ-child, the King, who makes His glory known to those who seek Him. The Magi remind us that all who authentically encounter Christ are changed. Like the Wise Men, we should be reminded to seek Christ with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength, so He can continue to guide us toward our heavenly home, where He hopes that all will come to adore Him for eternity.

Read This

Try This

[9 Things You Need to Know About Epiphany](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives](#) by Pope Benedict XVI

Children's books:

[The Legend of Old Befana](#) by Tomie dePaola

[We Three Kings](#) by Gennady Spirin

[Do the Epiphany house blessing.](#)

Do a procession of the three kings: Move the wise men figurines in your home to the manger, in front of the infant Jesus. Read the Gospel in front of the manger.

Bake or buy a King's Cake, which you can call a "Three King's Cake" to share at a family meal.

Give the kids in the family small gifts, like chocolate coins in gold foil, to commemorate the gifts of the Magi.

St. Joseph

"St. Joseph truly is the silent figure of the New Testament. For instance, the Gospel does not record one spoken verse for St. Joseph. Nevertheless, what this great saint did in his life for God speaks volumes." -Fr. William Saunders

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus and husband of Mary, was a man of great trust, selflessness, integrity, humility and obedience. Pope Pius IX declared him patron of the universal Catholic Church, and the faithful also celebrate St. Joseph as the patron saint of workers, fathers, families, and travelers.

St. Bernardine of Siena wrote: "“He was chosen by the eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of his greatest treasures, namely, his divine Son and Mary, Joseph’s wife. He carried out this vocation with complete fidelity until at last God called him, saying: ‘Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.’” Let us pray that through the intercession of St. Joseph, we too can follow God's will with everything that we are, becoming one of God's good and faithful servants.

Read This

Try This

St. Joseph: The Model of Manhood
by Sam Guzman

Guardian of the Redeemer by Saint
Pope John Paul II

Adult book:

[Life and Glories of St. Joseph](#) by
Edward Healy Thompson

Children's book:

[Good St. Joseph](#) by Fr. Lawrence
Lovasik

Pray the [Litany of St. Joseph](#).

Go to Mass.

Wear red and cook an Italian meal. (St. Joseph's Day is a big feast for Italians. In Middle Ages, the Sicilians were saved from a serious drought through the intercession of St. Joseph and God's intervention.)

Hang one of these [creative printable posters](#) about St. Joseph in the house.

Annunciation

On this wonderful Solemnity of the Annunciation, we celebrate the Incarnation of Christ and Mary's "yes" to carry Jesus in her womb, bearing God's Son to the world. When the angel Gabriel came to Mary, he called her "full of grace" and told her she was chosen to be the Mother of the Lord. Mary responded in willing submission to God's plan. Her fiat, "be it done unto me," was essential to God's plan of salvation.

St. Josemaria Escriva wrote, "Following her example of obedience to God, we can learn to serve delicately without being slavish. In Mary we don't find the slightest trace of the attitude of the foolish virgins, who obey, but thoughtlessly. Our Lady listens attentively to what God wants, ponders what she doesn't fully understand and asks about what she doesn't know. Then she gives herself completely to doing God's will: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to your word."

Read This

[8 Things to Know and Share about the Annunciation](#) by Jimmy Akin

[Mary's Faith in the Light of the Mystery of the Annunciation](#) by Pope Benedict XVI

Adult book:

[Hail, Holy Queen: The Mother of God in the Word of God](#) by Scott Hahn

Children's book:

[Mary's Story](#) by Mélanie Grandgirard (board book)

Try This

Pray the [Angelus](#).

Go to Mass.

Do something to support the pro-life movement. (Say a Rosary for the end to abortion at home or in front of an abortion clinic, donate to a pro-life charity, volunteer for a pro-life cause.)

Make waffles! (Sweden considers the Feast of the Annunciation "Waffle Day.")

Read the story of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) as a family.

Lent

"Lent is like a long 'retreat' during which we can turn back into ourselves and listen to the voice of God, in order to defeat the temptations of the Evil One. It is a period of spiritual 'combat' which we must experience alongside Jesus, not with pride and presumption, but using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our Baptism."

-Pope Benedict XVI

"Lent is the forty-day liturgical season of fasting, special prayer and almsgiving in preparation for Easter. The number "forty" is first noted in the Canons of Nicaea (A.D. 325), likely in imitation of Jesus' fast in the desert before His public ministry (with Old Testament precedent in Moses and Elijah). By the fourth century, in most of the West, it referred to six days' fast per week of six weeks (Sundays were excluded); in the seventh century the days from Ash Wednesday through the First Sunday were added to make the number forty." - from Our Sunday Visitor

Read This

[9 Things You Need to Know About Lent by Jimmy Akin](#)

Adult book:

[Characters of the Passion by Fulton Sheen](#)

Children's books:

Grab some of my Lent/Easter book recommendations for kids here:

[The Catholic Children's Picture Book List](#)

Try This

[My Favorite Thing to Do For Lent](#)

[20 Lenten Resources for the Whole Family](#)

[The Guide to All Things Holy Week by Catholic All Year](#)

Easter

During the Holy Triduum, we commemorate Christ's passion, death, and glorious resurrection, culminating in the beginning of the Easter celebration at the Saturday evening vigil. At this beautiful liturgy, the Easter Exsultet is proclaimed, and with eager anticipation we hear: "Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice, arrayed with the lightning of his glory, let this holy building shake with joy, filled with the mighty voices of the peoples...O wonder of your humble care for us! O love, O charity beyond all telling, to ransom a slave you gave away your Son! O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the Death of Christ! O happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer! O truly blessed night, worthy alone to know the time and hour when Christ rose from the underworld!"

Easter is the greatest of the solemnities, the highest feast of the Church year. On Easter we celebrate the fact that Christ has conquered death and opened the doors to eternal life! On Easter, we renew our baptismal promises, welcome new members into the Church, and begin a 50-day celebration of this newness of life in Christ which we have received.

Read This

[8 Things You Need to Know About Easter Sunday](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week](#) by Pope Benedict XVI

Children's books:

[The Cross in the Egg](#) by Shirley Taylor

[That Grand Easter Day!](#) by Lord and Trunfio

Try This

Commemorate each day of the [Triduum](#) to prepare for Easter Sunday.

Include religious items like Catholic books, holy cards, and medals in your Easter baskets.

Hunt for [Resurrection Eggs](#) (a great way to learn about the story of the Passion and Resurrection).

Do some of these [things to keep celebrating Easter](#), which lasts 50 days!

Divine Mercy

St. John Paul II, in his homily for the canonization Mass of Sr. Mary Faustina Kowalska (St. Faustina) in 2000, the year he decreed that the Sunday after Easter would be the celebration of Divine Mercy, said, "Divine Mercy reaches human beings through the heart of Christ crucified: 'My daughter, say that I am love and mercy personified', Jesus will ask Sr. Faustina (Diary, p. 374). Christ pours out this mercy on humanity through the sending of the Spirit who, in the Trinity, is the Person-Love. And is not mercy love's 'second name' (cf. Dives in Misericordia, n. 7), understood in its deepest and most tender aspect, in its ability to take upon itself the burden of any need and, especially, in its immense capacity for forgiveness?"

It was Jesus Himself who asked St. Faustina to have a feast dedicated to His Divine Mercy the Sunday after the Solemnity of Easter. Now as a Church we are blessed to remember the infinite mercy of our loving God, who died for us and continues to shower His mercy on us. May we, and all of the souls in need of His mercy, remain open to this great gift.

Read This

9 Things You Need to Know About Divine Mercy Sunday by Jimmy Akin

Adult books:

Diary: *Divine Mercy in My Soul* by Saint Faustina

You Did it to Me by Fr. Gaitley

Children's book:

St. Faustina Kowalska: Messenger of Mercy by Susan Wallace

Try This

Pray the *Chaplet of Divine Mercy* on your own or as a family.

Learn about the *image of the Divine Mercy* and print or purchase one for your home.

Receive an *Indulgence for the Feast of Divine Mercy*.

Listen to the *Second Greatest Story Ever Told*

Ascension

On this special feast during the Easter season, we celebrate our Lord's ascension into heaven. For forty days after his Resurrection, Jesus taught His disciples about the kingdom of God and instructed them to go out to the whole world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15). On this Solemnity of the Ascension (officially "Ascension Thursday," but in many places celebrated on the Seventh Sunday of Easter), we acknowledge the glorification of the Son of God and our participation in the mission of evangelization to all people.

In John's Gospel, we read: "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man" (John 3:13). Now, in heaven, Jesus exercises his high priesthood at the righthand of God. Meanwhile, on earth, the Church is given the task of carrying on Jesus' ministry on earth, by preaching the Good News and inviting others to come in contact with Christ and His saving grace through the sacraments.

Read This

[7 Things Pope Francis Wants You to Know about Jesus' Ascension](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[The Gift: Discovering the Holy Spirit In Catholic Tradition](#) by Alan Schreck

Children's book:

[The Catholic Bible for Children](#) (Ignatius/Magnificat) or read the Ascension story from any great children's Bible!

Try This

Have a picnic on a mountain (or some high location).

Pray the [novena to the Holy Spirit](#) (begins Ascension Thursday).

Have poultry to remember how Christ "flew" to heaven. (This was a custom in the Middle Ages). Or make cupcakes with [cloud frosting](#).

Make an [Ascension craft](#) with your kids!

Pentecost

Fifty days after the Passover, Jesus' disciples gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish feast of Pentecost, commemorating the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai and celebrating the year's harvest. This first Pentecost after Easter - the events of which we remember today as Christians - was different.

(Read Acts 2:2-7)

On this special day, we remember Pentecost as the "birthday of the Church," when three thousand souls "were added that day" (Acts 2:41). Pentecost, a feast uniquely connected to the Holy Spirit, should remind us that the Holy Spirit is still guiding the Church today, and that we as members of Christ's body - the Church - benefit from this outpouring of the Spirit, whose gifts and fruits strengthen us as missionary disciples of the Christian faith.

Read This

8 Things to Know and Share About Pentecost by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

Prayers to the Holy Spirit: Power and Light for Your Life by Bert Ghezzi

Children's book:

The Catholic Bible for Children (Ignatius/Magnificat) or read the Pentecost story from any great children's Bible! *Stay tuned for a Holy Spirit-themed book for kids that we will release in 2019!*

Try This

Discover which gift of the Holy Spirit you should pray for this year.

Wear and decorate your house in red.

Pray the Third Glorious Mystery of the Rosary or the [Come, Holy Spirit prayer](#).

Make a Pentecost cake (decorate with white and red) and sing "Happy Birthday" to the Church. (Here are some [additional meal ideas](#) for Pentecost Sunday.)

Hang one of these [creative printable posters](#) about Pentecost.

Most Holy Trinity

"The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching...The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, reveals himself to men 'and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin'" (CCC 234).

As Christians, we have always worshipped God as a Trinity: Three Persons in One God. Though we celebrate the Holy Trinity - a mystery beyond our human understanding - at Mass every week, since the Mass is ultimately a prayer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Christians began celebrating a day specifically dedicated to the Trinity, and in 1334, Pope John XXII proclaimed that Trinity Sunday would be an official feast day within the Latin Church. Now, the Sunday after Pentecost, we pause to reflect on the great truth and mystery of the Holy Trinity, prefigured in the Old Testament and revealed through Jesus Christ in the New, and we look forward to the day when we will come face to face with the Triune God in heaven someday.

Read This

[12 Things to Know And Share About the Holy Trinity](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[The One Thing is Three: How the Most Holy Trinity Explains Everything](#) by Fr. Michael Gaitley

Children's book:

[God is Three Persons](#) by Dr. Craig

Try This

Make the Sign of the Cross and pray the [Glory Be](#), remembering your baptism when you were brought into the Church in the name of the Trinity.

Cook or eat something that incorporates the number three (examples: tres leches cake, tricolor pasta, neapolitan ice cream, etc.).

Do a [Trinity craft](#) with your kids.

Watch Bishop Barron's quick video: [What is the Trinity?](#)

Corpus Christi

The Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic faith. As Catholics, we have always believed in the Real Presence, that Jesus Christ is truly present - Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity - in the form of bread and wine in the Holy Eucharist. Even though we celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday, we stop to rejoice in a special way on this solemnity for the great gift of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi in Latin), which Jesus instituted on Holy Thursday (Mark 14:22-26).

The Eucharist is the most beautiful thing we will ever see in this world, because the Eucharist is literally Jesus Christ. He has given the gift of Himself to the Church, and we can commune with Him in a special way every time we receive Him in His Most Precious Body and Blood. What an amazing privilege this is - to have this most intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. When you receive our Lord this Corpus Christi Sunday, thank God for His enduring promise to remain with you always, and make yourself a fitting, holy tabernacle to receive Jesus and to share Him with others.

Read This

[Is the Eucharist Truly Jesus' Body and Blood?](#) by Tim Staples

Adult book:

[Jesus Shock](#) by Peter Kreeft

Children's books:

[The Weight of a Mass](#) by Nobisso and Szegedi

[Jesus Speaks to Me on My First Communion](#) by Burrin and Casco

[I Went to Mass](#) by Warner and Whalen (available Fall 2018!)

Try This

Watch this brief commercial on the power of the Holy Eucharist.

Participate in a Eucharistic procession, or a Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction.

Sing or recite the [Pange Lingua](#).

Do this [Monstrance craft](#) with your kids.

Commit to going to Eucharistic adoration this week.

Sacred Heart

The heart of Jesus has a major role in the story of salvation history. The Lord revealed Himself as "gentle and lowly in heart" (Matt 11:29), and we see throughout the story of Christ's life, passion, death, and resurrection the great tenderness, love, and mercy that flow from the heart of Jesus Christ onto all humanity.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been practiced for a long time, but the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alcoque, in particular, helped make the devotion become universally recognized and celebrated.

St. Margaret Mary called the Sacred Heart of Jesus "an abyss of all blessings,...an abyss of joy in which all of us can immerse our sorrows,...an abyss of love to meet our every need."

Read This

Why You Should Practice Devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

by Deacon Mike Bickerstaff

Adult book:

[Consoling the Heart of Jesus](#) by Fr. Michael Gaitley

Children's book:

[The Miracles of Jesus](#) by Tomie De Paola (not Sacred Heart-themed, but this is a great time to read about Jesus' tenderness, love, and mercy toward all.

Try This

Do the Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart.

Pray the [Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus](#).

Learn about the [12 Promises of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary](#).

Make a [Sacred Heart cake](#).

Purchase or print a Sacred Heart image for your home, or have your house enshrined to the Sacred Heart of Jesus this week!

Birth of John the Baptist

Most saints' feast days are celebrated on the day of their death, the day that they entered into heaven. Not so with St. John the Baptist. On June 24th, we celebrate the birth of this great saint, prophet, and cousin of Jesus.

St. Augustine wrote: "But for John the day of his birth, the day on which he began this mortal life is likewise sacred. The reason for this is, of course, that the Lord willed to announce to men His own coming through the Baptist, lest if He appeared suddenly, they would fail to recognize Him. John represented the Old Covenant and the Law. Therefore he preceded the Redeemer, even as the Law preceded and heralded the new dispensation of grace."

Jesus considered John the greatest of those who preceded him, saying, ""This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.' I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 27-28). We, too, should look to John's greatness as an example for us, for his greatness came from his unwavering dedication to paving the way for others to have a relationship with Jesus Christ, and knowing his own humble role in building the Kingdom.

Read This

Who Was John the Baptist? 11 Things to Know and Share by Jimmy Akin

John the Baptist: a Model for the Church - excerpts from Pope Francis' homily

Children's book:
Loyola Kids Book of Heroes by Welborn and Konstantinov

Try This

Display one of these great printables and indulge in some Nativity of John the Baptist-themed treats.

Have a bonfire, incorporating this blessing. John was a "burning and a shining light" for Jesus.

Read about the birth of St. John the Baptist in Luke 1.

Sing or read this hymn as a family.

Saints Peter and Paul

Pope Benedict XVI said, "The Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul is at the same time a grateful memorial of the great witnesses of Jesus Christ and a solemn confession for the Church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic. It is first and foremost a feast of catholicity."

Can you even imagine the Church today without the work of St. Peter and St. Paul in the earliest days of Christianity? Today, as Catholics, we celebrate the lives of two devoted apostles of Jesus Christ - St. Peter, the first pope, and St. Paul, the great 'apostle to the Gentiles.' Both of these well-loved saints also remind us that though we may be flawed, though we may sometimes say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing, God still has big plans for us, and if we rely on His grace, we can accomplish great things in His Name.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
-2 Timothy 4:7

Read This

[Saint Peter and Saint Paul](#) by Fr. George Rutler

Adult book:

[The Apostles](#) by Pope Benedict XVI

Children's books:

[Catholic Saints for Children](#) by Du Bouëtiez and Lefebvre

[Picture Book of Saints](#) by Lovasik

Try This

Watch this [short video](#) from Bishop Barron about Sts. Peter and Paul.

Do this "[footprinting](#)" activity for kids.

Have fish for dinner or make [apostle cookies](#).

Pray the [Litany of Saint Peter](#).

Pray the [Litany of Saint Paul](#).

Do one of these children's [crafts](#) for Saint Peter and Saint Paul's feast day!

Assumption

The Solemnity of the Assumption is the greatest of Our Lady's feast days. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI said of the Assumption, "Mary is taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, and with God and in God she is Queen of heaven and earth. And is she really so remote from us? The contrary is true. Precisely because she is with God and in God, she is very close to each one of us."

On November 1, 1950 Pope Pius XII solemnly defined in "Munificentissimus Deus" that the "Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory" (44).

Our Blessed Mother, who was so beautifully honored by her son through her Assumption into heavenly glory, is now our special advocate in heaven, watching over us as we work to be conformed more fully to Christ and be united with her Son in heaven someday, too. In Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's words, "We may be sure of it: from on high, Mary follows our footsteps with gentle concern, dispels the gloom in moments of darkness and distress, reassures us with her motherly hand."

Read This

[The Assumption of Mary: 12 Things to Know and Share](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[Behold Your Mother](#) by Tim Staples

Children's books:

[Mary the Mother of Jesus](#) by Tomie dePaola

[Saintly Rhymes for Modern Times](#) by Meghan Bausch

Try This

Pray the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary.

Read the [Magnificat](#).

Sing a Marian hymn like "[Immaculate Mary](#)."

Participate in the [Blessing of Herbs](#).

Bake some bread that has to "rise."

All Saints

On the Solemnity of All Saints, the Church celebrates the thousands of saints whom we know are in heaven - those who have been formally declared saints - as well as the countless other saints who, though not officially recognized by the Church through the canonization process, are fully alive in God's presence. Our commemoration of the saints and martyrs - both known and unknown - inspires us to reflect on the heroically holy lives they led while on earth and the impact the saints continue to have through their intercession in heaven.

Various areas within the early Church began commemorating the saints and martyrs after the legalization of Christianity in 313. Eventually, a common feast day arose to honor the many Christians who were martyred during times of severe persecution of the Church. We now celebrate this special day in the Church on November 1, but we also ask for the intercession of the saints year-round, as our friends in heaven, who can offer their own prayers to God for our intentions.

All of us are called to be saints, by living holy lives, excelling in virtue, and by following God's will. "Life holds only one tragedy: not to have been a saint." -

Léon Bloy

Read This

Try This

[All Saints and All Souls](#) by Fr. William Saunders

Pray or sing the [Litany of Saints](#).

Adult book:
[Angels & Saints](#) by Scott Hahn

Read a book by a saint.

Children's books:
[Cloud of Witnesses](#) by Warner and Whalen (available Fall 2018)

Check out these [saint crafts and saint party ideas for kids](#).

[Loyola Kids Book of Saints](#) by Welborn and Holmberg

Dress in one of these [creative saint costumes](#).

Christ the King

In 1925, Pope Pius XI added this solemnity to the liturgical calendar, stating "that the Catholic Church, which is the kingdom of Christ on earth, destined to be spread among all men and all nations, should with every token of veneration salute her Author and Founder in her annual liturgy as King and Lord, and as King of Kings."

At the end of every liturgical year, the Church celebrates the glorious reality that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. All of the feast days leading up to and culminating in this solemnity remind us of Christ's kingship over the Church, the world, and each one of our lives.

This King whom we adore today and every day--God incarnate--is a king unlike any other the world has ever seen. Jesus, the King, led his people not by political prowess but by humble service and submission to God's will, giving His life on a cross to redeem the world and to show His Kingship over death. In this climactic Sunday in our Church calendar, we celebrate the God who governs all things, the King who showed His royal power by rising from the dead and then humbly giving Himself to us in the Eucharist. What a king He is: Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, our Lord of Lords, our King!

Read This

The Solemnity of Christ the King by Fr. George Rutler

Adult book:

Life of Christ by Fulton Sheen

Children's books:

Jesus by Wildsmith

The Parables of Jesus by Tomie dePaola (not specifically Christ the King-themed but a good time to read about Jesus and the kingdom!

Try This

Pray the *Litany to Christ the King*.

Participate in your parish's Christ the King procession.

Make a cake in the shape of a crown or a "King cake."

Follow the requirements to obtain a **plenary indulgence** on the Feast of Christ the King.

Immaculate Conception

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, we celebrate Mary being conceived without sin. By God's grace, to make her a holy tabernacle to carry the Lord Jesus, Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin and from committing personal sin. As the Catechism states: "The 'splendour of an entirely unique holiness' by which Mary is 'enriched from the first instant of her conception' comes wholly from Christ: she is 'redeemed, in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son'. The Father blessed Mary more than any other created person 'in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places' and chose her 'in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love' (CCC 492).

On this feast day, we remember Mary as a pure light to lead us toward Christ.

In Pope Benedict XVI's words, "Mary thus stands before us as a sign of comfort, encouragement and hope. She turns to us, saying: 'Have the courage to dare with God! Try it! Do not be afraid of him! Have the courage to risk with faith! Have the courage to risk with goodness! Have the courage to risk with a pure heart! Commit yourselves to God, then you will see that it is precisely by doing so that your life will become broad and light, not boring but filled with infinite surprises, for God's infinite goodness is never

depleted!"

Read This

Try This

[8 Things You Need to Know About the Immaculate Conception](#) by Jimmy Akin

Adult book:

[The World's First Love: Mary, Mother of God](#) by Fulton Sheen

Children's books:

[Catholic Treasure Box Books](#) by Maryknoll Sisters

Pray the Magnificat, the Hail Mary, or the Rosary.

Plan to do a "Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration" with Fr. Gaitley's book, [33 Days to Morning Glory](#).

Cook a meal with all white foods for dinner (white symbolizes purity).

Do some [Immaculate Conception crafts and activities](#) with your children.

Notes about this feast/commemoration:

Read This

Try This

Blank Planning Page

Favorite Resources

A selection of helpful resources to assist you in celebrating feasts all year

Blogs/Websites

USCCB Liturgical Calendar

The Kennedy
Adventures

Shower of Roses

Catholic Icing

Elizabeth Clare

Catholic All Year

Catholic Cuisine

Pinterest (search:
liturgical living or a
particular feast day)

Katie Warner

Books

The Feasts: How the Church Year
Forms Us as Catholics by Wuerl and
Aquilina

The Catholic Home: Celebrations
and Traditions for Holidays, Feast
Days, and Every Day by Gould

The Catholic All Year
Compendium by Tierney

Catholic Household Blessings and
Prayers by U.S. Bishops

The Year and Our Children: Catholic
Family Celebrations for Every Season
by Newland

A Continual Feast: A Cookbook to
Celebrate the Joys of Family and
Faith Throughout the Christian Year
by Vitz

(c) KatieWarner.com

Do not replicate or distribute without permission
Resource page may contain affiliate links.