

**Parent Notes:**

This Easter will be unlike the many Easter's we have celebrated before. All usual routines and many traditions will be done away with. This gives us the opportunity for reflection:

What is it that has made Easter important to me in the past? Was my focus in the right place? To who's benefit do I celebrate Easter, to honour and worship God or for the benefit of my traditions?

The beginnings of our Easter story go all the way back to Moses and the Israelites in Egypt. It was here that the first Passover was celebrated. The observance of this Passover festival is when Jesus has His last meal with His disciples. There is a theme in these two stories that we will focus on in the lessons for this Sunday: Hearing!

The Israelites heard Moses' instructions and then had a choice to act and obey or suffer the consequences. Jesus had heard and knew the Father's Will through prayer and chose to lay down his own life for the will of the Father and all mankind. Hearing requires an action.

*James 1:22*

*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

As parents I'd like to encourage you in teaching your children to listen and obey, especially quick obedience. This is not just for their benefit (and yours) as they grow up, but it also has spiritual significance in that it teaches your child to be obedient to God's voice when they hear Him speak.

If we talk about hearing, then we also need to question 'what' we hear. I'd like to challenge the stories you tell your child during Easter. If you tell them the story of the Easter Bunny and at the same time you tell them the story of Jesus but in a few years you have to tell them that the Easter Bunny is just a story, do you think it will make them question the validity of your stories about Jesus? *Let your words be truthful and honest at all times* so that your child develops the knowledge that they can trust you and believe what you say.

*Have a blessed Easter and may God's favour continue to rest on you.*

**Toddler group** (Pray before you start, for wisdom in what to teach and for God to water the seed of His Word in your child's life.)

**Sing:**

- This little light of mine  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtqhyQ>
- Jesus loves me *(with a suggested word change to the song)*  
Jesus loves me this I know  
For the bible tells me so  
Little ones to Him belong  
They are **His and** He is strong  
  
Yes Jesus loves me (x3) The bible tells me so  
  
Jesus loves me He who died  
Heaven's gate to open wide  
He will wash away my sin  
Let His little child come in

**Tell the story:** Use simple pictures or props, kids Bible or act out the story.  
(Action ideas)

Jesus had a special meal with His disciples ([pretend to eat](#)). He gave them bread ([pretend to pass some bread](#)) and wine ([pretend to pass a cup](#)) and told them to remember Him ([tap your head](#)).

After dinner Jesus went to a garden to pray ([put your hands together as to pray](#)). He knew what was going to happen and He needed God's help. He prayed and listened ([cup your hand around your ear- encourage kids to do the same](#)). Some men come and took Jesus away. They dressed Him in a purple robe, like a king ([sit up straight](#)) and put a crown of thorns on his head ([pretend to place a crown on your head and make a sad face](#)).

Later He had to carry a cross up a hill ([walk as if carrying a heavy load](#)). He died on the cross ([stand with arms stretched out](#)) and darkness covered the earth ([cover your eyes- get kids to do the same](#)). Jesus' body was put inside a special cave called a tomb. A big stone was rolled in front of the tomb ([roll your arms round and round](#)). 3 days later ([show 3 fingers- kids do the same](#)) some women come to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away ([roll arms again](#)). It is empty ([throw your arms open and look surprised](#)). An angel comes to tell them that Jesus is alive ([make a happy face and do a little jump for joy](#)).

## Pray:

Thank you Jesus that you are always with me. Help me to hear you. Help me to listen to what you say. Help me to also listen to mom and dad. Amen.

## Ask:

- Where is Jesus now? (He is King in Heaven and sits next to God. He is also always with us through His Holy Spirit).
- What can you tell me about Jesus?

## Activity ideas:

- **Treasure hunt**

Pre-draw some hearts and crosses and hide them in various places. Look for the cross that reminds us that Jesus died for us and for the hearts to remind us that God loves us.

Variation: Instead of random searching you can give specific instructions of where to look. Practice listening and doing.

If you plan to hunt for Easter Eggs then make the eggs part of the story eg. Hollow chocolate eggs remind us that the tomb is empty. Marshmallow filled eggs remind us of the light and angel that filled the tomb to tell the good news. Chicks and bunnies can represent new life, we have new life in Jesus. Filled eggs – God never leaves us empty, He is always with us.

- **Make a paper crown and decorate it**

This reminds us that Jesus is our King and He is alive. He wants us to rule with Him.

## Bonus song:

He's got the whole world in His hands.

[https://youtu.be/t\\_g73UHrpNc](https://youtu.be/t_g73UHrpNc) (Music and words)

## **Age 4-6 years**

(Parent- pray before you start. Ask God for wisdom in sharing his Word with your children, to know what to highlight and how to tell the story in a meaningful and lasting way. You plant the seed of God's Word, He watches over it to make it grow.)

## **Lesson ideas**

### **Sing:**

- Our God is a great big God  
[https://youtu.be/-424MpB\\_pd0](https://youtu.be/-424MpB_pd0) (with actions)  
<https://youtu.be/pgFT6beutEI> (Music and words only)
- This little light of mine  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtqhyQ>

### **Listen and do!**

Give your child some action instructions to follow as quickly as they can.

Eg. Jump up and down 3 times. Hop on 1 foot till I say stop. Turn around and sit down.

Was it easy to listen and do?

First you had to use your ears to hear and then you had to choose to move your body and do what was asked. This is good listening.

Today's story is the reason we can celebrate Easter. Jesus was good at listening to God the Father.

**Read:** (For reference: Luke 22-24) short summary to follow

- Use a children's illustrated Bible to read from the last supper to the resurrection. If this is too long for your child, use the pictures and summarise the story, highlighting what you think is important.
- Draw simple pictures as you tell the story eg. Bread and wine, praying hands, a garden, a purple robe, a crown of thorns, a cross, an angel and an empty tomb.

### Brief summary if needed –

It was the Passover festival and Jesus had a special meal with His disciples. He thanked God and then broke bread and gave it to them, saying it was like His body which He was going to give up for them. Then He gave them wine and said it was like His blood which would be shed for them. He told them to take bread and wine in this way and remember Him and what He was going to do for all of us.

After dinner Jesus went to a garden to pray. He knew what was going to happen to Him and He needed God's help. He prayed and listened as God strengthened Him. Some soldiers came and arrested Jesus and took Him away. They dressed Him in a purple robe, like a king, they put a crown of thorns on his head. They mocked Him and beat Him. This made his friends very sad.

Later He had to carry a cross up a hill. He died on a cross between two other men who had done wrong. Jesus never did anything wrong. When he died darkness covered the earth for 3 hours and the curtain that blocked the entrance to the Most Holy Place in the Temple was torn in half. (This shows us that the way to know God was now open for all people).

Jesus' body was put inside a special cave called a tomb. A big stone was rolled in front of the tomb. 3 days later some women come to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away. They were confused, where was Jesus? The tomb was empty. An angel told them that Jesus is alive! After this many of Jesus' friends saw Him and were happy that He was alive. Then He went up to Heaven and promised to come back one day and fetch all people who believe in Him.

\*This is why we celebrate Easter, to remember that Jesus was punished, so we don't have to be. He is alive and made a way for us to call God our Father.

### **Discussion and question time:**

- Did any parts of the story make you sad? Why?
- What do you like about the story? Why?
- Do you think it was important for Jesus to do what God the Father wanted? (It wasn't easy but Jesus chose to listen so we can be saved).
- Do you think it's important to listen when you are asked to do things? (Do you know that learning to listen to your mom and dad can help you learn to listen to God too).

## **Pray:**

Thank you Jesus that I have ears to hear. Help me to hear your voice and to do what you say. Help me to listen to my mom and dad too. Thank you that you were punished for me because you love me. I love you too. Amen.  
(Encourage children to say their own prayer.)

## **Activity ideas:**

As you hunt or eat Easter eggs this week think about the gospel story. Eg. Hollow chocolate eggs remind us that the tomb is empty. Marshmallow filled eggs remind us of the light and angel that filled the tomb to tell the good news. Chicks and bunnies represent new life, we have new life in Jesus. Filled eggs – God never leaves us empty, He is always with us.

- **Hunt the heart**

Draw a heart for each person in the family. Cut it out and write 'Jesus loves me' on the heart.

Adults hide the hearts and children look for them, listening to the 'warm' or 'cold' promptings from parents as to proximity of finding the heart. (ie 'warm' means it's close to you or 'cold' it's not near you and you need to try a new spot.)

OR children hide the hearts and adults have to find them.

At the end of the game, stick up the hearts to remind you how much God loves you!

- **Me and Jesus**

Take a minute to be quiet and think about Jesus. (Close your eyes if it helps you not to get distracted.) Listen for God's voice inside you. Draw a picture about you and Jesus. Tell your parents about your picture and what it means to you.

(Instead of drawing your child could just tell you about how they see themselves and Jesus.)

- **Draw** a picture of the part of today's story you liked most or you remember best.

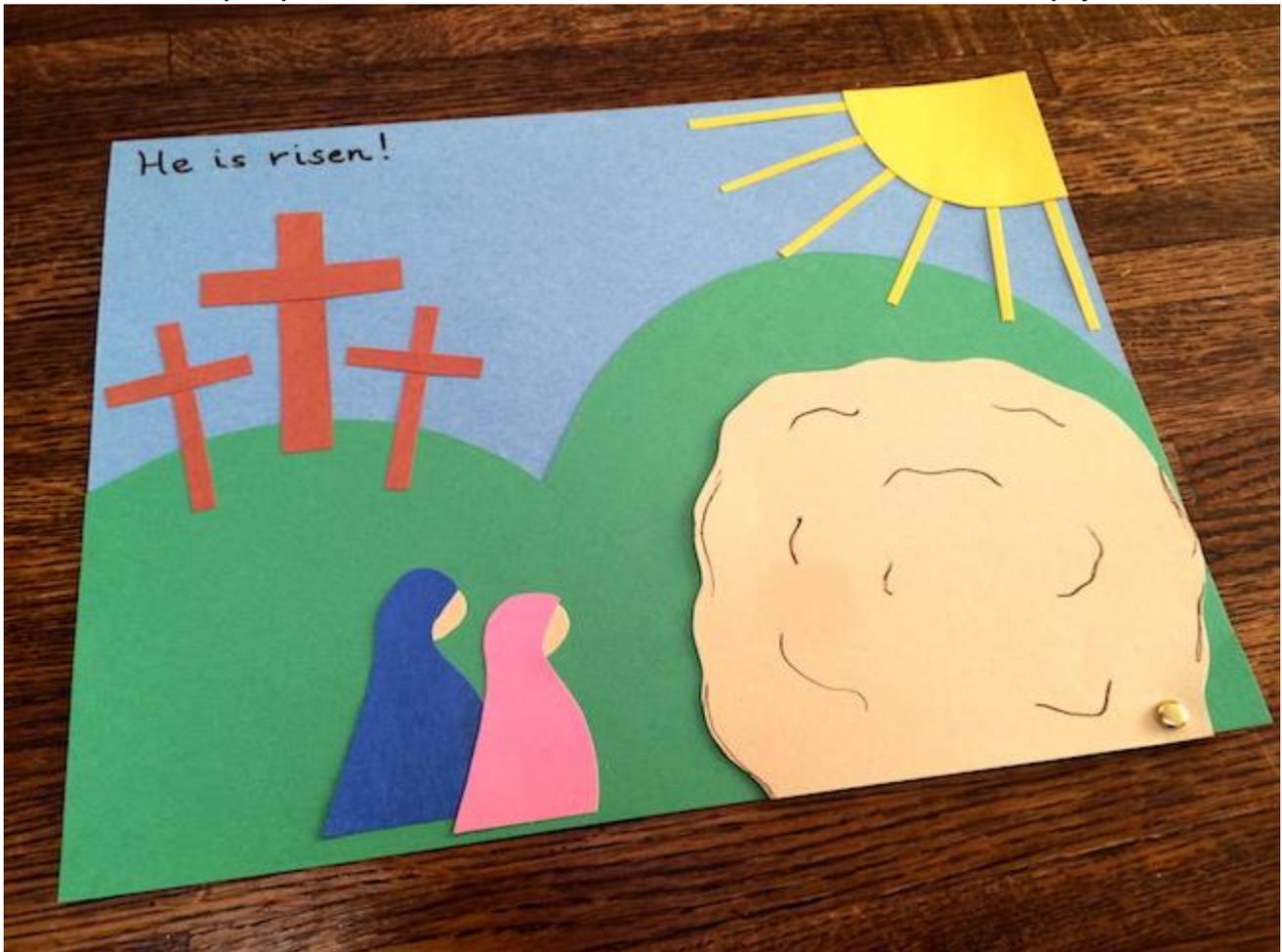
- **Listening Game**

Try to guess the sound.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>

- **He is risen craft**

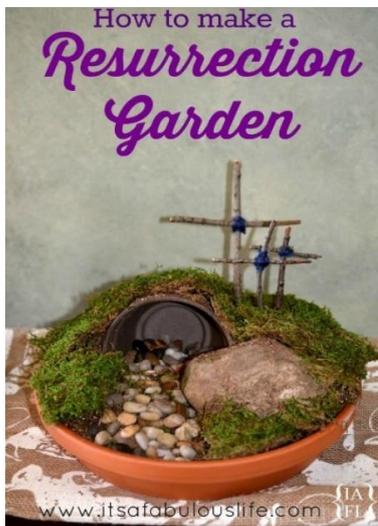
Use a split pin on the rock so that it moves to reveal an empty tomb.



<https://www.catholicteacherresources.com/arts-and-crafts-the-empty-tomb/>

- **Resurrection Garden**

Google search: resurrection garden. There are many creative ideas. Add Matthew 28:6 He is not here for He is risen.



Source: Pinterest

### **Grade 1-7 (adapt as necessary)**

(Parent- pray before you start. Ask God for wisdom in sharing His Word with your children, to know what to highlight and how to tell the story in a meaningful and lasting way. You plant the seed of God's Word, He watches over it to make it grow.)

### **Lesson Ideas:**

#### **Sing:**

Sing your favourite worship song together or ones the kids suggest.

#### **Listen and do!**

Give your child some action instructions to follow as quickly as they can. Eg. Jump up and down 3 times. Hop on 1 foot till I say stop. Sit down.

Today's story is the reason we can celebrate Easter. Jesus was good at listening to God the Father and obeying Him.

#### **Read: Luke 22-24**

Read or summarise the story from the Passover meal (last supper) to the resurrection. (For a brief summary see the lesson for ages 4-6years.)

This video could be a useful conclusion or recap to the story you have read or discussed together.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ4gQniUVO8>

#### **Discussion and question time:**

- Do you think it was easy for Jesus to obey His Father?
- Why do you think Jesus chose to obey even though it cost Him His life? (Read **John 3:16**)
- Do you obey your parents quickly and with a good attitude or do you need God's help to get better at this? (Pray and ask for help as needed)
- How can you hear God's voice? (Through His Word, what others teach or tell you about God, the whisper you hear inside you that tells you about God - that's the Holy Spirit, He is a good teacher and will help you to get better at hearing God's voice and obeying what He says to you).

- God's greatest commandment is to love. Jesus loves you so much He died for you before you were even born. Are you listening to how He's teaching you to love others and Himself?  
Take some time now to be quiet and listen to what God wants to say to you. Share what you hear with your parents.

### **Pray:**

Thank you Jesus for dying for my sins and taking the punishment that would have been mine. Help me to hear your voice more clearly and to do the things I'm asked to do quickly. Help me to know more about you and to show more love to the people around me. Amen.

(Pray your own prayer).

### **Activity ideas:**

- **Write out John 3:16 and learn it.**  
Find the scripture in your Bible and write it out.

Watch this song to help you learn the books of the Bible.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4KEWLNnmCQ>

- **Me and Jesus**  
Write about you and Jesus or draw a picture that shows how you see yourself and Jesus.
- **Listening Game**  
Try to guess the sound. Just like we can hear these sounds, we can learn to hear and know God's voice.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>
- **Broken Telephone**  
Whisper a sentence, word or phrase into someone's ear. They must then repeat the message in a whisper to someone else and keep passing the message on until the last person hears it. That person must then say the message out loud. See if the message is the same or did someone not hear properly and break the phone line.  
(Try giving an instruction as the first message and the last person must do the action eg. Do 10 hops)

- **Find the objects and see how well you listened**

See how quickly you can find these objects from around your house. If you don't have the object draw it on a piece of paper.

Then put the objects in the order that they appear in the story. Discuss.

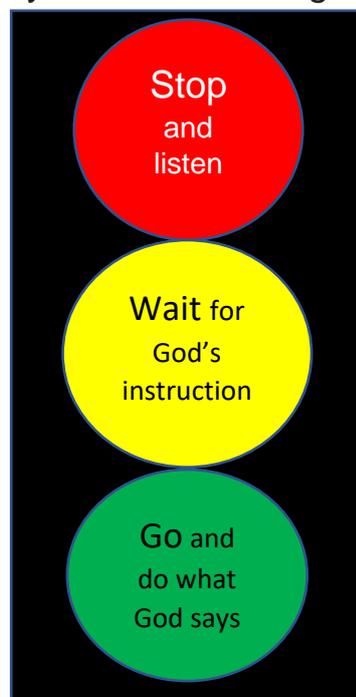
A cup	Purple clothing item or material
A cross	Something prickly like thorns
A sword	A piece of bread
A rock	Some nails
Linen or white cloth	Something from the garden
3 silver coins (representing 30)	A black item representing darkness

\*\*You can google 'resurrection eggs' for other ideas to re-enforce the story.

- **Red light, green light**

One person is on - the traffic light. Everyone else forms a line some distance away. The traffic light has his back to everyone and says 'green light' meaning the other players can move towards him until he says 'red light' and turns around. The players must then freeze or be sent back to the starting line. The first player to touch the traffic light wins and then has a turn to be the traffic light.

As an extension activity make a traffic light and hang it on your door.



## Youth

**Worship song** – Who you say I am

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKw6uqtGFfo>

### **Verse for the day**

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

### **Read**

Luke 22-24

### **Points to ponder**

- What does Easter mean to you? Does Jesus feature in this view?
- The Passover festival is the starting point of Jesus' last few hours on earth. Think back to the first Passover in Egypt (Exodus 12). The Israelites were given very specific instructions to follow. It was obedience to these instructions that would secure their safety. Merely hearing the instruction was not good enough! How would things have turned out if Jesus heard the Father's instruction but said it was too hard and decided not to obey?

Jesus is the sacrificial lamb of Passover. It is faith in His shed blood, death and resurrection that provides protection for us and defeats the power of sin and death in our lives.

- Do you think it was easy for Jesus to obey the Father?  
Consider that he was a human just like us and would have wanted to preserve His life and keep His body from pain and anguish. Read Luke 22:41-44 which reveals some of the anguish He experienced. The only way Jesus could lay down His will successfully was to be in prayer and relationship with the Father. He needed help. Our will is a strong force. If we choose to allow our mind and emotions to guide our will we can end up making some bad choices. We have an alternative, we can surrender our will to God and choose obedience to His Word. Obedience to Him always brings blessing (although at times the process seems painful - surrender is in fact victory for us.) It is not God's intention that you wander lost through life. He wants you to understand your position in His Kingdom and reign in this life with Him.
- Pray, listen and obey. See where God will lead you and establish you.

*Have a blessed week and remember we are here if you need us.*