

Waiting at the Tomb

By Julie Filby

Take time on the Saturday before Easter to quietly consider Jesus' passion and death and prayerfully wait for the celebration of his resurrection. In today's noisy world, it is important to make time for silence and meditation.

For

Young Family

Season

Spring

Needed

Bible, calendar, candle, matches; optional: supplies for a quiet family activity like coloring or a jigsaw puzzle



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Prepare in Advance

Mark your Bible at John 19:38-42.

Activity Plan

1. Dim the lights as much as possible. Gather the family and pray aloud as someone lights the candle:

God of love and mercy, be with us today as we wait to celebrate Easter. Amen.

2. Show the calendar as you explain that the church tradition of the Easter Triduum (Latin for "three days") refers to the period of time that begins with worship on the evening of Maundy Thursday and ends on the evening of Easter Sunday. The three days are counted in the Jewish manner—each day begins at sundown. That is the way Jesus and his disciples would have counted three days.
3. Observe that Holy Saturday begins at sundown on Good Friday and ends at sundown on Holy Saturday. Read aloud John 19:38-42 from your Bible, or from the text at the end of this activity.
4. Invite everyone to imagine the scene of this story by saying: What did Joseph do? What did Nicodemus do? Imagine that you followed them to the tomb to see where they were putting Jesus' body.
5. Encourage family members to describe what the people in this story might have been thinking and feeling.
6. Invite family members to make themselves comfortable and close their eyes as they listen to you read aloud the following meditation:

Imagine yourself sitting next to Jesus' tomb. Now imagine that you see Jesus—he's standing there. Perhaps you want to give him a hug, or maybe you just want to sit quietly. Think about how much you love Jesus and how grateful you are for his sacrifice on the cross.

Imagine that Jesus speaks to you, saying something like: "My child, I love you very much. Love is never lost. God created love and nothing can ever defeat it, not even death. I will love you forever and never leave you."

Let yourself feel God's love.



7. You may want to join in a quiet family activity, like making Easter pictures to give to family members or neighbors or working a jigsaw in order to extend the quiet waiting of Holy Saturday. It's a good day for everyone to unplug awhile.

John 19:38-42

³⁸ After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body.

³⁹ Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

⁴¹ Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

