

Order for the Family Blessing of Food for the First Meal of Easter:

The family gathers for the meal, with the food on the table.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Christ is risen. Alleluia.

All: He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Leader: Let us pray to our Risen Lord.

The Son of God who invites us to the Paschal feast stands ready to help. Let us call on Him in our need.

R: Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

1. That Easter may find us cleansed of sin and ready to live anew our Christian faith, we pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

2. That the bread we share may be a reminder of the Bread of Life we share in the Eucharist, we pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

3. That we may be ready to give from our table to those who hunger and thirst, we pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

4. That we may one day enjoy the banquet of the Lord in the heavenly kingdom, we pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, prepare us for the feast of life.

Leader: Christ taught us to pray for our daily bread and so we dare to say:

All: Our Father...

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Leader: God of glory, the eyes of all turn to you as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. Bless us and this food of our first Easter meal. May we who gather at the Lord's table continue to celebrate the joy of His resurrection and be admitted finally to His heavenly banquet. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

The food may be sprinkled with the Easter water.

Leader: May Christ nourish us and strengthen us in faith and love, now and forever.

All: Amen.

HOUSE BLESSING FOR EASTER!

Below is an Easter blessing for your home. Easter Holy Water is available to take home.

During the Easter Season you are welcome to take some holy water from the Baptismal font home and bless your home with the following prayer.

Please bring a small container and take some holy water home.

Gather your family in each room and offer the following prayer of thanksgiving to God for your family and home. Move from room to room sprinkling the holy water in each room.

Easter Home and Family Blessing Prayer

Lord, our God, You whose home is in heaven and on earth, surround this shelter with Your Holy Spirit. Encompass our home with the power of Your protection so that no evil or harm will come near. May Your blessing and protection shield our Home and family from destruction, storm, sickness and all that might bring evil to those who live here.

(Members may take turns praying the following and sprinkling water in each room)

Blessed be this doorway. May all who come to it be treated with respect and kindness. May our comings and goings be under the seal of God's loving care.

Blessed be this living room and family room. May we truly live within it as people of peace. May prayer and playfulness never be strangers within its walls.

Blessed be this dining room. May all our meals be reminders of the presence and love of God in our home, lives and world.

Blessed be this kitchen. May our meals remind us always of the many blessings of this life, and may anger and bitterness never poison the meals prepared here.

Blessed be this bathroom. May the spirits of health and healing abide here and teach us to honor and love our bodies and minds.

Blessed be these bedrooms. Here we shall find rest, refreshment and renewal. May the spirits of love and affection together with the spirits of the angels touch all who shall use these rooms.

Blessed be all the rooms of this home. May each of them be holy and filled with the spirit of happiness.

May our door be always open to those in need and may the holy light of God's presence shine brightly in this home.

May it be a blessing for all who live here and for everyone who shall come to our door.

May God's holy blessings rest upon us all; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN!

Don't forget your Easter water!

A powerful way to extend the graces of Easter into your home.

At the Easter Vigil the priest solemnly blesses the baptismal font where the catechumens (unbaptized adults who want to be admitted into the Catholic Church) are baptized. It is a rather long blessing that recalls the many saving acts of God that were accomplished through water.

The blessing starts at the very beginning of creation and goes all the way to the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. Here is the first part of the blessing:

*O God, whose spirit
in the first moments of the world's creation
hovered over the waters,
so that the very substance of water
would even then take to itself the power to
sanctify;*

*O God, who by the outpouring of the flood
foreshadowed regeneration,
so that from the mystery of one and the same
element of water
would come an end to vice and a beginning
of virtue;*

*O God, who caused the children of Abraham
to pass dry-shod through the Red Sea,
so that the chosen people,
set free from slavery to Pharaoh,
would prefigure the people of the baptized;*

The blessing concludes with a reference to the baptisms that will occur in this font.

*May the power of the Holy Spirit,
O Lord, we pray,
come down through your Son
into the fullness of this font,
so that all who have been buried with Christ
by Baptism into death
may rise again to life with him.*

It is a powerful prayer, but the graces are not only reserved for those to be baptized. It is an ancient custom for priests to bless, in addition to the baptismal font, several gallons of water to be distributed to the faithful. Often parishes have holy water bottles available to fill up and take home.

Holy water is a special sacramental in the Church with great importance in the spiritual realm. Saint Teresa of Avila recalls in her autobiography the power she experienced when using holy water to expel demons.

*I have found by experience that there is
nothing from which the devils fly more
quickly than from holy water. They also fly
from the cross, but they return almost
immediately. Certainly, the power of holy
water must be great; for my part, my soul
feels particular comfort in taking it, and very
generally a refreshment and interior delight
which I cannot express.*

Water is a momentous force in salvation history and is meant to remind us of the need to spiritually cleanse ourselves of sin. This is why holy water is used throughout the Easter season, especially on Sundays when the priest sprinkles the people with that same Easter water. As we often sing while the priest blesses us with water, "Sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

So don't forget the next time you go to church during the Easter season to take home some Easter water!

Philip Kosloski, *Aleteia*, Apr 16, 2017
