

RAISING SAINTS



CHILDREN + FAMILY MINISTRY // WEEKLY GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

GETTING READY FOR EASTER LEVEL 1: AGES 5 - 8

APRIL

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | | 1 Lazarus Saturday |
| 2 Palm Sunday | 3 Holy Monday | 4 Holy Tuesday | 5 Holy Wednesday | 6 Holy Thursday | 7 Holy Friday | 8 Holy Saturday |
| 9 Easter Sunday | 10 Easter Monday | | | | | |

It is time to get ready to celebrate Easter. With your parents or Sunday School teacher plant the wheat seeds to sprout. Make sure you keep these seeds watered so they will grow several inches like green grass.

Now take a look at the April calendar.

APRIL 2 is Palm Sunday. You will go to church and hold palms in your hand. Many years ago, people greeted Jesus with palms in their hands as he came into Jerusalem. They shouted with joy saying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Color the box for Palm Sunday green.

APRIL 6 _____ Write the name of this day on the line.

On this day Jesus had the Last Supper with his disciples and gave them the bread and wine which he blessed. We remember that each time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy and receive Holy Communion.

APRIL 7 _____ Write the name of this day on the line.

On this day Jesus was crucified and died. His friends put him in a tomb. In church we remember that day. The Tomb of Christ is placed in the center of the church. People bring flowers to place on the tomb.

You can bring the green wheat sprouts you planted with your parents and place it as an offering on Jesus' tomb.

APRIL 8 is Easter Eve. We go to church for Divine Liturgy and we sing.

Krisdos Haryav ee Merelotz!
Christ is Risen from the Dead!

LEVEL 2: AGES 9 - 12

Holy Week which starts with the Saturday preceding Palm Sunday is the remembrance of Jesus' last days of his earthly life. It is an invitation to each faithful to recall important sayings of Jesus about the Kingdom of God. Understanding the parables he told will help his followers to live according to God's will. On Holy Thursday Jesus ate the Last Supper with his disciples in the Upper Room. He was betrayed on Holy Thursday, tortured and led to be crucified on Holy Friday on Golgotha, he died and was buried in a tomb by Joseph of Arimathea. Our Church services on Thursday through Friday help us to relive those moments of Jesus' sacrifice for us all.

On Holy Friday afternoon, during Vespers the Tomb of Christ is placed in the nave or chancel which would be decorated with flowers that the faithful bring. In front of the tomb is placed the Gospels Book and the Cross which the faithful will come to kiss in adoration at the end of the service.

In Armenia and in Middle Eastern countries where many Armenians lived, often the months of March and April were not warm enough for flowers to grow abundantly. So, people took wheat sprouts to church to adorn Christ's tomb on Holy Friday.

The symbolism of this tradition illustrates Jesus' own words, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." John 12:24.

Why don't you sprout some wheat grains to take to church on Holy Friday following the instructions your parents or teacher have. Take note to what happens to the grain of wheat in the following states:

As it sprouts

As the green blades of wheat grow. You may pull one of the green blades out to see what has happened to the seed.

You may plant some of these sprouts in your garden. What happens when a husk is formed? How many grains of wheat do you see?

In John 12:24 Jesus was speaking about the necessity for his death and burial so that through his resurrection we may all have eternal life. When you were baptized, the priest immersed you into the waters of the baptismal font, then lifted you up as you became a member of the Body of Christ. We too receive a new life when we are raised with Christ in baptism. We must grow as followers of Christ through education and produce "fruit" by the way we live and relate to others, just like the wheat plant would produce many grains of wheat if it grows under the proper conditions.

How do you plan or wish to become a faithful follower of our Lord Jesus Christ? Write your thoughts here.

LEVEL 3: AGES 13 - 17

Holy Week in the Armenian Church started on Lazarus Saturday, the day preceding Palm Sunday. On this day Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and on account of this many of the Jews were believing in Jesus. We read in John 12:12-15, "The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!"

A few days later, Jesus ate the Passover meal, which we call the Last Supper with his disciples. After the meal was over, Jesus poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel which was around his waist. "12 When he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him." John 13:12-16.

Washing of feet as one entered a friend's house was customary in ancient Israel, since the roads on which people walked were unpaved and dusty. Usually, the servant of the household would do that washing. Write a sentence which summarizes Jesus' message to his disciples and to you who is also his follower.

How does Jesus' message define the way you and your friends need to behave with each other or when you work in groups? What are some words or adjectives that define that behavior? List those that are acceptable to Jesus in the **green** box, those that are unacceptable in the **red** box.

On Holy Thursday afternoon we have the Washing of the Feet service, heeding Jesus' advice to do the same for each other. On Holy Friday during the Burial Service, Christ's tomb is decorated with flowers brought by the faithful. You may also bring the wheat sprouts which you can prepare with your parents or teacher. In front of the tomb is placed the Gospels Book and the Cross which the faithful will come to kiss in adoration at the end of the service.

- Show your devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ by bowing down before his tomb to kiss the Gospels Book and the Cross.

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