

## Family Guide to the celebration of Holy Week and Easter.

This year we are not able to celebrate Holy Week and Easter as a parish community gathered together in one place. This is unfortunate, but it could also be a blessing. Yes, a blessing, for it offers us a chance to gather **as families** in our homes, and virtually with hundreds of other families **to really walk with Jesus** and as we remember the week that Jesus suffered, died and then rose from the dead to give us all everlasting life.

This guide offers **suggestions** so that families, young and old, can together more actively participate in the events of Holy Week.

### Preparation:

- a. **Choose a place in your home** where your family will be able to virtually join our parish family to celebrate Holy Week. You will need internet access to access our website at [saintdominicsavio.org](http://saintdominicsavio.org) and click on "live mass".
- b. **Prepare a small altar or table** in the place you will be gathering. If possible cover the table with a cloth.
- c. Place on your altar: **a bible, a cross and a rosary** (if you have these items). It would be great (but not necessary) to have a rosary for everyone in the family. Finally place **photos** of those people, family member and others, that you want to remember during Holy Week. Your photos will remind us all of everyone for whom we are praying even if they are not physically present to pray with us.

During Holy Week we will add other things to our altar and begin using the items we've already placed on the altar. Here are the items that we'll add during the week:

- **Palm Sunday:** we remember Jesus entering into Jerusalem. So we'll add a few **palm leaves or any other green branch**. (They don't need to be palms. The Jews who greeted Jesus used branches of the trees that grew outside of Jerusalem.)
- **Holy Thursday:** we remember the Last Supper and the gift of the Eucharist. I invite you to prepare a basket of bread for your altar. This bread will be blessed as part of our evening celebration and then you as a family will use it as part of your supper just as Jesus did at his last meal. Be sure that the bread is the kind that your family likes to eat!
- **Good Friday:** we'll be using the **cross** that's already on our altar. If you can, place an **image of Mary** on your altar. She was at the foot of the cross when Jesus died. We'll also add a **candle** to the altar but we light it today. The candle represents Jesus when he is resurrected from the dead. We must wait till the Easter Vigil or Easter Sunday to light it.
- **Holy Saturday:** The **candle** has a very important roll today. We also need to add a **bowl of water** and a **bell** (or any other type of noise makers). The candle is your family's Easter Candle (like the Pascal Candle in the Church) we will light it at a special moment during the Easter Vigil Mass. We will also bless the water to remind us of our baptism. At a special moment we'll ring the bell as a sign of our joy at Christ's resurrection.