

What is the meaning of Easter Preparation (Easter Prep)?

Easter Prep is the 40-day period leading up to Easter. It is a season where we open ourselves wider to more fully appreciate our deep need for Jesus. During Easter Prep, we fast from things that we are tempted to idolize and feast in Christ. We empty our lives of false sources of hope in preparation to receive the overflowing graces of Holy Week, culminating on Easter Sunday. During this time, we allow the death of practices, dreams, and priorities that distract us, and look forward to the new life and better way that Jesus offers to us through the resurrection.



Easter Preparation

How can we commemorate the significance of Easter Prep as a congregation? (Choose one of the practices below, or make your own.)

- **Easter Prep Devotional Guides:** Distribute or recommend devotional guides to members. They can guide contemplation to help identify where we are turning to for hope and to turn toward Jesus.
- **Silent Confession in Sunday Worship:** Integrate a time of silent confession into the Sunday worship gathering during Easter Prep. Confessing our sins is a way to open ourselves to God, acknowledging our need for his forgiveness and healing. Consider using the phrase from Jesus' teaching on prayer as a guide for personal reflection during this time.
- **Planning Holy Week Gatherings:**
 - **Palm/Passion Sunday:** Commence the week with a celebratory tone, imagining the symbolic act of laying coats before Jesus and waving palm branches. Shout "Hosanna" as an expression of longing for salvation. Join Jesus in both joyful welcome and shared lamentation over the pain and suffering in the city (Luke 19:28-44).
 - **Maundy Thursday:** Plan a gathering or reflective activities focusing on Jesus' servant-leadership and the new covenant. Encourage personal reflection on discipleship and recommitment to the commandment of loving one another (John 13:34).
 - **Good Friday:** Organize a reflective service centered on Jesus' profound sacrifice on the cross. Use hymns and readings to guide contemplation on the depth of his love and the call to follow his commandments (John 15:13-14).
 - **Holy Saturday:** Create a quiet and contemplative atmosphere for reflection on Christ's death and sacrifice. Emphasize the significance of baptism and provide a space for prayerful recommitment to the journey of following Jesus.

How can we participate in Easter Prep with Jesus? (Choose one of the practices below, or make your own.)

- **Silence and Solitude:** Practice the spiritual disciplines of solitude and silence, paying attention to the tombs in your life where Jesus is seeking to meet you.
- **Journal:** Journal without fear about your deep need for Jesus. Or start a praise journal recording the times Jesus has met you in your own tomb and shared his resurrection life with you.
- **Fasting:** Practice spiritual disciplines of simplicity, decrease, or fasting for the purpose of increasing your awareness of your deep need for Jesus (rather than out of self-scorn or self-effort).

