



As we begin to walk the road to Holy Week, the Church offers us a plethora of ways to encounter our Lord and His graces - graces the Holy Spirit is preparing our hearts to receive. This Lent, as we emerge from a time of quarantine and uncertainty to a time of renewal, here are

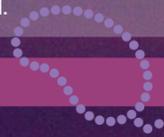
40 WAYS TO ENCOUNTER CHRIST THIS LENT

- 1** **Encounter Him in the ashes.** Begin Lent by being present at Ash Wednesday Mass. As you receive the ashes on your head, commit to remembering the meaning of the cross and what Jesus has done for us in giving His life so that we may have eternal life.


- 2** **Encounter Him in the naked.** Take time today to simplify your closets, and donate clothes in good condition to the poor.


- 3** **Encounter Him in creation.** Explore the great outdoors and thank God for the gift of His creation.


- 4** **Encounter Him in the Rosary.** Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries with your family. Use a Scriptural Rosary and think of one Bible verse per bead.



SUNDAY – As you attend Mass, say a special prayer for the sick.

- 5** **Encounter Him in the saints.** Learn about your favorite saint and let them guide your journey to Christ. If you don't know any saints, try picking your name or that of a family member.


- 6** **Encounter Him in your prayers.** Open your heart to God and allow Him to direct your prayers to particular intentions this Lent. Pray for those intentions each day during Lent. Write them down and keep them with you each night.


- 7** **Encounter Him on the mountain.** Read next Sunday's gospel, Mark 9:2-10, with your family.


- 8** **Encounter Him in the hungry.** On days that you commit to fast, place any money saved from skipped meals into a jar. Decide as a family where you would like to contribute the money at the end of Lent.


- 9** **Encounter Him in your community.** We are custodians and stewards of creation. Find an area of your neighborhood to help clean or rid of garbage.


- 10** **Encounter Him in His Mother's "Yes."** Pray the Angelus prayer. If you can't find it, Google can help.



SUNDAY – As you attend Mass, say a special prayer for victims of violence, especially from a loved one.

- 11** **Encounter Him in cinema.** Find Christ in the beauty of His artists and watch a movie that will help bring you to Him. Check the Institute website for ideas.


- 12** **Encounter Him in silence.** Sit quietly and open your heart to God. Think about the fruits of the Holy Spirit* (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) that you need most. Allow this inner silence to help you listen to what He is asking of you.


- 13** **Encounter Him in His house.** Read next Sunday's gospel, John 2:13-25, with your family.


- 14** **Encounter Him in those held captive.** Pray for those in prison, that the Lord may strengthen them and show them true freedom.


- 15** **Encounter Him in simplicity.** Choose an area in your home to clean out. Donate or throw away items and discover how cleaning our physical space can help us to clean out the clutter in our minds and hearts.


- 16** **Encounter Him in motherhood.** Pray for women preparing to bring a child into this world, that they may greet their own children as the Little Christ Child in their hearts.



SUNDAY – As you attend Mass, offer a special prayer for our Church leaders, government officials, and those who answer the call to serve others.

- 17** **Encounter Him in a new way.** Listen to a podcast offered by the diocese, such as *Let's be Frank*, as you go about your day.


- 18** **Encounter Him in renewal.** If you have been challenged in your commitment to "give up" something, challenge yourself to start again.


- 19** **Encounter Him in the Father's love.** Read next Sunday's gospel, John 3:14-21, with your family.


- 20** **Encounter Him in his servants.** Give thanks and intercede for those frontline healthcare workers dedicated to our physical health, who have risked so much for us during this pandemic.


- 21** **Encounter Him in Mass.** The Eucharist provides the grace, the life of Christ in us, to help us navigate this world. Try attending one additional Mass each week.


- 22** **Encounter Him in pain.** Pray for all women who have experienced a miscarriage or stillbirth, that the Lord may heal their hearts and show them the warmth of His embrace.



SUNDAY – As you attend Mass, offer a special prayer for an end to the pandemic.

- 23** **Encounter Him in music.** St. Augustine says that to sing is to pray twice. Find some Christian music to liven up your day and bring you closer to Him.


- 24** **Encounter Him in your parents.** Go out of your way to be helpful without being asked.


- 25** **Encounter Him in a grain of wheat.** Read next Sunday's gospel, John 12:20-33, with your family.


- 26** **Encounter Him in our new brothers and sisters.** Find out if there are people preparing to enter the Church in your parish this Easter. Pray for all those throughout the diocese who will become part of the Catholic Church this Easter!


- 27** **Encounter Him in St. Joseph.** Join your parish for the celebration of the Solemnity of St. Joseph as the diocese is consecrated to the foster father of Jesus.


- 28** **Encounter Him in your family.** Make an effort to have dinner together and discuss how the Lord is working in each of your lives.



SUNDAY – After you attend Mass today, set an alarm for 7:30 p.m. to join us for the Family Rosary.

- 29** **Encounter Him in writing.** Take some time today and write a letter to someone you haven't seen recently and reconnect. Offer your prayers for their intentions.


- 30** **Encounter Him in literature.** Discover a book that speaks to you, or choose one from the list on the Institute website.


- 31** **Encounter Him in the palms.** Read next Sunday's gospel, Mark 11:1-11, with your family.


- 32** **Encounter Him in the spoken word.** The Annunciation is all about spreading the Good News. Reflect on how your life can be a witness to that Gospel.


- 33** **Encounter Him in water.** If you are a child, ask your parents to tell you the story of your baptism. If you are a parent, reflect on your role as first witness to the faith.


- 34** **Encounter Him in the innocent.** Pray for victims of abortion and their mothers, that the Lord may bring the children to Himself and let the mothers know the warmth of His forgiveness.



PALM SUNDAY – After you attend Mass, place the palms in a prominent part of your house.

- 35** **Encounter Him in mercy.** If you haven't already, go to confession. Draw closer to Christ through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Confession will be available in many parishes during Holy Week. See the diocesan website for locations and times.


- 36** **Encounter Him in almsgiving.** As you prepare for trips to Church this week, collect the loose change around your house to donate to those in need.


- 37** **Encounter Him in vocations.** Pray for men to hear and answer the call to the complete self-gift of the priesthood. Pray for women to consider a life consecrated to God.


- 38** **Encounter Him in the Eucharist.** Give thanks to the Lord for the gift of His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Blessed Sacrament.


- 39** **Encounter Him in fasting.** Know that your fasting and prayer helps build perseverance as you trust in and rely on His power at work within you.


- 40** **Encounter Him in the Resurrection.** Alleluia! We are an Easter people, and Alleluia is our song! Continue to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus every day!



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Christ is Risen!

Be sure to check ahead of time if your parish still requires reservations for Easter Sunday Mass.

*See Galatians 5:22 and section 1832 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church to learn more about the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

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