

“Let’s celebrate this glorious time in our liturgical year. Soon enough we will be back to Ordinary Time. Don’t forebode joy! Happy Easter. Alleluia. He is Risen!”

“But Easter is O-V-E-R...”

I first began my teaching career in Piedmont, South Carolina. A mill town at the time, and mostly Southern Baptist or independent churches, no one observed the twelve days of Christmas. Returning from the holiday one year I was telling my students that I hadn’t taken my Christmas tree down yet because it wasn’t Epiphany. “E-fif-fany? What’s that?” one of them asked. And so I gave an explanation about the story of the wise men still not even being at the manger yet, and why I observed Epiphany. “Christmas is O-V-E-R, Ms. Montanez,” one of them reminded me, emphatic that it was time to move on.

Like the twelve days of Christmas, the fifty days of Easter seem to get lost in the shuffle of life. Easter is O-V-E-R, and now we are in school testing, spring vacations, recitals, end of the year concerts, playoff games, exams, preparation for VBS, and some are already getting ready for camp. Wait, I want to celebrate the fifty days of Easter(!)

At my church, we don’t kneel during Easter. We stand, in order to make a statement about the Resurrection. We also do not say the confession, which I personally think is not such a good idea. I need to confess. A lot. Even during Easter. The music is Easter-y for a while. But I want more. I want to hold on to the mystery and the glory of Easter for just a while longer.

8 Ideas for Living The Fifty Days of Easter

Here are some ideas I’ve had about basking in the joy of the fifty days of Easter.

1. Easter Greeting

Start every morning by saying to your family, “Happy Eastertide!” Wake your children with this life-changing message. “Good Morning, Child of Mine. Guess what? Love wins!” Kiss your partner with a “Happy Easter” wish. If you live alone, look yourself in the mirror and say, with enthusiasm, “Happy Easter, Beautiful!”

2. Enjoy Nature

Make an intention to spend extra time in nature. The life-death-life cycle is apparent

this time of year. The hydrangea leaves come back on the dead wood. Amazing. The hosta that disappeared are poking out their first shoots and saying, "See, you just thought we were gone. We're back!" Meditate on the part of creation that insists that life comes back and beauty returns. And show your children. Help them understand the Holy Book of Creation.

3. Be Grateful

Notice and be grateful for something new for fifty days in a row. Really. Something you've never ever been grateful for before. Not the same old, "I am grateful for my family." Or "I am grateful for our home", but something you have never noticed before. More like, "I've never noticed the how the petals of that rose curl over at the edges." Or, "Son, I never noticed how carefully you load the dishwasher." Or, "You know, those new towels are really soft. They feel luxurious against my skin." Write your gratuities down and share them with someone.

4. Write Some Poetry

Try writing a haiku. If you've never tried it, play with the idea of creating some simple verses. The pattern for haiku is 5-7-5 syllables per line. Anyone can do it. Here's one to get you started.

*Fifty Easter days
Long enough for love to win?
Game over. Deep breath.*

5. Pursue Virtue

Pick a few virtues you would like to work/play with. Linda Popov has created virtue cards and the [Family Virtues Guide](#). Pick one virtue a week for each week of Easter. Honesty, Discipline, Compassion, Gentleness, Cheerfulness, Prudence. Pick something you could use extra help with and practice during Easter. Tell your friends or family what virtue you are holding in your consciousness and ask for their help.

6. Make a Special Delivery

Take an Easter basket to someone who needs a little love in their life. When they say, "But Easter passed a few weeks ago," assure them that it is still Eastertide and that you are observing the fifty days of Easter.

7. Party

Plan and execute an Eastertide party. Or join a party. Heck, it's a fifty day party.

8. Lighten Up

Don't wear black. A priest in one of my support groups said that in honor of Easter she was not going to wear black. She showed up in a beautiful floral skirt, white sweater, and silver sparkly shoes. If you just have to wear that black shirt, how about some lavender socks. Come on, let's not take ourselves so seriously... no one wears black to a garden party!

He is Risen!

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