

Easter

Have a Family Sunrise Breakfast

Getting up before dawn to watch the sunrise is a special treasure that is not easily forgotten in life. This Easter morning tradition of a sunrise breakfast creates a sacred space in which memories are cultivated for life. Some families already have this tradition and gather together in community for a sunrise service. For those who don't, however, why not do it at home? Breakfast can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. The most important element is simply gathering together as a family and enjoying the time together.

Designed for All Ages

Materials

1. Breakfast foods
2. Printout of John chapter 20:1–18 (a link to the printout is available at www.traci-smith.com/resources)

Time Investment: 1 hour

How To

1. The night before, set the table. If possible, consider setting up outside on a balcony or deck, or near a window to see the sunrise. Also, prepare as much of breakfast ahead of time as possible as well.
2. Plan to wake everyone in time to be ready at the table about 10–15 minutes before sunrise.
3. Serve breakfast and have everyone seated. Begin with a prayer of your own or use this one: *“God of darkness and light, we give you thanks for this Easter morning. As we sit here in the dark, we are*

Easter: Have a Family Sunrise Breakfast

excited to experience resurrection in a new way as the sun rises and light fills the sky. Help us to have a meaningful breakfast together as a family. Amen.”

4. Begin to eat breakfast together and have someone read the John passage slowly and deliberately.

5. Notice the first line: “Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark...” (20:1a, NRSV). Notice if it is still dark outside, and notice that this is how it was outside when Mary went to the tomb. Ask “*How do you think Mary felt when she went to the tomb in the dark?*” If you are able to eat outside, notice what sounds you hear. Is it quiet? Is it noisy?

6. Enjoy breakfast together and notice as it gets brighter and day breaks. Share any thoughts and experiences that come to mind. Ask questions that occur to you or use one (or more) of the following:

- *What part of the story is most interesting to you or sticks out the most?*
- *Does the light happen all at once, or does it seem to get light outside gradually? What does this tell us about the resurrection?*
- *In the story, Mary calls Jesus a teacher. How is Jesus a teacher to you?*
- *How do you think people felt when they realized that Jesus was alive?*

- *Resurrection means coming back to life. What are some things that remind you of resurrection in the world?*

7. Close your time together with a prayer: “Thank you, God, for this resurrection breakfast, a time to focus on you and the mystery of resurrection. Help us to celebrate Easter and to share its message of hope and promise. Amen.”

Notes

- Parents and grandparents often complain to me how commercialized Easter has become. The focus seems to be more and more on gifts, bunnies, eggs, and chocolate. Certainly, families can choose to engage some of the secular Easter traditions as much or as little as they would like. The beauty of this tradition, though, is that it starts the morning with a spiritual focus and centers the day in family and faith.
- This tradition is a great foundation on which to build other traditions as the years go on. Add your own special recipes and surprises at breakfast.

Variations

- Use different scriptures and readings in different years.
- Add different songs, scriptures, or other readings that are meaningful to your family.
- Use this breakfast as a time to reflect on any of the other practices from this book that your family has been practicing together.