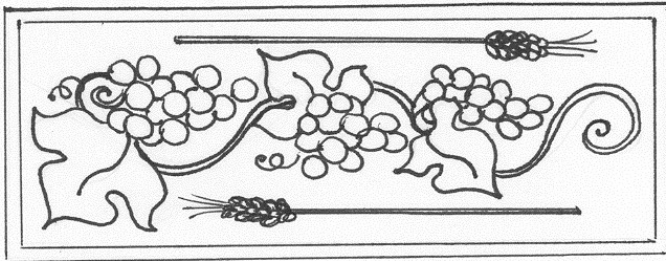


# "CHRIST, OUR PASSOVER":

A CATHOLIC REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE SEDER MEAL



Each year, Jews around the world celebrate a festival called Passover. During the eight days of Passover, they remember their ancestors' Exodus from Egypt and freedom from slavery. It is one of the oldest and most-loved holidays of the Jewish people. Included in the festival is a special family dinner called the Seder (SAY-der), a word that means "order." The Seder, which is full of unusual foods and traditions, is customized for each family, although the basic order is the same for all Jewish people. Each family uses a Haggadah (ha-ga-DAH), a book that serves as a guide to conducting the Seder. Certain foods are eaten and rituals are performed to help recall the first Passover, which took place over 3,000 years ago and is recorded in the book of Exodus.

For Christians, the Passover takes on added meaning. We recall not only the Israelites' Exodus from slavery but also our freedom in Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise—the Lamb of God who takes away our sins. It was during His last celebration of the Passover meal (the Last Supper) that Jesus instituted the Eucharist:

*"When the hour arrived, He took His place at table, and the apostles with Him. He said to them: 'I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. I tell you, I will not eat again until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.'*

*"Then taking a cup, He offered a blessing in thanks, and said: 'Take this and divide it among you; I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the coming of the reign of God.'*

*"Then, taking bread and giving thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying: 'This is My Body to be given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.' He did the same with the cup after eating, saying as He did so: 'This cup is the new covenant of My Blood, which will be shed for you.'" Luke 22:14 -20*

Celebrating this special meal helps us appreciate God's faithfulness throughout the centuries and His saving power at work in us today.



## **SETTING FOR THE SEDER TABLE**

CANDLES

BOOKLET FOR EACH PERSON

ELIJAH'S CUP

SEDER PLATE CONTAINING:

LAMB BONE or SYMBOL of the LAMB  
(cake, statue)

HARD-BOILED EGG (slice for each person)

BOWL of BITTER HERBS (radish or horseradish)

BOWL of GREEN HERBS

(celery, lettuce, or parsley)

BOWL of HAROSES

(enough for a tablespoon per person)

BOWL of SALT WATER

3 WAFERS of MATZO (wrapped in a white napkin)

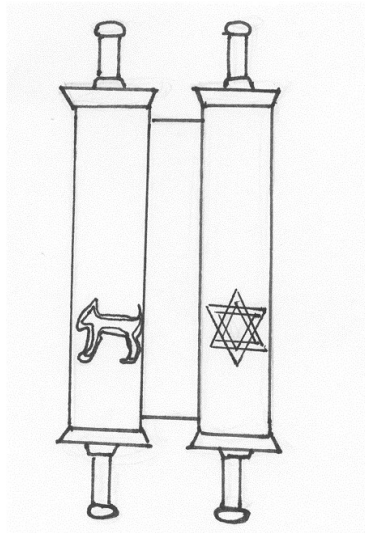
*3 wafers of matzo must be stacked on a plate, each wafer separated with a napkin; then the 3 wafers are covered with another cloth.*

CUP (one for each person)

PITCHER of WINE or GRAPE JUICE

PILLOW FOR LEADER'S CHAIR

***NOTE: Recipes and other preparations are included in the back of this booklet.***



# PASSOVER MEAL

## *(SEDER)*

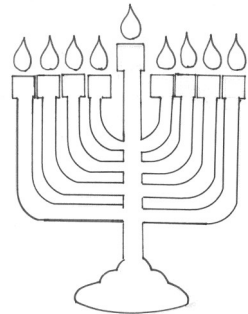
COMMENTATOR: We are gathered this evening to celebrate the great saving acts of the Lord among us. Today we are the people of the Passover. We are God's people. Like any people or family, we tell stories generation after generation to keep alive in our memories the people and events that are significant to us.

Let us stand to begin our celebration.

## I. LIGHTING OF THE FESTIVAL LIGHTS

*Festival lights are lit to symbolize the joy of this occasion. It is the custom for the mother to do this.*

MOTHER: *(Lights the candles)* Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. You have made us a holy nation by your laws. And you have asked us to light the festival lights.



ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. You have made us a holy nation by your laws. And you have asked us to light the festival lights.

MOTHER: May our home be consecrated, O God, by the light of your countenance, shining upon us in blessing and bringing us peace. Blessed are you, God of light and of the Universe.

ALL: Amen

## **II. BLESSING OF THE FEAST**

COMM: Please be seated.

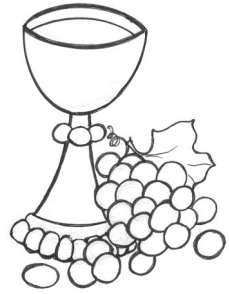
We now ask a blessing on this special feast.

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has chosen us to be your special people. With great love you gave us seasons of gladness and times for rejoicing. You have given us this feast of unleavened bread to remember the freedom you gave our ancestors.

COMM: During the Passover meal, wine is poured and shared four times. It is poured from one pitcher as a symbol of unity. The four times wine is shared correspond to God's redemption described in Exodus 6:6-7.

I will bring you out;  
I will deliver you;  
I will redeem you;  
I will take you to be my people.

FATHER: (*Stands*) Wine is now poured into the Elijah cup. This cup represents Elijah who helped the poor and the stranger. We open our door to welcome the strangers. We pray for the hungry and the poor everywhere as we celebrate this feast.



*The first cup of wine is now poured by the father. We pray:*

ALL: Blessed are you O Lord, Our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine. You give us life, sustain us and bring us to this season of joy.

COMM: We now drink from this first cup: the Cup of Sanctification. (*All drink from the cup.*)

On the table before you is a plate holding different foods, all symbolic of the Passover.

The green herb is symbolic of new life, the coming of spring. We dip it in saltwater to remind us of the tears shed by the Israelites during their bitter life of slavery.

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Who creates the fruit of the earth.

*Everyone eats a bit of the green herb.*

### III. BLESSING OF THE BREAD

*Father stands, takes the bread and holds it up for all to see.*



FATHER: Behold this bread. It is like the bread which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry, come and eat. All who are needy, come and celebrate the Passover with us.

*Father places the bread back on the plate and is seated.*

ALL: Let this simple bread remind us of those who are hungry and in need. Let us always be open to welcome them at our table. We look forward to the day when all will share in the joy of this season and will enjoy freedom, justice, and peace.

COMM: *The story of the deliverance (from the Haggadah)*  
Now the story of the first Passover is told. As the story is told anew each year, not only is the past brought to life, but the miracle of God's presence in our lives is brought to mind.

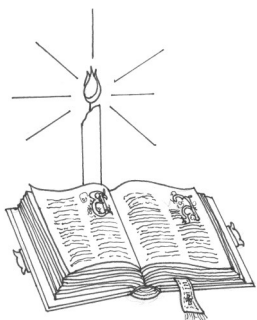
CHILD: *Questions about the feast.*

1. Why is this night different from all other nights?  
On all other nights we eat leavened bread; on this night why do we eat only unleavened bread?



2. On all other nights we eat herbs of any kind; on this night why do we eat only bitter herbs?
3. On all other nights we do not dip our food; why do we dip it tonight?
4. On all other nights we do not eat this way; why do we eat like this tonight?

FATHER: Our ancestors left Canaan, their homeland, because there was no rain and a shortage of food. They went to Egypt where there was plenty of food and water. At first a kindly Pharaoh ruled, and the Israelites and their flocks prospered and grew very large. But after awhile a cruel Pharaoh ruled. He disliked the Israelites; he made them slaves, treated them cruelly and forced them to bake bricks and build big monuments in the hot sun. The people cried out to God for help. God answered their prayer by sending Moses to lead them out of Egypt. When Pharaoh refused to let them leave, God punished the Egyptians with 10 plagues until Pharaoh consented.



Hastily, the Israelites gathered together in the night and fled from Egypt. Moses went before them, the Red Sea was opened and the Israelites were freed. When the Egyptians followed, they were drowned in the Red Sea. That is why this night is different from all other nights.

The celebration of the Passover every year is to thank God for the freedom and that we may learn to love freedom and desire to work for it for all people.

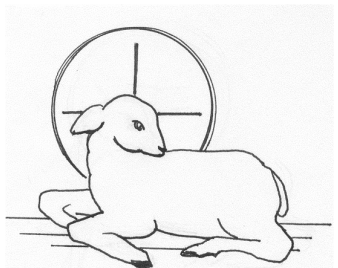
COMM: We now drink wine a second time: the Cup of Deliverance.

An important point in the Passover meal is the explanation of what the different foods mean. Each of them says something about our ancestors' deliverance from Egypt.

CHILD: What is the meaning of the LAMB?

*A small symbol of a lamb can serve as a centerpiece on the table a few days before the Passover meal.*

FATHER: Each family was to sacrifice a lamb and drain the blood into a basin. Then they were to take hyssop, dip it into the blood and strike the upper lintel and the two side outposts of the house where they would be eating the Passover. (Exodus 12:21-22) The Lord said, "I will pass over you, when I strike the land of Egypt." (Exodus 12:13) Thus, when the Angel of Death came as the final plague, he would pass over the houses of the Israelites and leave them unharmed.

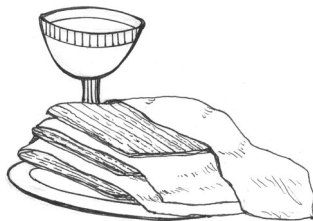


We can see this as a symbol of Jesus' blood shed on the Cross to provide a refuge for us from spiritual death. John, seeing Jesus, said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World." (John 1:29) And Saint Paul said, "For Christ, our Passover, also has been sacrificed." (1 Corinthians 5:7)

CHILD: What is the meaning of unleavened bread?

FATHER: This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. It is flat and hard, because they did not have time to let the dough rise before they had to flee. We eat the bread of affliction with joy because it is the bread of freedom too. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need come and celebrate Passover.

COMMENTATOR: In the Passover meal, there are the three wafers of bread, wrapped in one napkin. The middle wafer is broken and shared. As Christians, we could see these three wafers, united by the napkin as representing the three Persons—the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit—united in the Trinity. The middle wafer, representing the Son, is broken and shared among us, just like the Eucharist.



*The father takes out the middle wafer and breaks it in half. He returns one of the halves to its place. Then he wraps the remaining half in a white napkin (representing burial). While*

*the children cover their eyes, he hides that portion of the middle piece.*

FATHER: We all eat of the unleavened bread.

*The father takes out the broken wafer from the TRINITY, breaks off a small piece and the wafer is passed around the table. Each person breaks off a piece and eats only a piece of it.*

CHILD: What is the meaning of moror (bitter herb)?

FATHER: We eat it in order that we may remember the lives of our ancestors who were made bitter by slavery in Egypt. To us as Christians, the eating of bitter herbs also reminds us of the bitter cup our Lord tasted on our behalf.

*Each person now takes a piece of the bitter herb (radish or horseradish), dips it into saltwater, and eats it.*

CHILD: What is the meaning of the haroses?

FATHER: Haroses is symbolic of the mortar or red clay which the children of Israel used to make bricks for Pharaoh. This mixture is sweet, but it represents bitter labor. When we knew our redemption drew near, even the bitterness of labor was sweet.

*All at the table now take a second piece of unleavened bread, scoop some haroses from the bowl and eat it.*

CHILD: What is the meaning of the egg?

FATHER: All other foods become softer with cooking. The egg becomes harder. The longer the people suffered, the more determined they became. The egg is a symbol of life. This celebration comes in the spring when all that is young and alive seeks the freedom of life. Let us all eat of the egg.

FATHER: Every generation has reason to give praise and thanks to God for saving us.  
We now drink wine the third time: the Cup of Redemption.

*At this time a complete meal could be served. The only foods not to be found at a Jewish Passover table, besides any kind of leavened food, are pork and shellfish.*

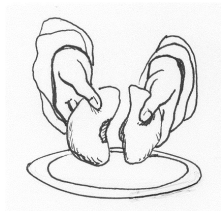
*Children are encouraged to look for the wafer of unleavened bread hidden earlier, signifying looking for Christ. When the child finds the wafer, he returns it to the table. The child may receive a reward ("Gift of Life ") for finding it. The father unwraps the wafer (representing the Resurrection), breaks it into small pieces, and all at the table eat of it.*

FATHER: This is the place in the Passover service which is recorded for us in Luke 22:19. "Jesus, having taken some bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to His apostles, saying, "'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' "

*You may wish to read Luke 22:14-20 at this point.*

*All eat of the bread.*

FATHER: *Lifts the fourth cup: the Cup of Acceptance, and says:* "And in the same way Jesus took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. Take this and share it among yourselves.' " (Luke 22:20-17)



*All drink of the wine.*

## **FINAL BLESSING**

FATHER: "When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you." (Deut. 8:10)

# **PREPARATIONS FOR THE PASSOVER**

## **ELIJAH'S CUP**

Elijah's cup should look different from the other cups on the table. Use a fancy goblet or make your own using a clear plastic wine glass that can be found in party supply stores. Color the outside surface of the glass with permanent felt-tip markers, then spray the outside with a light coat of lacquer.

## **PASSOVER PILLOWCASE**

The leader of the Seder reclines on a pillow. Often he hides the unleavened bread in the pillowcase. You can decorate the pillowcase by drawing symbols of the Passover (lamb, candles, etc.) or the Eucharist (wheat, grapes, cup, etc.) with permanent markers on the front of the pillowcase. On the back, write the date and have each family member sign it. Use it every year and you will have a permanent record of who celebrated the Passover Seder with your family through the years.

## **SEDER PLATE**

The Seder plate is a large plate that holds the five symbolic foods: egg, bitter herbs, green herbs, haroses, and lamb (bone or symbol). You can use a 10 1/2-inch heavy paper plate. Draw five circles (2 inches in diameter) around the inside edge of the plate. Dip wool yarn in white glue and paste it around the rims of the circles. Then draw a design around the outside rim of the plate and glue more yarn



to it. When the glue is dry, cover the plate, including the bottom, with aluminum foil.

Press the foil down so that the yarn underneath will make a pattern. Color the center of the circles and the outside rim design with permanent felt-tip markers and you'll have a sparkling Seder plate.

## RECIPES

roast lamb

matzos

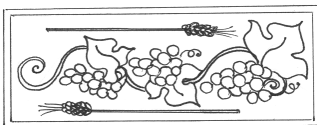
(unleavened bread)

bitter herb and vinegar

green herb and salt water

red wine or grape juice

haroses



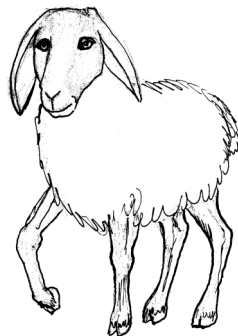


# PASSOVER LAMB

The Passover Lamb is the most important of all foods in this celebration. Exodus 12:3-11 describes the Lord's orders regarding preparation of the lamb: a year-old male, without blemish, the meat to be roasted and eaten with bitter herbs. Jewish tradition states it was even roasted whole on a cross-like spit. None of its bones were to be broken. As Christians, the symbolism of the Paschal Lamb is important, as Jesus became our Passover—the Lamb of God on the cross. Today, a leg of lamb or a lamb roast is often the Passover Lamb in the Jewish feast. It is marinated and prepared in a roasting pan, much like a beef roast. Following are several recipe variations for preparing this main entree.

## MARINATED LAMB

- 1/2 c. vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder or fresh onions
- 1/2 tsp. white pepper
- 1/8 tsp. garlic powder or fresh garlic
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. rosemary
- 1/4 tsp. marjoram or curry
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 3 1/4 lb. lamb roast or leg of lamb



Mix vinegar and seasonings; let stand one hour. Mix with oil, and pour over lamb. Refrigerate several hours or overnight. Put roast on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Roast at 325 degrees for 3 to 3 1/2 hours.



## ROAST LAMB WITH HERBS

1 (6 lb.) leg of lamb, trimmed of all visible fat  
parsley and radish roses to garnish

1/4 c. chopped parsley

1/2 tsp. thyme

3 Tbsp. lemon juice

1 Tbsp. marjoram

1 tsp. salt

1 garlic clove, pressed

1/2 tsp. ground pepper

1/2 tsp. caraway seed

Pierce leg of lamb all over with sharp knife, making slits about 1/2-inch deep. Combine remaining ingredients, except garnish, and stuff slits with mixture, rubbing surface of meat with excess. Wrap the lamb in aluminum foil, and allow to season overnight in refrigerator. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Remove lamb from foil, and place on rack in roasting pan. Roast 18-20 minutes per pound for medium doneness; 20-25 minutes per pound for well done. Transfer to hot platter. Garnish with parsley and radish roses.

## MARINADE FOR LAMB

Marinade acts as a seasoning and tenderizer.

- 1 c. soy sauce
- 4 fresh garlic buds
- 1 c. water
- 3 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 minced onion
- 1 Tbsp. powdered ginger

Mix ingredients, and store in a glass jar in refrigerator. Pierce meat with fork in several places. Place on platter, and drizzle marinade over both sides of meat. Allow to stand 4 to 6 hours in refrigerator. Roast as usual.

## HONEY-MARINATED LAMB

- shoulder of lamb (about 5 lbs.)
- juice of 2 limes
- 1/4 c. honey
- salt
- 1 tsp. dried mint leaves, crushed

Combine lime juice and honey in a large flat bowl. Add meat, turning to coat well with mixture. Let stand overnight in refrigerator, turning a few times. Put meat in roasting pan, and reserve marinade. Score top of meat, season with salt, and roast, uncovered, in slow oven (325 degrees) about 40 minutes per pound, basting several times to marinate. When half done, sprinkle with mint leaves, and finish roasting.

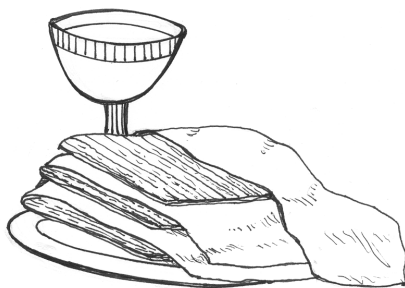
# MATZO

(Matzo, Matzah, Matzot)

*Unleavened bread is blessed, broken, and shared several times through the course of the Passover. The festival of unleavened bread is described in Exodus 12:15-20, and the Passover in Exodus 12:21-28. The use of unleavened bread in the Passover is governed by these Scriptures and by Jewish tradition. It is this bread that Christ broke and distributed to His disciples in accordance with this tradition. In Moses' time, it was most likely made with only flour and water. The most common form of it is a thin, wafer-like bread called Matzo.*

- 3 c. flour
- 2 Tbsp. shortening
- 2 tsp. salt
- 3/4 c. cold water

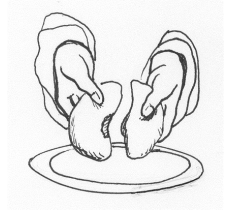
Mix flour, salt, and shortening until coarse and pebbly. Add the water. Knead until smooth (about 5 minutes). Divide and shape dough into three circles, 6-8 inches in diameter. (Three large matzos are used during the meal. Several smaller ones may be cut, if desired, instead.) Place on non-stick or greased cookie sheets, and prick with a fork or toothpick. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes.



# UNLEAVENED BREAD

If preferred, make this simple,  
sweeter form of unleavened bread.

1 c. whole wheat flour  
1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/4 c. brown sugar  
1/2 tsp. vegetable oil  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/4 to 1/2 c. warm water



Mix all ingredients together. Form and press into round shape about 1/2 inch thick. Bake about 10 minutes at 300 degrees.

# HERBS

## BITTER HERBS

Bitter herbs are described in the Passover ritual in Exodus 12:8. They are dipped in vinegar and called "moror." They symbolize the bitterness of the Jew's slavery and suffering in Egypt. In celebrating the Passover at home, some suggested bitter herbs may be horseradish, radish, endive, or parsley.

## GREEN HERBS

Green herbs are symbolic of the goodness of the earth. During the Passover, the green herb is dipped in salt water, symbolic of tears and sorrow. Suggested green herbs may be celery, broccoli, or lettuce. Place a bowl of salt water in the center of your table, the common bowl into which the herbs are dipped.

# HAROSSES

Haroses is eaten at various times during Passover. Its consistency and reddish color resemble the mortar used by the Israelites to build the palaces and pyramids of Egypt during their centuries of captivity and forced labor. It is a ceremonial dish with great meaning in the Passover feast.

2 medium apples

1 tsp. cinnamon

1 c. chopped nuts

2 Tbsp. red wine or grape juice

Finely chop or grate one of the apples and, if possible, grind the other. If you do not have a grinder, grate and mash it in some way (chop and place in plastic bag; then roll with a rolling pin to mash ... or use a mortar and pestle). This is necessary for the haroses to have the proper consistency. Add the remaining ingredients, and mix well.



## EGG

A hard-boiled egg is set at every participant's place. This is symbolic of the Israelites' suffering. Unlike foods that soften as they are cooked, the egg hardens. Similarly, the longer the Jews endured suffering, the more determined they became.

# PASCAL DESSERTS

*There is no actual prescribed Passover dessert. Certain traditions govern the use of wheat flour in the Passover, so in many Jewish recipes you will find potato starch, cake meal, or rice flour. These ingredients are available at specialty grocery stores. A simple dessert suggestion would be to place a basket of fruit on the table. Fruits most likely available during the time of Christ would have been grapes, figs, dates, and apples. You may choose to make a dessert using these fruits. A common dessert at the Passover is a sponge cake of some kind. You could decorate a cake in the shape of a lamb or a cross.*

## PASSOVER BANANA CAKE

7 eggs, separated  
1 c. sugar, divided  
3/4 c. cake meal  
1/4 c. corn starch  
1 c. mashed bananas  
1/2 tsp. salt

Beat egg yolks and half of the sugar until creamy. Add bananas; fold in dry ingredients. Beat egg whites, and add balance of sugar. Fold together. Bake in angel food pan at 325 degrees for 50-60 minutes.



## PASSOVER CAKE

9 large eggs, at room temperature

1/3 c. potato starch

1 c. sugar

1/2 c. crushed walnuts

juice and grated rind of 1/2 lemon

strawberries

1/3 c. cake meal

whipped cream

Separate eggs. Beat whites until stiff; add sugar. Beat well. Beat yolks, and add lemon juice. Fold yolk mixture into egg white mixture. Sift cake meal and potato starch together; gradually fold into cake batter. Fold in lemon

rind and nuts. Pour into an ungreased angel food tube pan. Bake 1 hour, starting at 275 degrees and raising temperature 25 degrees every 15 minutes. Cool upside down. When cool, slice into layers. Combine whipped cream with strawberries and frost layers, top, and sides generously. Garnish with fresh strawberries.







## CARROT MOLD

3/4 c. oil  
3/4 c. cake meal  
2 eggs  
1 c. grated carrots  
3/4 c. sugar  
1/2 tsp. salt  
rind and juice of 1 lemon  
3 Tbsp. water or lemon juice

Blend shortening and sugar; add eggs and beat well. Add carrots and other ingredients. Put into a well-greased mold or 9-inch pan, and bake 1 hour in 350 degree oven.

# MUSIC

*You may have sung some of these songs at Mass. If not, take the opportunity to learn a new song. The tunes of many of the following songs can be found on the internet by searching for the title.*

NOTE: Quite often the internet is not a friendly place for children. It is never recommended that you allow your children to search the internet without close adult supervision.

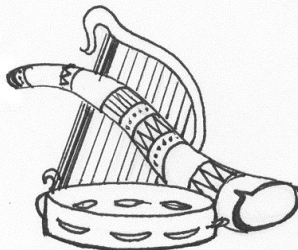
## Horse and Rider

I will sing unto the Lord for he has  
triumphed gloriously,  
The horse and rider thrown into the sea  
I will sing unto the Lord for he has  
triumphed gloriously  
the horse and rider thrown into the sea  
The Lord, my God, my strength, my song  
has now become my victory  
The Lord, my God, my strength, my song  
has now become my victory  
The Lord is God and (clap) I will praise Him;  
My Father is God and I will exalt Him  
The Lord is God and (clap) I will praise Him;  
My Father is God and I will exalt Him

(© unknown)

## Jerusalem, my happy home,

Jerusalem, my happy home,  
When shall I come to thee?  
When shall my sorrows have an end?  
Thy joys when shall I see?  
Thy saints are crowned with glory  
great;  
They see God face to face;  
They triumph still, they still rejoice  
In that most holy place.  
There David stands with harp in hand  
As master of the choir:  
Ten thousand times that man were  
blessed  
That might this music hear.

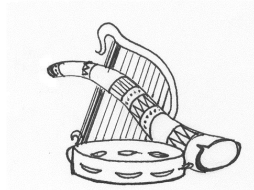


### **AT THE LAMB'S HIGH FEAST**

At the Lamb's high feast we sing  
Praise to our victorious King,  
Who has washed us in the tide  
Flowing from his pierced side;  
Praise we him, whose love divine  
Gives his sacred Blood for wine,  
Gives his Body for the feast,  
Christ the victim, Christ the priest.  
Where the Paschal blood is poured,  
Death's dark angel sheathes his sword;  
Israel's hosts triumphant go  
Through the wave that drowns the foe.  
Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed,  
Paschal victim, Paschal bread;  
With sincerity and love  
Eat we manna from above.  
Mighty victim from on high,  
Hell's fierce powers beneath thee lie;  
Thou has conquered in the fight,  
Thou has brought us life and light:  
Now no more can death appall,  
Now no more the grave enthrall;  
Thou has opened paradise,  
And in thee the saints shall rise.  
Easter triumph, Easter joy,  
Sin alone can this destroy;  
From sin's power do thou set free  
Souls newborn, O Lord, in thee.  
Hymns of glory and of praise,  
Risen Lord, to thee we raise;  
Holy Father, praise to thee,  
With the Spirit, ever be.

### **HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD**

How great is our God, how great is  
His name  
How great is our God, forever the  
same  
He rolled back the waters of the  
mighty Red Sea  
And He said "I'll never leave you,  
Put your trust in me."



### **OTHER SONGS:**

*Jehovah Jireh* by Merla Watson

*I Will Call Upon the Lord* by Victor Rubbe

*Therefore the Redeemed of the Lord* by Ruth Lake

All songs public domain unless otherwise noted.

## RESOURCES

*The Four Questions by Ori Sherman and Lynne Sharon Schwartz. New York: Dial Books, 1989.*

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