



Inviting baptism families at Easter

Easter is a great time to invite baptism families back to church. The anticipation of all those chocolate Easter eggs can be almost too much! When the big day finally arrives, these are some sweet ways you can help children understand why they have received Easter eggs, and explain the Easter story while enjoying the chocolate too.

An Easter Egg story

A story for anyone old enough to eat chocolate, and a great way to connect chocolate Easter eggs with the story of Easter from the Bible. Remember to include some lactose free eggs if you are handing out any chocolate to children so that as many as possible can be included.

Sit down together and enjoy peeling the foil wrapping off a hollow chocolate egg. Hold the egg in your hand.

Jesus' tomb was a bit like this egg – with the big stone rolled against the tomb entrance, inside it must have been dark and cramped. It's as if the darkness makes it still Good Friday, the day that Jesus died.

But on the first Easter day, Jesus came alive again, and burst out of the tomb. Good Friday is broken once and for all, and new life is set free.

At this point, feel free to smash the egg and start eating the pieces. While you eat, keep going with thinking through the story.

But the trouble was, that nobody saw it happen. The soldiers who were guarding the tomb had fainted in fear, and the next thing we know, Mary arrives at Jesus' tomb and finds that it's empty. The actual moment of the resurrection happened in private. All that excitement and joy and nobody to share it...

On Easter Sunday we focus on Mary's story. There in the garden, the resurrection had already happened, but she was trapped in her own Good Friday – her grief and sadness kept her in the dark.

Another story involving an Easter egg

If you have another chocolate egg, peel off the wrapping together and hold it in your hand.

Just like the first egg, it's like Good Friday is still happening. It still felt like Good Friday to Mary.

When we read Mary's story we can tell the exact moment when the resurrection happened for her – it's when Jesus calls her name and she recognises him. Suddenly all her sadness is turned to joy. Mary's Good Friday is gone once and for all, the new life is set free in her.

You can smash and eat your second egg now.

Over the next few weeks, churches all over the world read more stories of how Jesus' friends discovered that he was alive again: their own Good Fridays turned to Easter, all in different ways.

If you have lots of chocolate eggs, you could use these stories to help you eat them:-

- Jesus' closest friends were trapped in a Good Friday because they were afraid, but Jesus came to them and said: 'Peace be with you', and all their fear disappeared.
- Thomas's Good Friday was all about doubt, but his doubt turned to new faith and confidence when he saw Jesus for himself.
- Some friends of Jesus were on a journey when Jesus met them on the road, and helped them understand what had happened; he stayed with them for supper and as he broke the bread to share, they recognised him. Their Good Friday confusion turned to Easter recognition.
- Peter was Jesus' best friend, but he was stuck in Good Friday because he'd betrayed Jesus just when he needed his friendship the most. Peter's Easter moment came when Jesus gave him three chances to say 'I love you' to make up the three times that he had turned his back.
- Sometimes we can get stuck in Good Friday too – you could use this prayer (perhaps as you eat a little bit more chocolate) to help you enjoy the new life of Easter – or pray it for people you know who are having a hard time at the moment.

*Dear Jesus,
Be with us in our Good Fridays,
and lead us into the new life of Easter.
Amen.*