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# CELEBRATING



*the* 50  
DAYS  
*of*

# EASTER

“ALLELUIA. CHRIST IS RISEN,” the celebrant proclaims. “He is risen indeed,” we respond. Wearing our nicest clothes, we join the crowds on Easter Sunday with alleluias and song. We might then share a festive meal with families or friends. But, then what? Does life continue as it did before?

No. Through the resurrection of Christ, new life and new hope enter the world and our lives. Easter is not one day. It is fifty. Lent was forty days long. That means our season of celebration is longer than our season of repentance. In the words of Jerome Berryman, creator of *Godly Play*: “Easter is so great a mystery that you can’t keep it only one Sunday. It keeps going on for one, two, three, four, five, six weeks.”

During Lent we might have kept a “Lenten discipline.” These are intentional practices such as repentance, prayer, fasting, and self-denial. They are things we do to cultivate our spiritual lives and to foster a greater awareness of our dependence on

God. No one speaks of *Easter* disciplines. But perhaps we should. Easter *changes things*. And, we need conditioning—practice—to learn to live more fully in the light of the resurrection.

What might your Easter disciplines be? The following are some suggestions, with space to write your own reflections.

### **Let go of fear**

A few hours after they first encountered the risen Christ, the disciples were already holed away in a locked room, afraid. Fears can hold people back from experiencing new life. What are you most afraid of? Failure? Lost security? Lost health? The disapproval of others? You cannot follow the risen Christ if you are locked away in your fears.

### **Open your eyes**

If Jesus rose from the dead, who knows what else could be possible? Eucharistic

Prayer C in *The Book of Common Prayer* asks God to “open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us” (p. 372). Can you look for God and the resurrected Christ in all things, in all people, and all possibilities?

## **Cultivate signs of new life**

This can mean literally planting seeds or watering plants and watching them grow. But it can also mean taking out and dusting off some old hopes and dreams. You also might try resurrecting old relationships or bringing life and love to others in new ways. Sometimes new life simply comes your way, but often it needs to be cultivated and nurtured—like a seed.

## **Read the Bible**

Along with prayer, reading the Bible is a good discipline for all seasons. The fifty days of Easter are a particularly good time to read the Acts of the Apostles. Remembering the early life of the church—the struggles