



Easter Festival Details

Festival Aspects	Festival Details
Religion	Christianity
Title	Easter
Description	<p>Christians celebrate the holy festival of Easter, remembering with deep gratitude the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ when He gave His life on the cross and celebrating His resurrection three days later. For Christians, this is the most sacred time of the year, and many prepare for Easter with forty days of prayer and fasting.</p>
Spiritual Significance	<p>Sri Sathya Sai Baba has shown us that the true significance of Easter is the love, selflessness, and sacrifice of Jesus. Even when He was dying, Jesus only thought of the welfare of others, including those who had harmed him. He set an example for all of us with His selfless love, sacrifice, fortitude, and forgiveness. God is present in every being. Do not hate or deride anybody. Do not quarrel with anybody. When you lead your life in such a manner, you will be able to realise your Self. You say, “I, I, I”. What does “I” mean? It means ego. As long as you have ego, you will not be able to understand your reality. When you cut the “I” from the middle, it becomes cross (†). The cross symbolises cutting of ego. When you cut your ego, you rise to the level of Divinity.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 42, #8 (2009)</p>
Prayer	<p>Prayer 1: Let us love one another</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 John 4:7-8) ... God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- SSSIO - The Message of Easter – Love, selflessness, and sacrifice.</p> <p>Prayer 2: Our Father who Art in Heaven hallowed be Thy name</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Our Father who Art in Heaven hallowed be Thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses As we forgive those who trespass against us (And) Lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever Amen</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- SSSIO Sai Rhythms, Multi Faith Prayers, Christianity - https://sathyasai.us/devotion/prayers/multi-faith</p>
Purpose of Rituals	<p>At this sacred time of Easter, Christians remember Lord Jesus Christ with love and gratitude. He demonstrated through His life, death and resurrection, the path of love, selflessness and sacrifice.</p>



	<p>Each year on the Friday before Easter Sunday, Christians solemnly observe the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the cross. Christians observe Good Friday with prayers, church services or fasting. Larger celebrations occur on Easter Sunday. For many Christians, Good Friday marks the end of the 40-day period of Lent which is spent in the spirit of sacrifice in observance of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness alone.</p> <p>Jesus was crucified on a Friday, and He rose from the tomb on a Sunday. That is why Sunday is taken as a day of worship and service in churches.</p> <p>- SSSIO – Good Friday – Love & Sacrifice</p>
Chant / Song	<p>Song: Love Is My Form, Truth Is My Breath, Bliss Is My Food</p> <p>Love Is My Form, Truth Is My Breath, Bliss Is My Food My Life Is My Message Expansion Is My Life No Reason For Love, No Season For Love, No Birth, No Death Prema Sathya Ananda, Dharma Shanthi Ananda Shirdi Sai, Sathya Sai, Prema Sai Jai Jai Shirdi Baba, Sathya Baba, Prema Baba Jai Jai</p> <p>- SSSIO Sai Rhythms, Love is My Form</p> <p>- https://sairhythms.sathyasai.org/sites/default/files/pages/songs/audio/love-my-form.mp3</p>
Story	<p>Story 1: The Last Supper</p> <p>Jesus had a last supper with His disciples. He shared bread and wine with them, telling them that the bread represented His body and the wine His blood, which would be ‘poured out for many, for the forgiveness of sins’ (Matthew 26:28). Sathya Sai Baba tells us that the spiritual meaning behind the bread and wine was that all beings alive with flesh and blood are to be treated as Jesus Himself, without dividing and distinguishing some as friends and others as foes. Bread and wine were common items that everyone lived on at the time and so everybody sustained by bread and every drop of blood in the veins of every living being was to be seen as His. In essence, the message was that every man is Divine and was to be revered as such.</p> <p>- SSSIO – The Message of Easter – Love, selflessness, and sacrifice.</p> <p>Story 2: Crucifixion</p> <p>Sathya Sai Baba has also narrated the events leading to the crucifixion of Jesus. Baba's words highlight the incredible courage, selfless love, sacrifice, forbearance, and forgiveness that Jesus demonstrated throughout His ordeal.</p> <p>Baba tells us that the temple priests believed that the teachings of the Jewish prophets were valid for all time and that what Jesus taught was wrong. But Jesus had found that the true essence of the Jewish religion had been obscured by centuries of rituals and scholarly interpretation. He taught both spirituality and morality in order to make clear the path to God. Jesus found that God's Grace was being commercialised in the temple and so He condemned the priesthood</p>



who tolerated and encouraged this. This drew upon Him the anger of the priests and they tempted Jesus' disciple, Judas, to betray Him for 30 pieces of silver.

These priests then told the Roman rulers of Judea that Jesus was trying to proclaim Himself as King and that he was therefore guilty of treason. Their insistence made Pilate, the Roman governor, order His crucifixion. As Jesus was being crucified, He heard the voice of His Father saying "All life is one, My dear Son. Be alike to everyone," and He pleaded that those who were crucifying him may be pardoned for they knew not what they did. Jesus knew that everything happens according to God's Will, so even while He was in agony on the cross, He bore no ill will to those who crucified Him. Jesus sacrificed himself for the sake of mankind.

- SSSIO - The Message of Easter – Love, selflessness, and sacrifice.

Story 3: The Parable of The Sower

Jesus emphasizes the importance of practicing His teachings in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-52).

“Listen! Behold, a Sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. The other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately, it sprang up since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

Jesus later explains to his disciples that the seed represents the Gospel, the sower represents anyone who proclaims it, and the various grounds represent people's responses:

“The sower sows the Word. And these are the ones along the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are the ones sown among thistles. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. But **those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.**”

Swami also shares a beautiful example of three dolls to illustrate such differences between spiritual seekers. When a wire was passed through the ear of the first



	<p>doll, it came out of the other ear. In the case of the second doll, it came out of the mouth. For the third one, it did not come out at all. These dolls represent three types of people listening to good teachings in the form of the wire. The lowest kind, like the first doll, does not register anything. The better ones, like the second doll, hear, remember, and repeat the teachings like a parrot, just as the wire emerges from the mouth of the doll. The best ones are those inside whom the teachings stay like the wire that remains in the third doll. They listen, digest, assimilate, and make their lives His message. Those are the best followers of the Lord's teachings.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- SSSIO Sathya Sai - The Eternal Companion (Volume 2, Issue 12, December 2023)</p>
<p>Activity Suggestions</p>	<p>Activity 1: Easter Egg Hunt Having an Easter Egg Hunt indoors or outdoors. Each egg is filled with a strip of paper with a quote or value printed/written on it. Alternatively, you can have just one half of the quote in one egg and the other half in another egg and the students may need to work with others to complete the quote.</p> <p>Activity 2: What do you see? (Be careful not to reveal the answer.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students to stare at a place in a blank wall for a few (5) seconds. • Ask the students to stare at the 4 dots in the middle of the black and white picture below for 30 seconds (you need to time them). • Ask the students to stare back at the same place in the blank wall. • Ask them what do they see? • Answer: They should see an image of Jesus. <div data-bbox="755 1192 1123 1526" data-label="Image"> </div>