CHRISTMAS MASS AT NIGHT · DECEMBER 24

Stained-glass window cookies

Prep 40 min **Cook** 20 min **Chill** 1 hr **Total** 2 hr **Makes** About 24 cookies **Level** Medium

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. Melted candy is far hotter than boiling water and sticks to skin, so it burns badly. The cookies cool on the tray until the candy is hard, and no one touches the windows while they are warm. A grown-up handles the oven and any sharp cutters or knives. Hard candy, whole or crushed, and the candy windows are a choking hazard for children under 4: keep the candy out of their reach and give them a plain cookie.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Hard candies vary: some contain milk or soy, or are made where nuts are handled, so check the labels. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Cookie dough

- 1 cup (225 g) butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 g) sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling
- ¼ tsp salt

Windows

- About 30 clear, brightly colored hard candies (6 oz, 170 g), such as Jolly Ranchers or Life Savers

METHOD

1. Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla, then mix in the flour and salt until a soft dough forms. Divide it in half, flatten each half into a disk, wrap, and chill for 1 hour.
2. Sort the candies by color and put each color in its own zip-top bag. Lay a bag on a folded towel and tap it with a rolling pin until the candy is in small pieces.
3. Heat the oven to 350°F (175°C) and line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats (the candy sticks to bare pans and to wax paper). Roll one disk of dough on a floured counter to ¼ inch (6 mm) thick.
4. Cut shapes with 3-inch (7–8 cm) cutters: stars, crosses, or tall church windows. Set them 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart on the parchment, then cut a window out of the middle of each with a small cutter or a knife, leaving a border at least ½ inch (1 cm) wide. Reroll the scraps.
5. Spoon crushed candy into each window until it is level with the dough. Brush any candy dust off the cookie tops, since it melts into sticky spots.
6. Bake one tray at a time for 8 to 10 minutes, until the candy has melted to fill the windows and the cookie edges are just turning golden.
7. Leave the cookies on the tray until the candy is hard and completely cool, about 20 minutes, then slide them off. Hold one up to a lamp and watch the light shine through.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Sort the candies by color
- Crush the candy in a bag with a rolling pin
- Cut out stars, crosses, and windows
- Spoon candy into the windows

GOOD TO KNOW

- To hang cookies on the tree, poke a hole near the top with a drinking straw before baking, then thread a ribbon through once they are cool.
- Store the cookies in an airtight tin with parchment between the layers for up to 1 week. Damp air makes the candy sticky, so keep them away from steam.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Jesus, Light of the World, shine through our family like light through a window, so that others may see you.