

A PRAYER SERVICE AT HOME
WHEN ATTENDANCE AT MASS IS NOT POSSIBLE

Twenty-Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time

In these extraordinary times when we cannot gather as a Christian Community to celebrate Mass, let us unite ourselves spiritually to the Mass as it is being celebrated in our churches.

One way you can do this by joining broadcast Masses on radio, television, or via the internet.

This resource is offered to provide a ritual by which families, "the domestic church," can keep the Lord's day holy by joining together to celebrate part of the Church's liturgy at home. Ideally, the head of the family will lead the service; other members of the family should take on roles as readers.

It would be appropriate to celebrate this service at the usual time the family would attend Mass. If possible, prepare a suitable prayer space with a crucifix, holy picture and/or a candle or two. If the family is blessed with musical talent, hymns would be appropriate.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

GREETING

Leader: We gather together to keep holy the Lord's Day. Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because it was on this day, on the first Easter, that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life. Although public Mass has been restored, the threat of the transmission of COVID-19 continues, the Archbishop is continuing the dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation, and those who are not yet comfortable with the potential risk of returning to Sunday Mass still strive through these prayers to be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, death and resurrection

Leader: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Leader: Coming together as God's family, with confidence let us acclaim the Father's forgiveness, for God is full of gentleness and compassion.

After a pause for silent reflection, the leader continues.

Leader: Lord, you were sent by the Father
to bring good news to the poor,
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader Christ, you came to save us from sin,
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader Lord, you were sent to proclaim
the grace and mercy of God,
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

GLORY TO GOD

**All: Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, (Jesus),
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

COLLECT

Leader: Let us pray.

Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may serve you with all our heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Sirach 27:30-28:7

Reader: Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight. The vengeful will suffer the Lord's vengeance, for he remembers their sins in detail. Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. Could anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the Lord? Could anyone refuse mercy to another like himself, can he seek pardon for his own sins? If one who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins? Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin! Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor; remember the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 103

Reader: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger,
and rich in compassion.

**All: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger,
and rich in compassion.**

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

**All: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger,
and rich in compassion.**

Reader: He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills.
redeems your life from destruction,
he crowns you with kindness and compassion.

**All: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in
compassion.**

Reader: He will not always chide, nor does he keep his wrath forever.
Not according to our sins does he deal with us,
nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

**All: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in
compassion.**

Reader: For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he put our transgressions from us.

**All: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in
compassion.**

SECOND READING

Romans 14:7-9

Reader: A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Gospel Acclamation The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Cantor:

I give you a new commandment, says the Lord;
love one another as I have loved you.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21-35

Leader: Peter approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized one of his fellow servants and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he had the fellow servant put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger

his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

This reflection appears in *The Word Among Us* which is providing free access to their magazine content during this stage of the coronavirus crisis. Visit wau.org.

Reader: Daily Meditation: Sirach 27:30-28:7

Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight.
(Sirach 27:30)

Grudges. We've all carried them. At some point, each of us has been hurt by a friend, family member, or coworker. We can feel wounded and hold onto our anger, to the point where it defines us as a victim. But our first reading tells us this is not a healthy response.

When Sirach wrote these words two thousand years ago, he was clued into something that modern psychologists are only now coming to understand. Withholding forgiveness affects our physical and mental health. It can elevate our blood pressure, disrupt our sleep, and weaken our immune system. It can decrease our ability to trust people and reinforce a negative mindset about life. Why would we "hug tight" to these things that harm us? Only forgiveness can help us loosen our grip.

When we choose to forgive, even if the offender doesn't ask for forgiveness, we stop being that "wronged person." We overcome the stress and bitterness and negativity that were wrapped around us. Best of all, we open ourselves up to the Lord's healing.

God knows everything we've gone through: the ways we've been hurt and the ways we've hurt the people around us. He forgives us, like the master in today's Gospel. If we can let God's forgiveness soften our hearts and break through our guilt, shame, and sadness over the hurts we have caused, we will find the grace to act the same toward the people who have hurt us.

If you're struggling with a grudge or offense, bring it to God in prayer. Ask him to help you release your hold on anger, even if you feel justified. Forgive the person who hurt you even if you can't physically reconcile with them. Let the act of forgiveness bring you peace and help you move on.

"Father, help me to let go of wrath and anger. I don't want to refuse mercy to anyone. Teach me how to forgive!"

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**All: I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made,
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:**

[All bow during these two lines:]

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and become man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the Prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Leader: My brothers and sisters, as we pray to the Lord
with sorrow and humility for our sins,
let us ask for the necessary graces to forgive from our hearts
those who offend us.

Reader: The response will be: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For the Church, *(pause)*
that we who are God's people, both in life and in death,
may faithfully mediate God's love, mercy, and forgiveness
through our words and deeds.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For leaders of nations, *(pause)*
That they appreciate that they are all
brothers and sisters of the one human family,
and draw no boundaries or erect barriers to divide people
by reason of race, color, creed or social position.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the grace to forgive those who have wronged us, *(pause)*
that God will free our hearts so that we may forgive others
as God has forgiven us.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For freedom from vengeance and retaliation, *(pause)*
that God will turn hearts from violence
and increase our desire to seek the good for each person.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For fire fighters and relief workers, *(pause)*
that God will renew their strength, keep them safe in their service,
and sustain their families and loved ones.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For those discerning the RCIA program, *(pause)*
that they may be moved to inquire more about the Catholic faith
and enter the next stage of the process.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For an end to the coronavirus pandemic, *(pause)*
that the Spirit will bring healing to those who are ill,
protection for those who are vulnerable,
and inspiration to those working on a cure or a vaccine.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For leaders in education, *(pause)*
that God will give them wisdom and insight
as they strive to keep staff and students safe
and promote effective learning.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the sick, especially those for whom we have been asked to pray,
and, particularly, those who are placed in quarantine and isolation,
(pause)
that God's healing touch may bring them comfort and peace.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all our sisters and brothers who have died, especially
those who have died from the coronavirus pandemic,
(pause)
that they experience the joy of God's heavenly family for all eternity.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the prayers we now make in the silence of our hearts, *(pause)*
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Father, we pray that you will accept our sorrow for our sins,
and teach us how to forgive others
as you have forgiven us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

**All: 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.
Amen.**

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

St. Alphonsus Liguori

**All: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there,
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Leader: St Michael, the Archangel, Protect and Pray for us.

All: Amen.

Leader: The Lord bless us and keep us; the Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; the Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

SOURCES

Lectionary for Sunday Mass

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Prayers at Home When Gathering for Mass Is Not Possible

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