

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

Fourth Sunday of Easter - April 25, 2021

In these times when not all feel free to gather together 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: The risen Christ goes before us into God's glory.
With joyful alleluias we celebrate giving praise and thanks.

After a pause for silent reflection, the leader continues.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are the Shepherd of Israel.
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader Christ Jesus, you lay down your life for your sheep.
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd.
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.

Almighty ever-living God, lead us to a share in the joys of heaven, so that the humble flock may reach where the brave Shepherd has gone before. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Acts 4:8-12

Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said: "Leaders of the people and elders: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. He is the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved."

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 4

Reader: The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

All: The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

Reader: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his mercy endures forever.
It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in man.
It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in princes.

All: The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

Reader: I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and have been my savior.
The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the Lord has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.

All: The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

Reader: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;
we bless you from the house of the Lord.
I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and have been my savior.
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his kindness endures forever.

All: The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

SSECOND READING

1 John 3:1-2

Leader: Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Alleluia! Alleluia!

All: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Cantor:

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me. Jn 10:14

All: Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 10:11-18

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to John:
Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

Reader: Daily Meditation: 1 John 3:1-2

We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is..
(1 John 3:2)

What a marvelous promise! John is telling us that when we see Jesus in heaven, "as he is," we will be transformed (1 John 3:2). That vision of Christ will have such a powerful effect on us that all of the sinful tendencies we have accumulated over the years will be no more, and we will become like him. All our selfishness, our pride, our lusts, and our pettiness will melt away.

But what is it about seeing Jesus that brings about such a change? After all, his three closest disciples — including John himself — saw Jesus' heavenly glory at the transfiguration, but it didn't have as powerful an effect on them. They still had a lot of changing to do (Mark 9:2-12).

The difference is that in heaven we will see Jesus as he is after his death and resurrection. We'll see him as the "Lamb" who was "slain" for us and who bears the marks of his death as emblems of his love (Revelation 5:6). And not only will we see the evidence of Jesus' love, but we'll be enveloped in it.

The world has never seen a love as complete and pure as the love Jesus has for us. There is no self-interest in it. There is no ulterior motive. There are no conditions. There is only love: pure and strong and merciful. And where there is love like this, there is no room for sin of any kind.

That's what the future holds. But this vision isn't limited to the day we stand before Jesus in heaven. We can "see" him every single day: in our prayer, in the Scriptures, and in the people and the world around us.

And most powerfully, we can see him — and receive him — at every Mass: the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

So come and behold Jesus today. Come and see him with the eyes of your heart, and let what you see make you a little more like him.

Jesus, open my eyes to see you and my heart to welcome you today.

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

As the Good Shepherd tends his father's flock,
so we ask God to help our brothers and sisters.

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

Reader: For Pope Francis: *(pause)*
that God will give him strength,
help him model the dedication of the Good Shepherd,
and be a good example for all church leaders.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For leaders of nations: *(pause)*
that God will give them a heart like the Good Shepherd,
compassion toward those who are suffering,
and wisdom to develop policies that advance the common good.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For bishops, priests, and all who minister in the Church: *(pause)*
that they may draw strength and inspiration from the Good Shepherd,
model in word and deed Christ's dedication to the children of
God, and serve their communities with the heart of the Good
Shepherd.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all children who are receiving First Communion this spring:
(pause)
that they will experience God's love for them
and God's care and protection each day.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all who are searching: *(pause)*
that the Good Shepherd will find them and lead them
to a fuller life with purpose and a sense of belonging.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For successful distribution of the Covid vaccine, *(pause)*
that God will guide the delivery of vaccines
to where they are needed
and give strength to all who are administering them.
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: God of mercy, you sent your Son to care for your flock.
Hear and grant what we ask in the name of Jesus our Risen 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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