

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

**The Fifth Sunday of Lent - Year A**

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 here to celebrate the Lord's Day. Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because it was on this day that Jesus conquered sin an death and rose to new life. Unfortunately, we are not able to attend Mass today; in the light of the coronavirus pandemic, all public celebration of Mass has been suspended. But, let us now 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 Jesus, you came to reconcile us to one another and to the Father:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division:  
Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you intercede for us with your Father:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

#### COLLECT

Leader: Let us pray.

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. 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.

**All: Amen.**

#### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

##### FIRST READING

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the Lord God: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and have you rise from them, O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus you shall know that I am the Lord. I have promised, and I will do it, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

##### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 130

Reader: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

**All: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Reader: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication.

**All: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Reader: If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered.

**All: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Reader: I trust in the Lord; my soul trusts in his word. More than sentinels wait for the dawn, let Israel wait for the Lord.

**All: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

Reader: For with the Lord is kindness and with him is plenteous redemption; And he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

**All: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

SECOND READING

Romans 8:8-11

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

Brothers and sisters: Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.

**All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.**

Cantor: I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live. *Jn 11:25a, 26*

**All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.**

GOSPEL

John 11:1-45

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him saying, "Master, the one you love is ill." When Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God

may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?"

So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this, He cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

From a homily by Pope Francis

*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: "We all have within us some areas, some parts of our heart that are not alive, that are a little dead. . . . But if we become very attached to these tombs and guard them within us and do not will that our whole heart rise again to life, we become corrupted and our soul begins to give off, as Martha says, an 'odor,' the stench of a person who is attached to sin. And Lent has something to do with this. Because all of us . . . can hear what Jesus said to Lazarus: 'He cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!'"

"Today I invite you to think for a moment: Where is the dead part of my soul? Where is my tomb? . . . Let us think: what part of the heart can be corrupted because of my attachment to sin, one sin or another? And to remove the stone, to take away the stone of shame and allow the Lord to say to us, as he said to Lazarus, "Come out!" That all our soul might be healed, might be raised by the love of Jesus, by the power of Jesus. He is capable of forgiving us. We all need it! All of us. We are all sinners, but we must be careful not to become corrupt! Sinners we may be, but he forgives us. Let us hear that voice of Jesus who, by the power of God, says to us, 'Come out! Leave that tomb you have within you. Come out. I give you life, I give you happiness, I bless you, I want you for myself.'

"May the Lord today, on this Sunday, which speaks so much about the resurrection, give us all the grace to rise from our sins, to come out of our tombs; with the voice of Jesus, calling us to go out, to go to him." (April 6, 2014)

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: Let us bring our prayers before the Lord and entrust ourselves to Him.**

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

**Reader: For the Church  
that God will transform our fears into hope, selfishness into love,  
and deaths into new life.  
We pray to the Lord.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For our world and communities,  
that all may embrace the fragility of life, and our common humanity  
as brothers and sisters, one family under God.  
We pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For those who are suffering from the coronavirus,  
that through this trial they would be brought near to the heart of Jesus,  
and receive healing in body and soul from the Divine Physician.  
We pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For healthcare professionals who care for the sick,  
that the Lord protect them from the illnesses they are treating,  
and make them instruments of His healing.  
We pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For all the people of Bethany, Palestine and Israel,  
that God will turn hearts from violence, protect the innocent,  
open new understanding of each other's fears and hopes,  
and heal the wounds and mistrust that exists.  
We pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: For the sick, especially those for whom we have been asked to pray,  
that through us, the healing arms of Christ may reach out to them.  
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 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.  
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: Loving Father, during this time may your Church be a sign of hope,  
comfort and love to all. Grant peace. Grant comfort. Grant healing.  
Be with 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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