

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

Good Friday Service

In these extraordinary times when we cannot gather as a Christian Community to celebrate the Good Friday Solemn Liturgical Service, we unite ourselves spiritually to the universal Church as we celebrate the Passion of the Lord.

One way this can be done is by joining broadcast services on radio, television, or via the internet.

This resource is offered to provide a ritual by which families, "the domestic church," can keep this holy day 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 or near 3 P.M., the time recommended by the Church for this celebration. If possible, prepare a suitable prayer space with a crucifix or even a simple cross, especially on Good Friday. If the family is blessed with musical talent, hymns would be appropriate.

This solemn service begins without the normal Greeting and Penitential Rite. It would be appropriate for the family to kneel and pray in silence for a short time. Then all stand, and the leader says the following prayer.

PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray.

Remember your mercies, O Lord, and with your eternal protection sanctify your servants, for whom Christ your Son, by the shedding of his Blood, established the Paschal Mystery. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted. Even as many were amazed at him — so marred was his look beyond human semblance and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man — so shall he startle many nations, because of him kings shall stand speechless; for those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it.

Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, nor appearance that would attract us to him. He was spurned and avoided by people, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, one of those from whom people hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.

Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, a grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. But the Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity.

If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the Lord shall be accomplished through him.

Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked; and he shall take away the sins of many, and win pardon for their offenses.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 31

Reader: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

All: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Reader: In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your justice rescue me. Into your hands I commend my spirit; you will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.

All: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Reader: For all my foes I am an object of reproach, a laughingstock to my neighbors, and a dread to my friends; they who see me abroad flee from me. I am forgotten like the unremembered dead; I am like a dish that is broken.

All: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Reader: But my trust is in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God. In your hands is my destiny; rescue me from the clutches of my enemies and my persecutors."

All: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Reader: Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your kindness. Take courage and be stouthearted, all you who hope in the Lord.

All: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

SECOND READING

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Reader: A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brothers and sisters: Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.

In the days when Christ was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Salvation, glory, and power to the Lord Jesus Christ!

All: Salvation, glory, and power to the Lord Jesus Christ!

Cantor:

Christ became obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.
because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

All: Salvation, glory, and power to the Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

John 18:1 - 19:42

The Passion narrative is presented here in parts. One family member can be the Narrator, another the Voice (actually voicing the words of a number of individuals in the account), and the head of the household can speak the words of Christ.

Narrator: The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

Narrator: Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to where there was a garden, into which he and his disciples entered. Judas his betrayer also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas got a band of soldiers and guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees and went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and said to them,

Christ: "Whom are you looking for?"

Narrator: They answered him,

Crowd: "Jesus the Nazorean."

Narrator: He said to them,

Christ: "I AM."

Narrator: Judas his betrayer was also with them. When he said to them, "I AM," they turned away and fell to the ground. So he again asked them,

Christ: "Whom are you looking for?"

Narrator: They said,

Crowd: "Jesus the Nazorean."

Narrator: Jesus answered,

Christ: "I told you that I AM. So if you are looking for me, let these men go."

Narrator: This was to fulfill what he had said, "I have not lost any of those you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,

Christ: "Put your sword into its scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?"

Narrator: So the band of soldiers, the tribune, and the Jewish guards seized Jesus, bound him, and brought him to Annas first. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had counseled the Jews that it was better that one man should die rather than the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Now the other disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered the courtyard of the high priest with Jesus. But Peter stood at the gate outside. So the other disciple, the acquaintance of the high priest, went out and spoke to the gatekeeper and brought Peter in. Then the maid who was the gatekeeper said to Peter,

Crowd: "You are not one of this man's disciples, are you?"

Narrator: He said,

Voice: "I am not."

Narrator: Now the slaves and the guards were standing around a charcoal fire that they had made, because it was cold, and were warming themselves. Peter was also standing there keeping warm.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his doctrine. Jesus answered him,

Christ: "I have spoken publicly to the world. I have always taught in a synagogue or in the temple area where all the Jews gather, and in secret I have said nothing. Why ask me? Ask those who heard me what I said to them. They know what I said."

Narrator: When he had said this, one of the temple guards standing there struck Jesus and said,

Voice: "Is this the way you answer the high priest?"

Narrator: Jesus answered him,

Christ: "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

Narrator: Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing there keeping warm. And they said to him,

Crowd: "You are not one of his disciples, are you?"

Narrator: He denied it and said,

Voice: "I am not."

Narrator: One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said,

Crowd: "Didn't I see you in the garden with him?"

Narrator: Again Peter denied it. And immediately the cock crowed.

Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was morning. And they themselves did not enter the praetorium, in order not to be defiled so that they could eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and said,

Voice: "What charge do you bring against this man?"

Narrator: They answered and said to him,

Crowd: "If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."

Narrator: At this, Pilate said to them,

Voice: "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law."

Narrator: The Jews answered him,

Crowd: "We do not have the right to execute anyone,"

Narrator: in order that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled that he said indicating the kind of death he would die. So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him,

Voice: "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Narrator: Jesus answered,

Christ: "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?"

Narrator: Pilate answered,

Voice: "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?"

Narrator: Jesus answered,

Christ: "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here."

Narrator: So Pilate said to him,

Voice: "Then you are a king?"

Narrator: Jesus answered,

Christ: "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Narrator: Pilate said to him,

Voice: "What is truth?"

Narrator: When he had said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them,

Voice: "I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover. Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

Narrator: They cried out again,

Crowd: "Not this one but Barabbas!"

Narrator: Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said,

Crowd: "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Narrator: And they struck him repeatedly. Once more Pilate went out and said to them,

Voice: "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no guilt in him."

Narrator: So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them,

Voice: "Behold, the man!"

Narrator: When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out,

Crowd: "Crucify him, crucify him!"

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Voice: "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him."

Narrator: The Jews answered,

Crowd: "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."

Narrator: Now when Pilate heard this statement, he became even more afraid, and went back into the praetorium and said to Jesus,

Voice: "Where are you from?"

Narrator: Jesus did not answer him. So Pilate said to him,

Voice: "Do you not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?"

Narrator: Jesus answered him,

Christ: "You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above. For this reason the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin."

Narrator: Consequently, Pilate tried to release him; but the Jews cried out,

Crowd: "If you release him, you are not a Friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar."

Narrator: When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out and seated him on the judge's bench in the place called Stone Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he said to the Jews,

Voice: "Behold, your king!"

Narrator: They cried out,

Crowd: "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!"

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Voice: "Shall I crucify your king?"

Narrator: The chief priests answered,

Crowd: "We have no king but Caesar."

Narrator: Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, and, carrying the cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews." Now many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate,

Crowd: "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews'."

Narrator: Pilate answered,

Voice: "What I have written, I have written."

Narrator: When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another,

Crowd: "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be,"

Narrator: in order that the passage of Scripture might be fulfilled that says:

They divided my garments among them,
and for my vesture they cast lots.

This is what the soldiers did. Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved he said to his mother,

Christ: "Woman, behold, your son."

Narrator: Then he said to the disciple,

Christ: "Behold, your mother."

Narrator: And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said,

Christ: "I thirst."

Narrator: There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said,

Christ: "It is finished."

Narrator: And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.

[Here all kneel and pause for a short time.]

Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and that they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may come to believe. For this happened so that the Scripture passage might be fulfilled:

Not a bone of it will be broken.

And again another passage says:

They will look upon him whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SOLEMN INTERCESSIONS

I. For Holy Church

Reader: Let us pray, dearly beloved, for the holy Church of God, that our God and Lord be pleased to give her peace, to guard her and to unite her throughout the whole world and grant that, leading our life in tranquility and quiet, we may glorify God the Father almighty.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, who in Christ revealed your glory to all the nations, watch over the works of your mercy, that your Church, spread throughout all the world, may persevere with steadfast faith in confessing your name. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

II. For the Pope

Reader: Let us pray also for our most Holy Father Pope Francis, that our God and Lord, who chose him for the Order of Bishops, may keep him safe and unharmed for the Lord's holy Church, to govern the holy People of God.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, by whose decree all things are founded, look with favor on our prayers and in your kindness protect the Pope chosen for us, that, under him, the Christian people, governed by you their maker, may grow in merit by reason of their faith. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

III. For all orders and degrees of the faithful

Reader: Let us pray also for our Bishop Nelson, for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Church and for the whole of the faithful people.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is sanctified and governed, hear our humble prayer for your ministers, that, by the gift of your grace, all may serve you faithfully. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

IV. For catechumens

Reader: Let us pray also for (our) catechumens, that our God and Lord may open wide the ears of their inmost hearts and unlock the gates of his mercy, that, having received forgiveness of all their sins through the waters of rebirth, they, too, may be one with Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, who make your Church ever fruitful with new offspring, increase the faith and understanding of (our) catechumens, that, reborn in the font of Baptism, they may be added to the number of your adopted children. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

V. For the unity of Christians

Reader: Let us pray also for all our brothers and sisters who believe in Christ, that our God and Lord may be pleased, as they live the truth, to gather them together and keep them in his one Church.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, who gather what is scattered and keep together what you have gathered, look kindly on the flock of your Son, that those whom one Baptism has consecrated may be joined together by integrity of faith and united in the bond of charity. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

VI. For the Jewish people

Reader: Let us pray also for the Jewish people, to whom the Lord our God spoke first, that he may grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants, graciously hear the prayers of your Church, that the people you first made your own may attain the fullness of redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

VII. For those who do not believe in Christ

Reader: Let us pray also for those who do not believe in Christ, that, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they, too, may enter on the way of salvation.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, grant to those who do not confess Christ that, by walking before you with a sincere heart, they may find the truth and that we ourselves, being constant in mutual love and striving to understand more fully the mystery of your life, may be made more perfect witnesses to your love in the world. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

VIII. For those who do not believe in God

Reader: Let us pray also for those who do not acknowledge God, that, following what is right in sincerity of heart, they may find the way to God himself.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, who created all people to seek you always by desiring you and, by finding you, come to rest, grant, we pray, that, despite every harmful obstacle, all may recognize the signs of your fatherly love and the witness of the good works done by those who believe in you, and so in gladness confess you, the one true God and Father of our human race. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

IX. For those in public office

Reader: Let us pray also for those in public office, that our God and Lord may direct their minds and hearts according to his will for the true peace and freedom of all.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, in whose hand lies every human heart and the rights of peoples, look with favor, we pray, on those who govern with authority over us, that throughout the whole world, the prosperity of peoples, the assurance of peace, and freedom of religion may through your gift be made secure. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

X. For those in tribulation

Reader: Let us pray, dearly beloved, to God the Father almighty, that he may cleanse the world of all errors, banish disease, drive out hunger, unlock prisons, loosen fetters, granting to travelers safety, to pilgrims return, health to the sick, and salvation to the dying.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty ever-living God, comfort of mourners, strength of all who toil, may the prayers of those who cry out in any tribulation come before you, that all may rejoice, because in their hour of need your mercy was at hand. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

XI. For an end to the pandemic

Reader: Let us pray, dearly beloved, for a swift end to the coronavirus pandemic that afflicts our world, that our God and Father will heal the sick, strengthen those who care for them, and help us all to persevere in faith.

Prayer in silence.

Leader: Almighty and merciful God, source of all life, health and healing, look with compassion on our world, brought low by disease; protect us in the midst of the grave challenges that assail us and in your fatherly providence grant recovery to the stricken, strength to those who care for them, and success to those working to eradicate this scourge. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

ADORATION OF THE CROSS AND REFLECTION

While all face the crucifix or the cross, the following invitation and response introduce a period of adoration of the Cross. After a brief period of silent adoration, the leader reads the reflection. The reflection itself 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.

Leader: Behold the wood of the Cross,
on which hung the salvation of the world.

All: **Come, let us adore.**

Reader: Jesus' passion and all that it entailed — the agony, the humiliation, the feeling of abandonment — was over. "It is finished," Jesus said, bowing his head and handing over his spirit (John 19:30). Jesus had been obedient to the Father's will; he had completed his mission to save the world from sin.

But what had also ended was the dividing wall that had separated us from God. Jesus' death on the cross undid the sin of Adam. His sacrificial death accomplished what no previous sacrifice made by a Hebrew priest on behalf of his people could do. The sacrifice would never have to be repeated; it was "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). The blood that flowed from Jesus' body is the blood that continues to wash us clean. It is, and always will be, enough. Our separation from God is truly finished! Now we can "confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy" (4:16).

But how confident are you of God's mercy? Do you sometimes wonder how God can forgive your sins? Maybe you focus on a sin from the past that seems especially serious and wonder if you've really been forgiven. Or you might wonder why God continues to forgive a sin you keep committing over and over again. Does God's mercy have limits?

The answer, of course, is no. God went to unimaginable lengths to assure us that we will always receive his mercy when we approach him. He sent his only begotten Son, his Beloved, to become man and sacrifice his life for us. That's how much he loves us. That's how much he desires to forgive us. And that's why today is called "Good" Friday.

As you venerate the cross today, remember that God's mercy is truly limitless. Never believe that the pain and suffering that Jesus endured was not enough to save you. Never think that the blood that flowed from his side was for everyone else but not for you. Never let any sin stand between you and the Lord. For by his holy cross, he has redeemed the world — and that includes you!

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.**

CONCLUSION

Leader: May abundant blessing, O Lord, we pray, descend upon your people, who have honored the Death of your Son in the hope of their resurrection: may pardon come, comfort be given, holy faith increase, and everlasting redemption be made secure. Through Christ our Lord.

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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Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest: Leader's Edition

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