

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

Holy Thursday

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 enter into the Sacred Triduum 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.

This prayer service is based on the Mass of the Last Supper which is always celebrated in the evening. Thus, it would be appropriate to celebrate this service after dinner. 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 beginning of the Sacred Triduum, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, the most solemn period of the Church's year. This celebration commemorates the institution of the priesthood and of the Holy Eucharist, and the mandate to "wash one another's feet" as the Lord washed the feet of the Apostles. 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 raise us to new life:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins:
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

GLORY TO GOD

**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.

O God, who have called us to participate in this most sacred Supper, in which your Only Begotten Son, when about to hand himself over to death, entrusted to the Church a sacrifice new for all eternity, the banquet of his love, grant, we pray, that we may draw from so great a mystery, the fullness of charity and of life. 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

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Reader: A reading from the Book of Exodus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall stand at the head of your calendar; you shall reckon it the first month of the year. Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth of this month every one of your families must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household. If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lamb in proportion to the number of persons who partake of it. The lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish. You may take it from either the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present, it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight. They shall take some of its blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel of every house in which they partake of the lamb. That same night they shall eat its roasted flesh with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

"This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand, you shall eat like those who are in flight. It is the Passover of the Lord. For on this same night I will go through Egypt, striking down every firstborn of the land, both man and beast, and executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt — I, the Lord! But the blood will mark the houses where you are. Seeing the blood, I will pass over you; thus, when I strike the land of Egypt, no destructive blow will come upon you.

"This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the Lord, as a perpetual institution."

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 116

Reader: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

All: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

Reader: How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good he has done for me? The cup of salvation I will take up, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.

All: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

Reader: Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones. I am your servant, the son of your handmaid; you have loosed my bonds

All: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

Reader: To you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. My vows to the Lord I will pay in the presence of all his people

All: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

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

Brothers and sisters: I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

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: I give you a new commandment, says the Lord: love one another as I have loved you. *Jn 13:34*

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

GOSPEL

John 13: 1-15

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

Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well." Jesus said to him, "Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean, but not all." For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean."

So when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

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: It's common knowledge that if you walk barefoot in public places, you risk picking up all sorts of nasty microorganisms: E. coli, tetanus, and many different types of fungus. These germs seem to consider the human foot a very welcoming environment, and they turn our feet into petri dishes!

Can you imagine how dirty people's feet were during the time of Jesus? The apostles' feet were probably tougher, more calloused, and just plain uglier than anything most of us have seen. No wonder it was the role of a slave to wash the feet of the wealthy — no one else would want to!

So you can understand Peter's shock at the sight of Jesus stooping to wash his feet. Through his time with Jesus, he had come to understand that Jesus was the Messiah. Just to share a meal with him was an honor. So why in the world would this wise and holy man take on such a menial task? Jesus had to explain the importance of this gesture patiently before Peter would relent. And even then, Peter got it mixed up! Jesus had to wash only Peter's feet because he already believed. His head and hands were already clean.

The significance of this act of humility is so profound that some have called it the Gospel in miniature. Others have likened it to the Eucharist. God so loved the world that he sent his only Son to save us. And he still loves us so much that he bends down at every Mass to teach us, feed us, and refresh us. Both in the Incarnation and at Mass, he sends his only Son as a humble servant — all so that we can be filled with his life and transformed into his image!

On this Holy Thursday, focus on this truth: Jesus loves you so much that he is willing to wash your feet. He cares for you so deeply that he wants to tend to your every need, even to the point of feeding you with his Bread of Life and the cup of his own Blood. How loving and generous is our Savior!

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Leader: On the night before he died, the Lord gave us a new example of love when he washed his apostles' feet and instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Let us pray through him to the Father for the grace to live like him, in full Christian service to others.

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

Reader: For the Church
that all her members who are now deprived of the Holy Eucharist,
because of this absence increase our love and devotion
to the Holy Mass,
the center of Christian life,
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all ordained ministers in the Church,
that they be faithful and blessed in their vocations
as they labor in the Lord's vineyard for the sake of the gospel,
and that they have the support of our prayers and good works,
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 those in need of material and spiritual help,
that, following Jesus' commandment of love,
we see the person of Christ in the poor and suffering of this world,
and not hesitate to minister to them.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the Jewish people and for ourselves,
that we forgive any wrongs we have committed against each other,
and come to know the peace and love
which our Savior came to establish on earth,
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 they draw strength from Christ, the Bread of Life,
and from communion with the parish family.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all our sisters and brothers who have died, especially
James Donahue and Rolando Sartori and all
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: Father, we receive all graces through your Son. May we live our lives
as he did, in loving service of you and our neighbor. 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

© 1998, 1997, 1970, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC

Prayers at Home When Gathering for Mass Is Not Possible

© 2020, the Diocese of Clonfert and the Diocese of Elphin, Ireland

The Roman Missal © 2011, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC

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

© 2007, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC

The Word Among Us, © 2020 The Word Among Us.