

A PRAYER SERVICE AT HOME

WHEN ATTENDANCE AT MASS IS NOT POSSIBLE

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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.

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 bishop 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: You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:
Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You came to call sinners:
Christ, have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:
Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

COLLECT

Leader: Let us pray.

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. 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

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16

Reader: A reading from the second Book of the Samuel

When King David was settled in his palace,
and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies on every side,
he said to Nathan the prophet,
“Here I am living in a house of cedar,
while the ark of God dwells in a tent!”
Nathan answered the king,
“Go, do whatever you have in mind,
for the LORD is with you.”
But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan and said:
“Go, tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD:
Should you build me a house to dwell in?’”

“It was I who took you from the pasture
and from the care of the flock
to be commander of my people Israel.
I have been with you wherever you went,
and I have destroyed all your enemies before you.
And I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth.
I will fix a place for my people Israel;
I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place
without further disturbance.
Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as they did of old,
since the time I first appointed judges over my people Israel.
I will give you rest from all your enemies.
The LORD also reveals to you
that he will establish a house for you.
And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors,
I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins,
and I will make his kingdom firm.
I will be a father to him,
and he shall be a son to me.
Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me;
your throne shall stand firm forever.”

The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 2a, 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29

Reader: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

All: **For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

Reader: The promises of the LORD I will sing forever;
through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness.
For you have said, “My kindness is established forever”;
in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

All: **For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

Reader: “I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant:
Forever will I confirm your posterity
and establish your throne for all generations.”

All: **For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

Reader: “He shall say of me, ‘You are my father,
my God, the Rock, my savior.’
Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him,
and my covenant with him stands firm.”

All: **For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

SECOND READING

Rom 16:25-27

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

Brothers and sisters:
To him who can strengthen you,
according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ,
according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages
but now manifested through the prophetic writings and,
according to the command of the eternal God,
made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith,
to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ
be glory forever and ever.
Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 1:38

Cantor: Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Cantor: Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.
May it be done to me according to your word.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

Lk 1:26-38

Leader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

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 the following two lines:]
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became 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

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

All: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment 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

Father McLaughlin, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Richboro, PA

English translation of Lectionary for Mass

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