

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

Fourth Sunday of Easter

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 together to keep holy the Lord's Day. Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because it was on this day, the first Easter, that Jesus conquered sin and 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 brought us to salvation by your paschal mystery:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader Lord Jesus, you renew us by the wonders of your passion:
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader Lord Jesus, you give us your body to make us one
with your Easter sacrifice:
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,
one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed:
"Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made
both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked
Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?" Peter
said to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of
Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the
gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is made to you and to your
children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call."
He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them,
"Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted
his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were
added that day.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 23

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
beside restful waters he leads me;
he refreshes my soul.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: He guides me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side
with your rod and your staff
that give me courage.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: You spread the table before me
in the sight of my foes;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: Only goodness and kindness follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
for years to come.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

SECOND READING

1 Peter 2: 20b-25

Reader: A reading from the First Letter of Saint Peter

Beloved: If you are patient when you suffer for doing what is good, this is a grace before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.

He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

When he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you had gone astray like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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: 1-10

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said: "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him,

because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." Although Jesus used this figure of speech, the Pharisees did not realize what he was trying to tell them.

So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

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: Good Shepherd Sunday often brings bucolic scenes to mind. Picture a well-groomed shepherd, crook in hand, seated peacefully in lush, green pastures, surrounded by docile sheep. It's beautiful, isn't it?

But such an image falls short on two counts. First, shepherd and flock are often dirty and decidedly not peaceful. Second, Jesus called himself a "shepherd" as a rebuke to the Jewish leaders who had just rejected him and cast out a man he had cured of blindness. A true shepherd, Jesus told them, knows his sheep well and leads them with care. And Jesus, the good shepherd, goes so far that he "lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

We can read Jesus' words here as a course correction for his opponents, but we can learn something for ourselves as well. For we are all shepherds for God's people in one way or another. We are all called to care for his people by following in Jesus' footsteps. Our "flock" may include our children, our parents, or our catechism class. We may be quiet shepherds welcoming a new family at church or mentoring a coworker. But no matter who is in our flock, we need to remember that the sheep belong to Jesus and not to us. He treasures each one of them and wants us to reflect his own love and self-sacrifice.

So ask yourself, "How well do I know my sheep? Do I know the names of my coworkers or fellow parishioners? Do I know the challenges my loved ones are facing?" Sometimes we are so busy with our own affairs that we overlook the hurt, weariness, or fear in someone right next to us. But following Jesus' example, we can set aside our concerns, "call them by name," and listen to their needs. Perhaps we can even lead them to a place of peace. That's one small way to be a shepherd for God's sheep.

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: Together as brothers and sisters in Christ, let us now offer our prayers for our needs and those of the world to our heavenly Father.

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

Reader: For Pope Francis, Bishop Pérez and all shepherds of the Church,
in gratitude for their lives of humble and loving service
to the flocks in their care,
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For government and local leaders,
that the Good Shepherd will guide them
in devising effective solutions for reopening
that ensure the health and safety of all people.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For first responders, doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, and priests,
that the Lord may continue to protect and sustain
all who assist the sick.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For those with serious matters of health, finances
and tragic family losses,
that the graces flowing from our prayer today,
may bring them both consolation and divine assistance.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For our families,
that this time without Mass may increase
our spiritual strength from home
with a deeper hunger and love for God.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the families of those who have died during this pandemic,
that they may soon be able to celebrate
the lives of those they have lost,
and gather together to support one another in their grief.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all who serve in our military services,
that their generosity and sacrifices may contribute
to lasting peace and a better world.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For all who are unemployed,
that God will guide them in maximizing their resources
and open new opportunities for them to use their gifts and skills.
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,
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 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 God, hear the prayer of your people.
Often we go astray, like sheep without a shepherd.
Call us back to you through the words of your Son,
the Good Shepherd,
who shows us the way to eternal life with you
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.