

## **A PRAYER SERVICE AT HOME**

### **WHEN ATTENDANCE AT MASS IS NOT POSSIBLE**

### **Seventeenth Sunday of Ordinary Time**

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, 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: Lord, you were born of the Virgin Mary  
for the salvation of the world.  
Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader Christ, you died on the cross to heal the wounds of sin.  
Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader Lord, you rose from the dead to open for us the gates of heaven.  
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.

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure. 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

1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12

Reader: A reading from the First Book of Kings:

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "O Lord, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David; but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?"

The Lord was pleased that Solomon made this request. So God said to him: "Because you have asked for this — not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right — I do as you requested. I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you."

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 86

Reader: Lord, I love your commands.

**All: Lord, I love your commands.**

Reader: I have said, O Lord, that my part  
is to keep your words.

The law of your mouth is to me more precious  
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

**All: Lord, I love your commands.**

Reader: Let your kindness comfort me  
according to your promise to your servants.  
Let your compassion come to me that I may live,  
for your law is my delight.

**All: Lord, I love your commands.**

Reader: For I love your commands  
more than gold, however fine.  
For in all your precepts I go forward;  
every false way I hate.

**All: Lord, I love your commands.**

Reader: Wonderful are your decrees;  
therefore I observe them.  
The revelation of your words sheds light,  
giving understanding to the simple.

**All: Lord, I love your commands.**

SECOND READING

Romans 8: 28-30

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

Brothers and sisters: We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Alleluia, alleluia.

**All: Alleluia, alleluia.**

Cantor:

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;  
you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

**All: Alleluia, alleluia.**

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:44-52

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

"Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."

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](http://wau.org).

Reader: "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls."

What are you looking for in life? Everybody is searching for something. Children long for a special toy or game. Teenagers look for a boyfriend or girlfriend or success at school. Working people might be seeking out the next big career opportunity. People of any age could be wanting financial security or peace of mind.

Today's Gospel introduces us to someone who is also a seeker: a merchant on a quest for fine pearls. Like many of us, this merchant is searching for something specific. And in the midst of his search, he finds something far more wonderful than what he expected: one single pearl of surpassing value, a "pearl of great price" (Matthew 13:46). Seeing it, he gives up the search for those "fine pearls." He commits himself fully to obtaining that one beautiful pearl — so much so that he sells everything else so that he can buy it.

Surely the merchant wasn't able to sell everything all at once. There were probably times when he doubted himself. But he kept at it, day after day, item after item, until he finally had it — the pearl of his dreams. At last he was content!

Jesus says this merchant shows us what the kingdom of heaven is like. It is made up of people like us, searching for happiness. In some ways, the things we seek can make us happy. But finding Jesus and being part of his kingdom far surpasses the happiness that anything else can give. In him we find the answer to our deepest longings for love and reconciliation. For security and fulfillment. For purpose and meaning.

Make no mistake: things we long for can often be good things. But remember the merchant. There was nothing wrong with the pearls he was trading in. Yet he sold all of them for that one pearl of great price.

"Lord, help me to see you as a priceless pearl worth everything in my life."

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: God said to Solomon: "Ask for what you would like me to give you."  
We now ask God to hear our prayers —  
for the Church, the world, and for ourselves.**

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

Reader: For Pope Francis and Bishop Oscar,  
that they be filled with that Holy Wisdom of the Spirit,  
so that they can teach and serve with truth and humility.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For leaders of government, commerce, trade and industry,  
that they strive honestly and intelligently to work together  
as stewards of God's creation.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For all who are working to defeat the coronavirus,  
that God will give strength to all healthcare workers,  
insight to those researching treatments and cures,  
and patience to all who face daily challenges because of the disease.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For all farmers, particularly those in famine stricken areas of the world,  
that the seed they sow be fruitful  
and that there be an abundance of food for all.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For an end to racial divisions,  
that racial inequality will end and that all will come to see  
the variety of human customs, colors and cultures as precious,  
and an insight into the divine.  
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 those bound by the chains of addiction,  
that they find courage and strength from God  
to take the next step on a journey toward healing.  
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 from 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: Heavenly Father, source of all that is good in life,  
help us to use your gifts wisely  
and to rejoice in the treasures of your love.  
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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