

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

Fifteenth 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 Archbishop 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 sent by the Father to bring good news to the poor,
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader Christ, you came to save us from sin,
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader Lord, you were sent to proclaim the grace and mercy of God,
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, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray, so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ and to strive after all that does it honor. 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

Isaiah 55: 10-11

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

Thus says the Lord: Just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; my word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 65

Reader: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

All: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

Reader: You have visited the land and watered it;
greatly have you enriched it.
God's watercourses are filled;
you have prepared the grain.

All: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

Reader: Thus have you prepared the land: drenching its furrows,
breaking up its clods,
Softening it with showers,
blessing its yield.

All: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

Reader: You have crowned the year with your bounty,
and your paths overflow with a rich harvest;
The untilled meadows overflow with it,
and rejoicing clothes the hills.

All: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

Reader: The fields are garmented with flocks
and the valleys blanketed with grain.
They shout and sing for joy.

All: The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

SECOND READING

Romans 8: 18-23

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

Brothers and sisters: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Cantor:

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will have life forever.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 13: 1-23

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore. And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. Whoever has ears ought to hear."

The disciples approached him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will

be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand. Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says:

You shall indeed hear but not understand,
you shall indeed look but never see.
Gross is the heart of this people,
they will hardly hear with their ears,
they have closed their eyes,
lest they see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their hearts and be converted,
and I heal them.

"But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

"Hear then the parable of the sower. The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."

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: You shall indeed hear but not understand. (Matthew 13:14)

Any parent can tell you what it's like to be heard but not understood: "In one ear and out the other" or "It's like talking to a brick wall." This is how it feels when they can't seem to connect with their children.

Jesus had a similar experience. Despite all his time teaching and performing miracles in Galilee, he had little to show for it. Of course, disciples like Peter and Mary Magdalene and the others had left everything to follow him. They were trying to listen closely and put his teachings into practice. But what about the "large crowds" that he always attracted (Matthew 13:2)? They had seen the same miracles, but

many of them didn't see his compassion as something worth imitating. They had heard him talk about his Father's mercy, but many didn't seem to hear his words about loving their enemies.

Jesus' words make it clear that discipleship involves both receiving his miracles and following his teachings. It involves the excitement of experiencing his power and love, and it involves choosing to love him back by trying to become more like him. It involves making sure that our hearts are like the good soil in today's parable — listening intently and prayerfully to his words so that they can change our hearts.

Try to do just that today. Either before or after our prayer service, carve out fifteen minutes and focus on hearing Jesus speak to you. Find a quiet spot, choose one of the readings from today's Mass, and read it. Really read it. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you and help you understand what God is saying. When a word or phrase leaps out at you, let it sink into your heart like seed in good soil. Ask Jesus what he wants you to do about it. Then do it. Let his word bear fruit in your life.

"Thank you, Jesus, for sowing your word into my heart. Help me to nurture it so that I can become more like you."

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: With confidence and trust, we bring
our many prayers and needs before the Lord.

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

Reader: For the Church,
that we may spread the hopeful and exciting message of the Gospel
through both our words and deeds
so that others may encounter the God who loves them.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For government and healthcare leaders,
that God may guide them to make the right decisions
for the wellbeing of all people.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For an end to the pandemic,
that God will free the human family from the coronavirus,
guide all who searching for treatments or a vaccine,
and protect all who are vulnerable from 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 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: Loving Father, we thank you for your Word.
As you hear our prayers, may we always hear you ever more clearly,
and be faithful to your call.
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.