

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

**Sixteenth 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 are the way that leads to the Father,  
Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader Christ, you are the truth that brings joy to the world,  
Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader Lord, you are the life that renews the world,  
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.

Show favor, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands. 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

Wisdom 12: 13, 16-19

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

There is no god besides you who have the care of all, that you need show you have not unjustly condemned. For your might is the source of justice; your mastery over all things makes you lenient to all. For you show your might when the perfection of your power is disbelieved; and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity. But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much lenience you govern us; for power, whenever you will, attends you. And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind; and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 86

Reader: Lord, you are good and forgiving.

**All: Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

Reader: You, O Lord, are good and forgiving,  
abounding in kindness to all who call upon you.  
Hearken, O Lord, to my prayer  
and attend to the sound of my pleading.

**All: Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

Reader: All the nations you have made shall come  
and worship you, O Lord,  
and glorify your name.  
For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds;  
you alone are God.

**All: Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

Reader: You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity.  
Turn toward me, and have pity on me;  
give your strength to your servant.

**All: Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

SECOND READING

Romans 8: 26-27

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

Brothers and sisters: The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

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: 24-43

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus proposed another parable to the crowds, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' His slaves said to him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' He replied, 'No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

He proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the 'birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.'"

He spoke to them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened."

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables, to fulfill what had been said through the prophet:

I will open my mouth in parables,  
I will announce what has lain hidden  
from the foundation of the world.

Then, dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples approached him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He said in reply, "He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Just as weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all who cause others to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear."

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 . . . (Matthew 13:31, 33)

In his parable of the weeds among the wheat, Jesus confirms what we already know to be true: evil exists in the world. We see evidence of it all around us. Sometimes it even seems as if evil is winning out. Will the weeds eventually choke out the wheat and overrun the field of God's kingdom?

Jesus assures us that it will not. In the end, the angels of God will sort the good from the bad, and evil will be destroyed forever (Matthew 13:41). The fact is, by his death and resurrection, Jesus has already won the victory over evil. Someday God's kingdom will reign over all the earth.

Meanwhile, how can we hasten its coming? It's significant that after telling the first parable about the weeds and the wheat, Jesus tells two more parables about the kingdom of heaven. It's like a tiny mustard seed that grows into a large bush (Matthew 13:31-32). It's like a little yeast that leavens a whole loaf of bread (13:33). These are hopeful images! God's kingdom isn't static. It begins in many small ways and then grows and grows.

You have a part to play in its growth! With every prayer, with every act of faith, with every good deed, you help to build the kingdom of heaven on earth. Making time for prayer, worshiping at Mass, helping the poor, sharing your faith, reaching out to a friend in need, speaking out in defense of life — in these ways and more, you can participate in growing God's kingdom. Yes, they can seem like small things. But so are the mustard seed and that little pinch of yeast.

So don't get discouraged by the evil you see, and don't give up hope. Believe that your small acts of faithfulness really do make a difference. And taken together with other believers, they become a mighty force in choking out the weeds of this world.

"Lord, may your kingdom come!"

#### 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: Called to be people of faith and love,  
we turn to the God of healing with our prayers.

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

Reader: For the Church,  
that we may find ways to both preach the Word  
and serve our neighbor,  
especially during this time of separation and crisis.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For world leaders and leaders of nations,  
that, as leaders, they seek to overcome disunity among peoples,  
and strive to be guided by the principles of wisdom, sound judgement,  
care for the vulnerable, and love.  
We pray to the Lord.

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

Reader: For those suffering from the effects of COVID-19,  
that people who are grieving will find compassion,  
people who have lost income will be supported,  
people who are ill will be cared for, and the pandemic ended.  
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: Loving God, hear the words of your people.  
Thankful for your love and compassion showered on us in the past,  
we ask that you continue to fill us with your abundant grace.  
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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*Prayers at Home When Gathering for Mass Is Not Possible*

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