

Sunday Prayer at Home

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020

*For use by St. Mary's Parishioners
Immaculate Conception Church, Alton, IL*

Explanation

We have resumed public Mass at St. Mary's, abiding by social distancing requirements. The dispensation from Sunday Mass remains in effect. This booklet of readings and prayers is designed to help your family keep the Lord's day holy, even if you do not go to church.

It is most fitting for the father of the house to lead these prayers, encouraging the participation of as many members of the family as possible in the various readings and intercessions.

In place of the Eucharist, pray an Act of Spiritual Communion (included). Desire to receive the living presence of God into your souls. This may be done many times each day without limit. Holy Communion is distributed on Sunday on 4th Street from 11:45am-12:30pm, one car at a time. Those at higher risk should continue to shelter at home.

The Vatican has decreed special conditions for receiving plenary indulgences during this time (<https://bit.ly/2xj6pAw>). The prayer service outlined in this booklet satisfies the conditions, together with a firm desire to receive the Eucharist and sacramental absolution in confession as soon as possible. A plenary indulgence is the full pardon of temporal punishment due to our sins in this life (a "get out of purgatory free" card). The decree mentions many other actions that are granted an indulgence during the time of pandemic.

The place and attire: it would be nice for everyone to dress as for Sunday Mass, to arrange the room with candles or statues of saints or a bible in a prominent place. It may also help to sit and stand together like we do at Mass.

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Introduction

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Let us call to mind our sins and ask the Lord for his merciful forgiveness.

All: I confess to Almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned. In my thoughts, and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Leader: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us pray. (*pause in silence*)

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.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

(2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b—12, 14a, 16)

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.”

Responsorial Psalm **(89:2–3, 4–5, 27, 29)**

R. (2a) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.
 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.

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

“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.”

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

“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.”

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading ([Romans 16:25–27](#))

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.

Alleluia

R. Alleluia, Alleluia.

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

R. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel ([Luke 1:26–38](#))

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.

Reflection

Pause for silent reflection. Members of the family may share what inspired them, or what they are praying for on this day. This is not a time for open discussion, but for speaking from the heart while the others listen. Someone may read aloud from a printed reflection or homily written by someone else on the readings and circumstances of the day.

Creed

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,
(*bow*) 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.

Intercessions

Leader: As we approach the celebration of the birth of our Savior, let us turn our hearts and minds to the Father, with confidence in his generous love and mercy:

Reader:

1. That the Church will faithfully proclaim the Word of God to every part of the world, we pray to the Lord...
2. That Government leaders will be responsive to the needs of their people, especially families with young children, we pray to the Lord...
3. That all who are pregnant and afraid may welcome the life within them, and draw strength from the angel Gabriel's words to Mary: Do not fear, we pray to the Lord...
4. That the poor, the lonely, and the neglected will experience God's love during this joyful season through the kindness of others, we pray to the Lord...
5. That the faithful response, "Behold, I come to do your will, O Lord," will be voiced by each person discerning a call to serve Christ as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life, we pray to the Lord ...
6. For those who have died, especially Anne Fahrig, that as they shared our Christmas joy on earth, they may come to enjoy eternal glory in God's kingdom, we pray to the Lord...
7. For all the intentions we hold in our hearts (*pause for a few seconds*), we pray to the Lord...

Leader: Almighty God, prepare our hearts with your grace,
that like Mary,
we may be a worthy dwelling place for your Son.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Spiritual Communion

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father ...

Act of Spiritual Communion

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 into 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.

Silent Thanksgiving

Here, a moment of silence may be observed to thank Jesus for coming into our hearts, and to ask Him personally for all that we need.

Conclusion

Leader: May the Lord bless us, † protect us from evil,
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Dismissal

Leader: Let us go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

Prayer to St. Michael

Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.

Be our protection

against the wickedness and snares of the devil.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;

and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host,

by the Power of God,

cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits

who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

St. Mary's Streaming Schedule

On <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysalton> (no account/login)

- Monday-Friday, 5:30pm Rosary
- The regular Mass schedule has resumed in the church, with social distancing, facemasks recommended
Monday-Saturday 6:30am and 8am (also streaming)
Fridays 8:15am during school year, still streaming
Full Sunday Mass schedule:
 - Saturday 5:15pm,
 - Sunday 6:30am,
8am (also streaming; facemasks required),
9:30am, 11am, 6pm

Please visit our homepage at <https://www.stmarysalton.com> for the most current directives and schedules.

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