



SAINT PAUL SEMINARY

The Seminaries of Saint Paul

How to Keep the Lord's Day Holy A Catholic Family Guide for Celebrating a Spiritual Communion in the Absence of Mass

Background – As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the public celebration of Mass has been suspended throughout many Dioceses in the United States. Many of the faithful, particularly families with children at home, desire to fulfill their duty to God and the Third Commandment in keeping holy the Lord's Day even in the absence of Mass; but there is little guidance on how or what to do.¹ This document is intended to serve as a guide for the spiritual father or head of the family to maintain contact with our ancient liturgical traditions in communion with the Catholic Church throughout the world today. While it should be made clear, especially to younger children, that this is not the Mass – it is intended to connect us to what is familiar in a paraliturgical manner while in these extraordinary circumstances. This guide was approved for use by the USCCB in a April 2, 2020 email.

Gather your family together; it can be around the kitchen table, in the family room, out on a porch or deck. Encourage them to remember that this is a time to rest; to give thanks to God for His love for us in Jesus Christ, and to ask him to heal our world so that we can again join with our neighbors in celebrating the Mass, the Paschal Mystery, and the source and summit of our faith.

NB part of the following paraliturgy draws from the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, 2012 and other rites of the Catholic Church.

April 5, 2020 – Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion

Introductory Rites

Gather the family together and begin by reading or chanting the following antiphon. All stand.

Entrance Antiphon [Cf. Jn 12:1, 12–13; Ps 24 (23):9–10]

Leader: Six days before the Passover, when the Lord came into the city of Jerusalem, the children ran to meet him; in their hands they carried palm branches and with a loud voice cried out:²

Family: Hosanna in the highest!

Leader: Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy! O gates, lift high your heads; grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory! Who is this king of glory? He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

Family: Hosanna in the highest!

Leader: Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy!

Introduction

Invite the family to make the sign of the cross.

Leader: We gather here to celebrate the Lord’s Day. [Indeed, as our entrance antiphon indicates, it is Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion.] Sunday has been called the Lord’s day because it was on this day that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life. Unfortunately, we are not able to celebrate Mass today because [the Coronavirus Pandemic has limited our ability to hold public Masses]. Let us be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ’s suffering, Death, and Resurrection.³

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

Leader: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God forever!⁴

Family: Blessed be God Forever!

The Penitential Act⁵

Leader: Let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate [together and keep holy the Lord’s day].

Family: 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.

Family: Amen.

Collect⁶

The Collect is the introductory prayer at the end of the Introductory Rites that by ancient tradition of the Church, is usually addressed to God the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

Leader: Let us pray.

All present pray in silence for a short time. Then the spiritual leader in the family says the prayer that follows, with hands extended, to implore God.

Almighty ever-living God, who as an example of humility for the human race to follow caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross, graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering and so merit a share in his Resurrection.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.⁷

Family: Amen

Liturgy of the Word⁸

Invite the Family to sit and listen to the words of Scripture. Don't be afraid to break out the family Bible and read the full passages for the scriptures of the day.

Reading 1: Is 50: 4-7

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord GOD has given me
a well-trained tongue,
that I might know how to speak to the weary
a word that will rouse them.
Morning after morning
he opens my ear that I may hear;
and I have not rebelled,
have not turned back.
I gave my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who plucked my beard;
my face I did not shield
from buffets and spitting.

The Lord GOD is my help,
therefore I am not disgraced;
I have set my face like flint,
knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

Reader: The word of the Lord

Family: Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24.

Reader: Our responsorial psalm is: **My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

All: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reader:

All who see me scoff at me;
they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads:
"He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him,
let him rescue him, if he loves him."

All: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reader:

Indeed, many dogs surround me,
a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;
They have pierced my hands and my feet;
I can count all my bones.

All: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reader:

They divide my garments among them,
and for my vesture they cast lots.
But you, O LORD, be not far from me;
O my help, hasten to aid me.

All: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reader:

I will proclaim your name to my brethren;
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:
"You who fear the LORD, praise him;
all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

All: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reading 2: Phil 2:6-11

Reader: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
something to be grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness;
and found human in appearance,

he humbled himself,
 becoming obedient to the point of death,
 even death on a cross.
 Because of this, God greatly exalted him
 and bestowed on him the name
 which is above every name,
 that at the name of Jesus
 every knee should bend,
 of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 and every tongue confess that
 Jesus Christ is Lord,
 to the glory of God the Father.

Reader: The word of the Lord

Family: Thanks be to God

All stand just as you would at Mass for the Gospel acclamation.

Verse Before the Gospel Phil 2:8-9

Reader: **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

All: **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

Reader: Christ became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

All: **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

The Gospel on Palm Sunday is the reading of the Passion of our Lord. The parts can be divided up among members of the family or read by one person. The role of Jesus should be read by the spiritual father or head of the household. The family should be reminded at this time that we are called to live the Gospel by our lives.

N Narrator

J Jesus

O Other single speaker

C Crowd, or more than one speaker

Gospel: Mt 26:44-27:66⁹

N The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
 according to Matthew

N One of the Twelve, who was called Judas
 Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

O "What are you willing to give me if I hand
 him over to you?"

N They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and
 from that time on he looked for an opportunity
 to hand him over.

On the first day of the Feast of

Unleavened Bread, the disciples approached Jesus
 and said,

C "Where do you want us to prepare for you
 to eat the Passover?"

N He said,

J "Go into the city to a certain man and
 tell him, 'The teacher says, "My appointed time
 draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the
 Passover with my disciples."'"

N The disciples then did as Jesus had
 ordered, and prepared the Passover. When it was
 evening, he reclined at table with the Twelve. And
 while they were eating, he said,

J "Amen, I say to you, one of you will
 betray me."

N Deeply distressed at this, they began to
 say to him one after another,

C "Surely it is not I, Lord?"
 N He said in reply,
 J "He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born."
 N Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply,
 O "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?"
 N He answered,
 J "You have said so."

N While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said,
 J "Take and eat; this is my body."
 N Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,
 J "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father."
 N Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them,
 J "This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written:
*I will strike the shepherd,
 and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed;*
 but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee."

N Peter said to him in reply,
 O "Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be."
 N Jesus said to him,
 J "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."
 N Peter said to him,
 O "Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you."
 N And all the disciples spoke likewise. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples,

J "Sit here while I go over there and pray."
 N He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them,
 J "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me."
 N He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying,
 J "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."
 N When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter,
 J "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
 N Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again,
 J "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!"
 N Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. Then he returned to his disciples and said to them,
 J "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand."
 N While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and the elders of the people. His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying,
 O "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him."
 N Immediately he went over to Jesus and said,
 O "Hail, Rabbi!"
 N and he kissed him. Jesus answered him,
 J "Friend, do what you have come for."

N Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

J **“Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled which say that it must come to pass in this way?”**

N At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

J **“Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me. But all this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled.”**

N Then all the disciples left him and fled. Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Peter was following him at a distance as far as the high priest's courtyard, and going inside he sat down with the servants to see the outcome. The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward who stated,

O **“This man said, ‘I can destroy the temple of God and within three days rebuild it.’”**

N The high priest rose and addressed him,

O **“Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?”**

N But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him,

O **“I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Christ, the Son of God.”**

N Jesus said to him in reply,

J **“You have said so. But I tell you: From now on you will see ‘the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power’ and ‘coming on the clouds of heaven.’”**

N Then the high priest tore his robes and said,

O **“He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy; what is your opinion?”**

N They said in reply,

C **“He deserves to die!”**

N Then they spat in his face and struck him, while some slapped him, saying,

C **“Prophesy for us, Christ: who is it that struck you?”**

N Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said,

O **“You too were with Jesus the Galilean.”**

N But he denied it in front of everyone, saying,

O **“I do not know what you are talking about!”**

N As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there,

O **“This man was with Jesus the Nazorean.”**

N Again he denied it with an oath,

O **“I do not know the man!”**

N A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter,

C **“Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away.”**

N At that he began to curse and to swear,

O **“I do not know the man.”**

N And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: “Before the cock crows you will deny me three times.” He went out and began to weep bitterly.

When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.

Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, deeply regretted what he had done. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying,

O **“I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.”**

N They said,

C **“What is that to us? Look to it yourself.”**

N Flinging the money into the temple, he departed and went off and hanged himself. The chief priests gathered up the money, but said,

C “It is not lawful to deposit this in the temple treasury, for it is the price of blood.”

N After consultation, they used it to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why that field even today is called the Field of Blood. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet, *And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of a man with a price on his head, a price set by some of the Israelites, and they paid it out for the potter’s field just as the Lord had commanded me.*

Now Jesus stood before the governor, and he questioned him,

O “Are you the king of the Jews?”

N Jesus said,

J “**You say so.**”

N And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him,

O “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?”

N But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them,

O “Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?”

N For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message,

O “Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him.”

N The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply,

O “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

N They answered,

C “Barabbas!”

N Pilate said to them,

O “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?”

N They all said,

C “Let him be crucified!”

N But he said,

O “Why? What evil has he done?”

N They only shouted the louder,

C “Let him be crucified!”

N When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying,

O “I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.”

N And the whole people said in reply,

C “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

N Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying,

C “Hail, King of the Jews!”

N They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.

As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha—which means Place of the Skull—they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,

C “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!”

N Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said,

C “He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

N The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

J “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*”

N which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said,

C “This one is calling for Elijah.”

N Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said,

C “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.”

N But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.

All kneel and pause a moment.

N And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said,

C “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

N There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb.

The next day, the one following the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

C “Sir, we remember that this impostor while still alive said, ‘After three days I will be raised up.’ Give orders, then, that the grave be secured until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him and say to the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead.’ This last imposture would be worse than the first.”

N Pilate said to them,

O “The guard is yours; go, secure it as best you can.”

N So they went and secured the tomb by fixing a seal to the stone and setting the guard.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord

Family: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection on the Readings¹⁰

All sit. After the Passion narrative, a brief reflection should be given, if appropriate.¹¹ This reflection can be an opportunity for the spiritual father or head of the family to teach and apply the scripture passages to the family’s daily life. Make it real and practical. Draw in current events. Bring the Gospel to life! Especially if there are young children present, you may consider using prudent use of dialogue (questions and answers).¹² You can also look up and view a homily from one of the many on the web (e.g. Bishop Robert Barron or <https://adw.org/coronavirus-dispensation-and-prayers/>).

Period of Silence¹³

After the reflection, pause for a brief period of silent prayer and reflection on the scriptures.

Profession of Faith: Nicene Creed¹⁴

All stand.

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,

Instruct the Family to bow their heads at these words:

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.

Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful¹⁵

Encourage each member of the Family to offer in prayer their needs to their Heavenly Father who answers those who ask. The following are some suggested prayers and a guide to our intercessions. The family can reply to each: "Lord Hear Our Prayer."

Leader: Let us ask the Father of Jesus, our brother and King, for the grace to overcome our fears and to trust in his Divine Mercy.

Reader: For the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for our (Arch)bishop _____, and for all of our priests (especially _____), that throughout this Holy Week we may unite with their sacrifices and prayers imploring our Heavenly Father for grace and mercy in this time of need. We pray to the Lord...

Reader: We pray for the health and safety of our physicians, nurses, research scientists and all healthcare workers, and for all who support them in their mission, that the Holy Spirit's power of healing will flow through them to heal all nations. We pray to the Lord...

Reader: That like the disciples in Matthew's Gospel we might continue to proclaim "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" We pray to the Lord...

Reader: For all those isolated or alone during this time of quarantine, that with Isaiah we beg our Lord to give us a "well-trained tongue" so that we might find creative ways to speak to the weary and to share Christ's message of love and healing. We pray to the Lord...

Reader: That we might fulfill St. Paul's prophecy in his letter to the Philippians so that at Jesus' name our knees bend and our tongues confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. We pray to the Lord...

Reader: For all those suffering with the Coronavirus and for all those that will be diagnosed this week, that Our Lord will grant them quick healing of their bodies and of their souls. We pray to the Lord...

Reader: For all those who have died from this dreadful illness, that their loved ones come to know God's merciful love even at a time of great sorrow. We pray to the Lord...

Leader: Heavenly Father, in the name of your Son Jesus, we ask for those things we think we need, remembering today his procession into Jerusalem and knowing of his ultimate sacrifice to come. We pray in a special way this week for the grace to imitate Christ as our community walks with him on the road to Calvary, in union with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Family: Amen

Prayer to St. Joseph, Hope of the Sick¹⁶

St. Joseph is guardian of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ and patron saint of the Universal Church. In this time of great need, we implore his intercession.

All: Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, we place in you all our interests and desires.

Oh St. Joseph, do assist us by your powerful intercession and obtain for us from your divine son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, our Lord; so that having engaged here below your heavenly power, we may offer our thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers.

Oh St. Joseph, we never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. We dare not approach while he reposes near your heart. Press him in our name and kiss his fine head for us, and ask him to return the kiss when we draw our dying breath. St. Joseph, patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen.

Rite of Spiritual Communion¹⁷

Although without a Priest, we cannot offer the Mystery of Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross, we can join with the Church throughout the world in making a Spiritual Communion until such time as we can again participate in the great Sacrifice of the Mass.

Lord's Prayer

Leader: The Father provides us with food for eternal life. Let us pray for nourishment and strength.¹⁸

Family: 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.

Invitation to [Spiritual] Communion

Invite the family to kneel, if practical. The following formula of prayers can be prayed together as a family, inviting Jesus spiritually into our hearts.

Leader: Let us make acts of faith, hope and love¹⁹ to prepare ourselves to make our Spiritual Communion to unite ourselves with all the Masses our priests are celebrating in our absence and on our behalf:

Act of Faith

All: O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

Leader: Longing for the kingdom of heaven, we place our trust in Christ's promise relying on the grace of the Holy Spirit.²⁰ Let us now make our own act of hope as we pray:

Act of Hope

All: Lord God, I hope by your grace for the pardon of all my sins and after life here to gain eternal happiness because you have promised it who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I intend to live and die. Amen.

Leader: Through His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus made the ultimate act of love by offering himself as expiation for our sins. Let us now make our own act of love as we pray:

Act of Love

All: O Lord God, I love you above all things and I love my neighbor for your sake because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good, worthy of all my love. In this love I intend to live and die. Amen.²¹

Leader: With a humble and contrite heart, we ask the Lord to come to us just as He would if we were able to receive Him in Holy Communion at Mass:

St. Alphonsus' Act of Spiritual Communion

All: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire you in 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.²²

[Spiritual] Communion Antiphon

All: [Mt 26:42] Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it, your will be done.²³

Act of Thanksgiving²⁴

Leader: Let us together pray an Act of Thanksgiving

All [Psalm 100]: Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy. Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us, we belong to him, we are His people the sheep of his flock.

Go within his gates, giving thanks. Enter his courts with songs of praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name.

Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age.

Another Psalm of Thanksgiving would also be suitable, e.g. Ps. 23, Ps. 27, Ps. 98, Ps. 137, etc. Perhaps add prayers dear to the family to give thanks to God for faith in the Holy Eucharist and ever long to receive Him in Holy Communion at Mass.

Concluding Rite²⁵

All stand.

Invitation to Pray [for the world]

Pope Francis' prayer to Mary during the Coronavirus Pandemic²⁶

All: O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You, Oh Lady of Guadalupe and Patroness of the Americas,
know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who has taken upon himself our sufferings
and carried our sorrows
to lead us, through the cross,
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.
Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we
who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Blessing²⁷

Leader: Look, we pray, O Lord, on this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ did not
hesitate to be delivered into the hands of the wicked and submit to the agony of the Cross. Who
lives and reigns for ever and ever.²⁸

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

Family: Amen.

Sign of Peace²⁹

Leader: Let us offer other [an appropriate] sign of peace.

Closing Hymn³⁰

Choose a family favorite hymn and sing to the Glory of the Lord!

¹ Pope St. John Paul II offered abundant material for reflection about the importance of the Lord's Day in his 1998 Letter "*Dies Domini*," available online. What is included below is one option families may find helpful to keep the Lord's Day holy especially in our current circumstances.

² *The Roman Missal*, 3rd typical ed. (Washington D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011), 283.

³ United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, 2012), §186.

⁴ *Sunday Celebrations*, §188.

⁵ *The Roman Missal*, §4; cf. *Pastoral Care of the Sick*, (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983), §83.

⁶ *Sunday Celebrations*, §189.

⁷ *The Roman Missal*, 284.

⁸ *Lectionary*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, at www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040520.cfm, accessed Mar. 31, 2020.

⁹ *Lectionary*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, at www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040520.cfm, accessed Mar. 31, 2020; *Daily Roman Missal*, 4th ed. (Chicago, Illinois: Midwest Theological Forum, 1998), 294-302.

¹⁰ *Sunday Celebrations*, §196.

¹¹ *The Roman Missal*, 284.

¹² Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children* (1 November 1973). *Adoremus Bulletin* www.adoremus.org/2007/12/31/Directory-for-Masses-With-Children/, accessed March 23, 2020, §48.

¹³ *Sunday Celebrations*, §197.

¹⁴ *Sunday Celebrations*, §199.

¹⁵ *The Roman Missal*, §20.

¹⁶ Cf. www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/prayer-for-st-josephs-protection-329.

¹⁷ Cf. *Sunday Celebrations*, §204ff.

¹⁸ *Sunday Celebrations*, §205.

¹⁹ www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213.

²⁰ Cf. CCC 1817.

²¹ www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213.

²² www.stalphonsusno.com/pray-with-us-act-of-spiritual-communion/.

²³ *The Roman Missal*, 286.

²⁴ *Sunday Celebrations*, §211.

²⁵ Cf. *Sunday Celebrations*, §212ff.

²⁶ www.cny.org/stories/text-of-popes-prayer-to-mary-during-coronavirus-pandemic.20746.

²⁷ *Sunday Celebrations*, §214.

²⁸ *The Roman Missal*, 286.

²⁹ *Sunday Celebrations*, §215.

³⁰ *Sunday Celebrations*, §216.