

SUNDAY CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

For use in the home or in a small community

Adapted from *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*

INTRODUCTORY RITES

LEADER: We gather here to celebrate the Lord's Day. 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. While we are not able to celebrate Mass today and receive Holy Communion, let us be united in spirit the of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.

All stand and make the sign of the cross as leader continues:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen

LEADER: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God forever.

ALL: Blessed be God forever.

LEADER: Let us pray.

All pray in silence for a short time, then leader continues:

God of all creation, we gather on this first day of the week made holy by the resurrection of Christ. In the waters of baptism we were buried with him so that we might also rise with him and so share his victory over sin and death.

You have transformed our lives into the living stones that form your Church with Christ as the foundation stone. Strengthen our community's bond of communion and peace during this uncertain time, and deepen our solidarity with your Church throughout the whole world.

Rekindle in us today the vision of your kingdom so that our daily concerns and labor may find their proper perspective.

Fill our homes with the spirit of the Gospel and give us the grace to see the true face of the people with whom we live. In a world torn by fear, sin and division make us instruments of reconciliation and mercy.

Acknowledging our sins, we pray, O God, for the gift of true repentance and genuine conversion. Renew the grace of our baptism within us and inspire us to express our love for you in our service of others.

We raise our voices in praise and thanksgiving to you, O God. May we who celebrate Christ's resurrection this day share in his eternal glory where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 37:12-14

Thus says the Lord GOD:
O my people, I will open your graves
and have you rise from them,
and bring you back to the land of Israel.
Then you shall know that I am the LORD,
when I open your graves and have you rise from them,
O my people!
I will put my spirit in you that you may live,
and I will settle you upon your land;
thus you shall know that I am the LORD.
I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;
LORD, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to my voice in supplication.

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,
LORD, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness,
that you may be revered.

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

I trust in the LORD;
my soul trusts in his word.
More than sentinels wait for the dawn,
let Israel wait for the LORD.

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

For with the LORD is kindness
and with him is plenteous redemption;
And he will redeem Israel
from all their iniquities.

R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:8-11

Brothers and sisters:
Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
But you are not in the flesh;
on the contrary, you are in the spirit,
if only the Spirit of God dwells in you.
Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.
But if Christ is in you,
although the body is dead because of sin,
the spirit is alive because of righteousness.
If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,
the one who raised Christ from the dead
will give life to your mortal bodies also,
through his Spirit dwelling in you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

If the Gospel Acclamation cannot be sung, it should be omitted and leader continues with Gospel.

CANTOR: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory. (ALL repeat)

CANTOR: I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die.

GOSPEL

John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

(Proclaimed by Leader)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The sisters of Lazarus sent word to Jesus, saying,
“Master, the one you love is ill.”
When Jesus heard this he said,
“This illness is not to end in death,
but is for the glory of God,
that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”
Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.
So when he heard that he was ill,
he remained for two days in the place where he was.
Then after this he said to his disciples,
+Let us go back to Judea.”

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus
had already been in the tomb for four days.
When Martha heard that Jesus was coming,
she went to meet him;

but Mary sat at home.
Martha said to Jesus,
“Lord, if you had been here,
my brother would not have died.
But even now I know that whatever you ask of God,
God will give you.”
Jesus said to her,
Your brother will rise.”
Martha said,
“I know he will rise,
in the resurrection on the last day.”
Jesus told her,
“I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.
Do you believe this?”
She said to him, “Yes, Lord.
I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God,
the one who is coming into the world.”

He became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said,
“Where have you laid him?”
They said to him, “Sir, come and see.”
And Jesus wept.
So the Jews said, “See how he loved him.”
But some of them said,
“Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man
have done something so that this man would not have died?”

So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb.
It was a cave, and a stone lay across it.
Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”
Martha, the dead man’s sister, said to him,
“Lord, by now there will be a stench;
he has been dead for four days.”
Jesus said to her,
“Did I not tell you that if you believe
you will see the glory of God?”
So they took away the stone.
And Jesus raised his eyes and said,
“Father, I thank you for hearing me.
I know that you always hear me;
but because of the crowd here I have said this,
that they may believe that you sent me.”
And when he had said this,
He cried out in a loud voice,
“Lazarus, come out!”
The dead man came out,
tied hand and foot with burial bands,
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.

So Jesus said to them,
“Untie him and let him go.”

Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary
and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

Share together some or all of the following questions based on the scriptures:

EZEKIEL: What are some things that can raise your spirits on a gloomy day?

PSALM 130: Have you ever lost sleep anticipating the following day's events?

ROMANS: How does the Spirit lead you when you feel “the body is dead?”

JOHN: Why do you feel it is important that it is accounted that “Jesus wept”? Have you ever felt like God was not listening to you when you prayed? How has God shown care for you during difficult times? How do you show empathy for others when they are hurting? How can you free yourself from any “burial bonds” in your life? What are the areas of your life that need the healing touch of God?

After the reflections or sharing, a period of silence for further meditation on the readings should be observed.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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,

At the words that follow, all bow.

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man. (end bow)

For our sake we 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.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LEADER: With faith in God's promises, let us now present our needs and petitions.

READER: For the Church, for all who proclaim God as the source of life within us,
and for all who recognize the sanctity of all life, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For legislators and officials in elected office, and for those who enact
laws that will support and protect all people in these difficult times, we
pray to the Lord...

READER: For those who have done wrong, may they feel remorse and seek
forgiveness, and for all of us to be aware of God's promise of
redemption, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For all care-givers, doctors, nurses and health-care workers, for all those
who are working to heal the suffering from this pandemic in every way,
we pray to the Lord...

READER: For all of us to roll away the stones that block us from coming closer to
God, and for the courage and wisdom to assist others in unraveling the
bands that hold them in bondage, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For the Elect who are preparing for the Easter Sacraments, that the
coming of the Holy Spirit into their lives may lead them to see the world
around them through the eyes of faith, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For all those who mourn the loss of a loved one, may they know the care
and comfort of Jesus, who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus, we
pray to the Lord...

READER: For all who have died, especially victims of COVID-19, to attain the
fullness of life in paradise, we pray to the Lord...

LEADER: God of love, our refuge and our strength, hear the prayers of your Church, and grant us what we ask of you in faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer may be prayed at this time

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

All Recite

Jesus, I know and believe in your real presence in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is you I desire to love and receive above all things. As I am unable to receive your sacramental presence now, come and be with me in heart and soul. Let my entire self be united with you as I welcome you again and know your loving embrace. Amen.

ACT OF THANKSGIVING

The act of thanksgiving may be a song, hymn, psalm, canticle, or litany.

CONCLUDING RITE

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

ALL: Amen

SIGN OF PEACE

If appropriate, all may exchange a sign of peace