

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

Gather in a place where an environment appropriate for prayer can be created. Put a green branch on the front door or on a window of the home. It doesn't need to be a palm branch, any branch will do. Through this green branch on our door we can remember each other and Jesus' sacrifice for us as we enter into the holiest week of the Christian calendar.

Instrumental music may be played or an appropriate song may played or sung.

Possibilities:

- Jesus, I Trust in You (McDonnell) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0G9mPAZn8I>
- Sweet Redeemer (Angrisano) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlKTfqMdY-s>
- We Live to Love (Stephan) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wG1GKa68UGs>
- Hold on to Love (Manisbusan) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-5l8ZGkLN4>
- Day of Peace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shryo6kj4hw>
- Be My Hands and Feet (Alonso) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwWUw45v_04
- We Walk By Faith (Haugen) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbe3bpi_9Pg
- Without Seeing You (Haas) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqfVZebo81I>

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.

The good news of Easter fills our hearts with joy as we remember Christ's victory over death. In him, who offered his life on the cross, a broken world has been renewed and the promise of eternal life made sure.

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

Acts 2:42-47

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

They devoted themselves
to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life,
to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.
Awe came upon everyone,
and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.
All who believed were together and had all things in common;
they would sell their property and possessions
and divide them among all according to each one's need.
Every day they devoted themselves
to meeting together in the temple area
and to breaking bread in their homes.
They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart,
praising God and enjoying favor with all the people.
And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

R. (1) Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

Let the house of Israel say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say,
“His mercy endures forever.”
Let those who fear the LORD say,
“His mercy endures forever.””

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

I was hard pressed and was falling,
but the LORD helped me.
My strength and my courage is the LORD,
and he has been my savior.
The joyful shout of victory
in the tents of the just:

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it.

R. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting.

SECOND READING

Peter 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of Peter

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading,
kept in heaven for you
who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith,
to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time.
In this you rejoice, although now for a little while
you may have to suffer through various trials,
so that the genuineness of your faith,
more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire,
may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor
at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
Although you have not seen him you love him;
even though you do not see him now yet believe in him,
you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy,
as you attain the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

The Word of the Lord

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

CANTOR: Alleluia, Alleluia. (ALL repeat)

CANTOR: You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord:
blessed are they who have seen me, but still believe!

ALL: Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL
John 20:19-31
(Proclaimed by Leader)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples were,
for fear of the Jews,
Jesus came and stood in their midst
and said to them, "Peace be with you."
When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.
The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,
"Receive the Holy Spirit.
Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them,
and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve,
was not with them when Jesus came.
So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord."
But he said to them,
"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands
and put my finger into the nailmarks
and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside
and Thomas was with them.
Jesus came, although the doors were locked,
and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."
Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands,
and bring your hand and put it into my side,
and do not be unbelieving, but believe."
Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!"
Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples
that are not written in this book.
But these are written that you may come to believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,
and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

Take the passage "...these are written that you may come to believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you
may have life in his name" or another short phrase that stood out to you
and repeat it several times. Place yourself in the story. As you repeat the

phrase, meditate on the people and the actions of the story. Have the leader read the Gospel again if necessary.

Meditate on what this phrase means to you at this point in your life.

Share your personal response to the text: Allow everyone to simply share their thoughts and feelings about what the text means to them. Dialogue and converse about each other's responses after the prayer service over a meal.

Take time in silence to personally encounter how Christ has touched you and those you are with through your meditation on this story.

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

ACTS: Where has division crept into your family or into your community? How might you help bring the peace of Christ to this situation?

PSALM: Have you ever felt like "the stone rejected by the builders?" How did God help you handle the situation?

PETER: When has your faith been tested? Does suffering tend to make you bitter person or a better person?

JOHN: What are the experiences in your life that have brought you to believe?

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 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.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

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

READER: For the Church, and for all people who continue to the best our ability
during this difficult time to spread God's mercy to those most in need: the
impoverished, the unemployed, the chronically ill, the lonely and the
forgotten, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For leaders of nations, and for all who work toward achieving true justice
and lasting peace within their countries and with their neighbors, we pray
to the Lord...

READER: We pray for the waters of the earth to be restored to health, for the soil of t
he earth to provide abundant harvests for all, for continued beauty and
diversity in all creatures that share the earth, and for all the human family
to live as faithful stewards of the gifts of creation, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For all care-givers, health-care workers, first responders, and essential
personnel; for all those who are working to heal the sick and suffering from
this pandemic in every way, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For those who are most in need of the mercy of God and the forgiveness
of others, and for the strength to forgive those who have harmed us, we
pray to the Lord...

READER: For the Elect who continue their preparations for Christian Initiation, that
their witness and enthusiasm may remain strong, we pray to the Lord...

READER: For all who have died, (mention any names...) especially victims of
COVID-19, to attain the fullness of life in the eternal kingdom, we pray to
the Lord...

LEADER: Merciful God, you have given us a new birth through the resurrection of
your Son. May we share this living hope with our families, friends, and
neighbors. Hear these prayers and all the prayers we make to you and
grant through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Risen 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.
(See options on page 1).**

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