



# await the dawn

PRAYERS + RITUALS TO CELEBRATE THE TRIDUUM AT HOME

# foreword

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AND THE  
SHERWOOD FELLOWS  
TEAM

Holy Week holds a special place in the Church and in the hearts of Christians as the most sacred time of the year. It is a time of anticipation, when we await the dawn of the Resurrection and the fulfillment of God's loving promise of redemption. Normally, we would attend the Church's most ancient liturgies and carve out extra time for reflecting on Jesus' life. We would celebrate with our loved ones, our parish family, and our friends.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Triduum will be different than any we have experienced. While we understand the restrictions and know that there are many other challenges to face, *we still mourn the loss of our sacred celebrations*. We are not able to taste the bread and wine of the Last Supper Eucharist; we cannot see the empty barrenness of a church on Good Friday except through a computer screen; we will not smell the incense, hear the bells, or echo "Alleluia!" with a packed church as night turns to day.



**BUT EVEN IN THE MIDST OF THE SADNESS AND THE LONGING,  
WE BELIEVE THERE IS LIGHT AND HOPE.  
WE BELIEVE THAT, FOR EVERY CLOSED PHYSICAL DOOR,  
MANY MORE SPIRITUAL DOORS FLING OPEN.**

The word "liturgy"—which we often use to refer to organized, communal worship—means "the work of the people" participating in "the work of God" (CCC 1069). The highest form of liturgy is the Holy Mass, and while we cannot replace it, we can do other forms of "work."

Though we are not sacramental priests, we are all priests, prophets, and kings by our baptism. Communal prayer and at-home liturgies are accessible to us as laypeople. We have voices, faith, and the presence of God dwelling within us. This short guide is intended to offer you immersive activities and simple prayers to connect you with the events of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. *They can't replace the importance of gathering as the Church, but in a small way, they can elevate these holy days, giving tangible substance to virtual experiences and connecting you to Jesus Christ and his people.*

We are part of an ancient tradition that has survived plagues, wars, tyrants, and revolutions. That tradition continues in you, here and now. When we participate in the Triduum—whether in a church, through our computer, or at home—*we walk alongside the whole Catholic Church and even Christ himself. We follow that well-trod path through life, death, and Resurrection.* How incredible an opportunity we have: to keep our candles burning with watchful hope, no matter where we are, as we await the dawn of new life in Christ Jesus, our King. *A blessed Triduum to you and yours.*

## HOW TO USE THIS

# liturgy guide

For each day of the Triduum, from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday, we've included the day's Gospel, two prayers, and three "rituals" — prayerful activities that you can do alone or with your current housemates. If you live with multiple people, we suggest designating one person to lead the activities and prayers (e.g., the head of the household), or switching off each time.

You'll notice throughout the guide that the text includes hyperlinks to passages from the Bible and external sources for prayers and readings—these link both to outside webpages and to specific pages in our [Appendix of Prayers](#). If you're viewing this guide digitally, simply double click or tap on the underlined words and you'll be redirected.

Please print this guide as needed. Many of the hyperlinked prayers are included in the Appendix of Prayers, which begins on page 24.

## PRAYERS

The prayers are from various Church liturgies and traditions. You could use them any way you see fit: as opening and closing prayers for the ritual activities, before or after you live stream a Triduum service, or for quiet reflections throughout the day.

Many of the prayers have call-and-response options; the normal text indicates where the leader will speak, and the greyed, italicized text is where the group will speak together. Although it might feel strange to pray like this at home, these can be powerful ways for your family or roommates to feel like they're part of something larger than themselves.

## RITUALS

We call the activities "rituals" because they are meant to elevate an ordinary moment into the extraordinary place of prayer, reflection, and worship. These are just suggestions and ideas. You might choose one ritual for the day, mix-and-match throughout the day, or use a portion of the ritual to prepare for a live stream. We've selected these activities because you can do them safely at home and hopefully with supplies you have on hand.

Most of all, the rituals will give you a tangible experience of the Gospel stories each day. They won't replace Mass or a Good Friday service, but they might help you enter into the mysteries of the Triduum more fully and, ultimately, let you encounter God no matter where you are.



# holy thursday



WASHING OF THE FEET  
CHRIST'S LAST SUPPER MEAL  
KEEP WATCH + PRAY

## **MINDFUL PREPARATION**

holy thursday

gospel [JOHN 13:1-15](#)

FROM THE LITURGY  
OF THE HOURS

---

Father,  
for your glory and our salvation  
you appointed Jesus Christ eternal High Priest.  
May the people he gained for you by his blood  
come to share in the power of his cross and resurrection  
by celebrating his memorial in this eucharist,  
for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.

***Amen.***

LITANY OF THE  
MOST BLESSED  
SACRAMENT

---

Read or print from [page 26](#) in our Appendix of Prayers.

sherwood  
fellows

## WASHING OF THE FEET

*If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do. — John 13:14-15*

01. Set up a foot-washing station with a chair, a few pitchers of warm water, a large bowl to pour the water into as you wash each other's feet, and a few towels.
02. Appoint someone to read aloud the story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet: John 13:1-17
03. Take turns washing each other's feet. Try to remain as reverent as possible. Ensure everyone gets a chance to wash another's feet and to have their own feet washed. You might do this by having each person draw the name of another or going around in a circle.
04. While each person is having their feet washed, pray over them silently or out loud.
05. Close by praying an Our Father or one of the above prayers

## CHRIST'S LAST SUPPER MEAL

*When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again] until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God." — Luke 22:14-16*

01. Prepare the meal. The Last Supper would have been a Jewish Passover meal. Jesus, a devout Jew, would have eaten traditional Passover foods to commemorate the Israelites escaping from Egyptian slavery. If your household so chooses, your dinner could include:



- Lamb: lamb chops, lamb meatballs, roast, etc., or beef. *Symbolism: the spotless lamb the Israelites sacrificed, and Jesus, the Lamb of God sacrificed for us.*



- Bitter herbs in salt water: traditionally parsley dipped in salt water, but could also have mixed greens salad, cooked spinach, celery in salt water, etc. *Symbolism: the bitter anguish and salty tears of the Israelites.*



- Unleavened bread: homemade unleavened bread, or crackers, matzoh, pita, etc. *Symbolism: the Israelites escaped quickly in the night and didn't have time to let their bread rise.*



- Red wine: could use actual wine or grape or pomegranate juice. *Symbolism: the blood of the Lamb.*



- Haroset: applesauce with raisins. *Symbolism: the bricks and mortar the Israelites laid during their enslavement.*

CHRIST'S LAST  
SUPPER MEAL  
CONT'D

- 
02. Prepare a table setting for the meal. Use a white linen or table cloth if you have one and set the table with nice plates, glasses, and silverware.
  03. Before you eat, gather the household around the table and have the leader of the household or a volunteer open with one of the above prayers or the [blessing before meals](#) ("Bless us, O Lord! And these thy gifts ...").
  04. During dinner, you could read or tell the story of the first Passover meal ([Exodus 12:1-20](#)) or the Last Supper ([Luke 22:14-20](#)). Jesus wasn't just celebrating Passover; he was also instituting a new sacrament — the Eucharist — and once-for-all sacrifice that we now participate in at every Mass.
  05. After dinner, close by reading a Psalm, like [Psalm 31](#), or one of the above prayers.

KEEP WATCH  
& PRAY

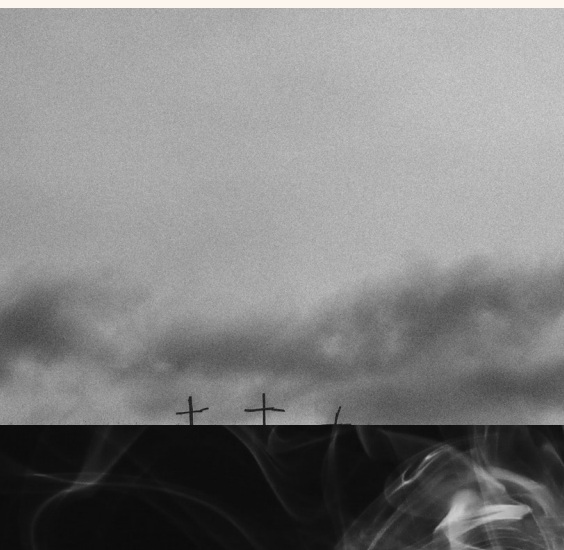
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*Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter, James, and John, and began to be troubled and distressed. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch." — [Mark 14:32-34](#)*

There are a few ways you could walk with Jesus in this moment:

- Spend some time quietly praying in your backyard or a local garden or park. Read the story of Jesus' time in the Garden: [Mark 14:32-42](#). If you keep a safe distance, you could use this activity to meet up with a friend or another family.
- Some people visit churches throughout the night of Holy Thursday to symbolize walking with Jesus as he is handed off to different guards and prisons (see [John 18](#)). While we might not be able to do this in person during the time of quarantine, you could drive to churches in your area and pray outside them, or pray in your car. You could also caravan with other friends or families.
- As a way of "visiting the prisoner" and remembering Jesus' time as a prisoner, consider making Easter cards for inmates at a local jail.





# good friday



ANIMA CHRISTI  
STATIONS OF THE CROSS  
VENERATION OF THE CROSS  
TIME OF SILENCE



## PRAYERFUL INTERCESSION

good friday

gospel [JOHN 18:1-19:42](#)

FROM THE LITURGY  
OF THE HOURS

ANIMA  
CHRISTI

---

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 with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

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Soul of Christ, *sanctify me.*  
Body of Christ, *save me.*  
Blood of Christ, *inebriate me.*  
Water from the side of Christ, *wash me.*  
Passion of Christ, *strengthen me.*  
O Good Jesus, *hear me.*  
Within your wounds *hide me.*  
Permit me not to be *separated from you.*  
From the wicked foe, *defend me.*  
At the hour of my death, *call me*  
*and bid me come to you,*  
*That with your saints I may praise you*  
*For ever and ever.*

**Amen.**

prayers

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

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*And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him. — Mark 15:20*

Here are some options for various versions of the Stations to pray with:

- [Stations of the Cross by St. Alphonsus Liguori](#)
- [Pope Francis' Stations of the Cross](#)
- [Catholic Relief Services Stations of the Cross](#)
- [Stations of the Cross for Children](#)
- Stations of the Cross on [page 29](#) in our Appendix of Prayers

There are many ways you could elevate this experience. Some options for praying the Stations of the Cross at home:

- Print out images of each Station and hang them along the wall in a room or hallway. Walk to each of the Stations as you pray.
- Gather images for each station on your computer (from an [artist's collection like this](#), an [online collection like this](#), or from [various sources](#)) and scroll through each one as you pray.
- Light a candle and display a Crucifix.
- Walk along a path in a quiet place outside.

## VENERATION OF THE CROSS

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*Carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him... Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. — John 19:17-18, 25*

If praying at home:

01. Begin by praying one of the above prayers or the [Good Friday Solemn Intercessions](#) (used in the Church's Good Friday liturgy, available to read or print from [page 39](#) in our Appendix of Prayers).
02. Display a crucifix and say the following three times:
  - Behold the wood of the cross, on which hung the salvation of the world. *R. Come let us adore.*
03. Have each member of the household kiss, touch, or spend a quiet moment looking at the crucifix.
04. While everyone is venerating the cross, or afterwards, you could speak or sing the [Stabat Mater](#), the [Good Friday Reproaches](#), [O Sacred Head Surrounded](#), or another Good Friday Hymn. You could also read the Gospel of the day.
05. Spend some time in silent prayer and contemplation.

VENERATION  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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06. Close with this prayer (used in the Church's Good Friday liturgy):

Wisdom, power, and adoration  
To the blessed Trinity  
For redemption and salvation  
Through the Paschal Mystery,  
Now, in every generation,  
And for all eternity.

**Amen.**

If incorporating this ritual into a live stream of a Good Friday Service, follow along with the service, venerating the cross after the Solemn Intercessions.

TIME OF SILENCE

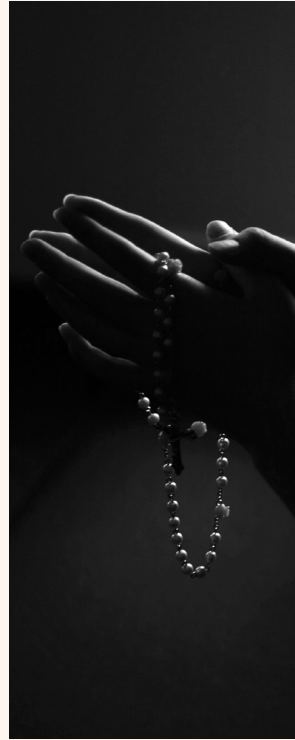
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*From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" — Matthew 27:45–46*

In the three hours before Jesus died on the Cross, the land was covered with darkness. Many people spend these hours — or some portion of this time — in quiet reflection, even as they go about their daily activities. Begin and end your time of silence with one of the prayers or other rituals, or read and meditate on a passage of Christ's agony and death through the eyes and heart of his mother. You can find it in on [page 41](#) of our Appendix of Prayers.



JOINED WITH CHRIST IN DEATH  
TIME OF SILENCE  
PREPARATION  
LIGHT AT NIGHTFALL



# holy Saturday



**HOLY SILENCE**

In order to commemorate the death of Christ, there is no mass offered on Holy Saturday, and therefore *there is no Gospel of the Day*.

Instead, spend some time in silent prayer and contemplation, or reflect on this [ancient homily](#) (available on [page 49](#) of our Appendix of Prayers) and meditate on the depths of Christ's love that breaks the bonds of sin and death.

FROM THE LITURGY  
OF THE HOURS

---

All-powerful and ever-living God,  
your only Son went down among the dead  
and rose again in glory.  
In your goodness  
raise up your faithful people,  
buried with him in baptism,  
to be one with him  
in the eternal life of heaven,  
where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

PRAYER TO BE  
JOINED WITH  
CHRIST IN DEATH

---

O Lord, Your sorrowing Mother stood by Your Cross;  
help us in our sorrows to share Your sufferings.  
Like the seed buried in the ground,  
You have produced the harvest of eternal life for us;  
make us always dead to sin and alive to God.  
Shepard of all, in death you remained hidden from the world;  
teach us to love our hidden spiritual life with You and the Father.  
In Your role as the new Adam, You went down among the dead  
to release all the just there since the beginning; grant that all  
who are dead in sin may hear Your voice and rise to new life.  
Son of the living God, You have allowed us through baptism  
to be buried with You; grant that we may also rise with You  
in baptism and walk in newness of life.

**Amen.**



## TIME OF SILENCE

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*Having bought a linen cloth, [Joseph of Arimathea] took [Jesus] down, wrapped him in the linen cloth and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus watched where he was laid.*  
— Mark 15:46

On Holy Saturday, Christ descends into death and the world is silent. On this day, the Church forbids the celebration of any sacraments, except for confession and the anointing of the sick.

Take time away from your phone, away from work or hobbies, away even from friends, family or roommates, and let yourself enter into this time of mourning and longing. Reflect on the events of Good Friday, Christ's death, and the hope of Resurrection.

As a symbol of meditating outside Jesus' tomb, you might consider driving to a church to pray in your car or outside the church at a safe distance from others.

## PREPARATION: CLEAN & DECORATE THE HOUSE

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*It was the day of preparation, and the sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils. Then they rested on the sabbath according to the commandment.* — Luke 23:54–56

Begin preparing for and anticipating Easter Sunday. You could do this in silence, play soft music, or call a friend while you work.

- Deep clean your house
- Prepare any food for tomorrow
- Remove clutter and choose some things to donate
- Put up your Easter decorations

LIGHT AT  
NIGHTFALL:  
CANDLE-LIGHTING  
OR BONFIRE

---

*After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow. — Matthew 28:1–3*

The Easter Vigil opens with the Liturgy of Light: a special portion of the Vigil Mass in which the Paschal Candle, symbolizing Christ our light, is brought into the church. While we cannot replace the Easter Vigil Mass or the Liturgy of Light, we can certainly celebrate the dawn of Easter with our own forms of light, using candles and/or an outdoor fire.

01. If you are using candles, give each person a candle to hold. If using a bonfire, set up the firewood beforehand. Try to be in as dark a space as safely possible.
02. Light one candle or a small portion of the fire as you say one of the above prayers.
03. Then, recite all or some of the Exsultet (on page 50 of our Appendix of Prayers), the traditional chant that opens the Easter Vigil Mass. If saying the whole prayer, omit the portions in parenthesis. If you only want to use a part of the prayer, the first 3 stanzas are a good section to use.
04. Have each person share something they are grateful for, or someone that has brought light to their life. As they share, they could light their candle using the original candle or take a turn stoking the fire. Continue to light each others' candles as people share.
05. Appoint someone to read aloud this Gospel passage: Matthew 28:1-10.
06. After everyone has shared and you've read the Resurrection account in Matthew, feel free to continue the conversation about gratitude (after blowing out all candles!), sing an Easter hymn, or roast some s'mores.
07. Close with one of the above prayers or a "Glory Be" prayer.

VICTIMAE PASCHALI LAUDES  
BAPTISMAL PROMISES  
FEASTING TOGETHER  
EASTER EGGS



# easter sunday

AND AT DAWN, FATHOMLESS MERCY

FROM THE LITURGY  
OF THE HOURS

---

O God, who on this day,  
through your Only Begotten Son,  
have conquered death  
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,  
grant, we pray, that we who keep  
the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection  
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,  
rise up in the light of life.  
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.

**Amen.**

FROM THE  
SEQUENCE  
VICTIMAE  
PASCHALI  
LAUDES

---

Christians, to the Paschal Victim  
Offer your thankful praises!  
A Lamb the sheep redeems;  
Christ, who only is sinless,  
Reconciles sinners to the Father.  
Death and life have contended in that combat stupendous:  
The Prince of life, who died, reigns immortal.  
Speak, Mary, declaring  
What you saw, wayfaring:  
"The tomb of Christ, who is living,  
The glory of Jesus' resurrection;  
bright angels attesting,  
The shroud and napkin resting.  
Yes, Christ my hope is arisen;  
to Galilee he goes before you."  
Christ indeed from death is risen, our new life obtaining.  
Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning!

**Amen. Alleluia.**

## RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

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*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." — John 20:19-21*

01. Begin by lighting a candle. If you have your or a family member's baptismal candle on hand, you could light and hold it.
02. Appoint someone to lead the household in the Renewal of Baptismal Promises (on [page 53](#) of our Appendix of Prayers).
03. If you have holy water on hand, sprinkle it on everyone present and make the sign of the cross.
04. Close with an "Our Father" or one of the above prayers.

## FEASTING TOGETHER

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*And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. — Luke 24:30-31*

After fasting throughout Lent, we should feast in an equal way to commemorate the Easter season! So don't hold back in your Easter meal celebration — this is, after all, the holiest feast day in the Church!

01. A blessing for the first meal of Easter (on [page 54](#) of our Appendix of Prayers) could be a great way to start your family brunch or a meal with friends over video chat.

## EASTER EGG DECORATIONS

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*On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. — John 20:1*

Christians have long seen the egg as a symbol of the empty tomb and Jesus' resurrection. Some stories show that Mary Magdalene has a long-standing association with the Easter egg. In the Eastern Rites, there are icons of Mary Magdalene holding a [red egg](#), symbolizing her attempt to use the egg to evangelize the emperor Tiberius Caesar in Rome.

This year, try upping your egg decoration skills with great (but generally easy) ideas [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

## APPENDIX OF ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

## NOTE ON THE APPENDIX

In call-and-response prayers, the leader speaks the normal text and the group speaks the *greyed, italic text*, unless otherwise noted.

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holy  
thursday

LITANY OF THE  
MOST BLESSED  
SACRAMENT

**Nihil Obstat:**

*Very Rev. Peter J. Kenny, D.D.,  
Diocesan Censor*

**Imprimatur:**

*Most Rev. Denis J Hart DD  
Titular Bishop of Vagada  
Vicar General*

**May 18th, 2000**

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Lord, have mercy. *R. Lord, have mercy.*  
Christ, have mercy. *R. Christ, have mercy.*  
Lord, have mercy. *R. Lord, have mercy.*  
Christ, hear us. *R. Christ, graciously hear us.*  
God the Father of Heaven, *R. have mercy on us.*  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *R. have mercy on us.*  
God the Holy Spirit, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Holy Trinity, one God, *R. have mercy on us.*

Jesus, Eternal High Priest of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, Divine Victim on the Altar for our salvation, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, hidden under the appearance of bread, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, dwelling in the tabernacles of the world, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, really, truly and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament,  
*R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, abiding in Your fulness, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity,  
*R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, Bread of Life, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, Bread of Angels, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Jesus, with us always until the end of the world, *R. have mercy on us.*

Sacred Host, summit and source of all worship and Christian life,  
*R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, sign and cause of the unity of the Church, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, adored by countless angels, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, spiritual food, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, Sacrament of love, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, bond of charity, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, greatest aid to holiness, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, gift and glory of the priesthood, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, in which we partake of Christ, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, in which the soul is filled with grace, *R. have mercy on us.*  
Sacred Host, in which we are given a pledge of future glory,  
*R. have mercy on us.*

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.  
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.  
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

For those who do not believe in Your Eucharistic presence,  
*R. have mercy, O Lord.*  
For those who are indifferent to the Sacrament of Your love,  
*R. have mercy on us.*  
For those who have offended You in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar,  
*R. have mercy on us.*

That we may show fitting reverence when entering Your holy temple,  
*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

LITANY OF THE  
MOST BLESSED  
SACRAMENT  
CONT'D

---

That we may make suitable preparation before approaching the Altar,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may receive You frequently in Holy Communion with real

devotion and true humility, *R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may never neglect to thank You for so wonderful a blessing,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may cherish time spent in silent prayer before You,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may grow in knowledge of this Sacrament of sacraments,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That all priests may have a profound love of the Holy Eucharist,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That they may celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in accordance  
with its sublime dignity, *R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may be comforted and sanctified with Holy Viaticum at the

hour of our death, *R. we beseech You, hear us.*

That we may see You one day face to face in Heaven,

*R. we beseech You, hear us.*

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,

*R. spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,

*R. graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,

*R. have mercy on us, O Lord.*

V. O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine,

*R. all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine.*

Let us pray,

Most merciful Father,

You continue to draw us to Yourself through the Eucharistic Mystery.

Grant us fervent faith in this Sacrament of love, in which Christ the  
Lord Himself is contained, offered and received. We make this prayer  
through the same Christ our Lord. *R. Amen.*

good  
friday

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Source:  
[Discovery Ministries, Inc.](#)

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### preparatory prayer

#### ALL PRAY

My Lord, Jesus Christ,  
You have made this journey to die for me with unspeakable love; and I have so many times ungratefully abandoned You. But now I love You with all my heart; and, because I love You, I am sincerely sorry for ever having offended You. Pardon me, my God, and permit me to accompany You on this journey. You go to die for love of me; I want, my beloved Redeemer, to die for love of You. My Jesus, I will live and die always united to You.

#### ALL SING

At the cross her station keeping  
Stood the mournful Mother weeping  
Close to Jesus to the last

---

### the 1st station: pilate condemns Jesus to die

#### LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

#### GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

#### V:

Consider how Jesus Christ, after being scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross. (*Kneel*)

#### R:

My adorable Jesus, / it was not Pilate; / no, it was my sins that condemned You to die. / I/ beseech You, by the merits of this sorrowful journey, / to assist my soul on its journey to eternity. / I love You, beloved Jesus; / I love You more than I love myself. / With all my heart I repent of ever having offended You./ Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

#### ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

#### ALL SING

Through her heart, His sorrow sharing  
All His bitter anguish bearing  
Now at length the sword has passed

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

---

**the 2nd station: Jesus accepts his cross**

V:

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

R:

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider Jesus as He walked this road with the cross on His shoulders, thinking of us, and offering to His Father on our behalf, the death He was about to suffer. (*Kneel*)

R:

My most beloved Jesus, / I embrace all the sufferings You have destined for me until death. / I beg You, by all You suffered in carrying Your cross, / to help me carry mine with Your perfect peace and resignation. / I love You, Jesus, my love; / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never / let me separate myself from You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

O, how sad and sore depressed  
Was that Mother highly blessed  
Of the sole Begotten One

---

**the 3rd station: Jesus falls the first time**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider the first fall of Jesus. Loss of blood from the scourging and crowning with thorns had so weakened Him that He could hardly walk; and yet He had to carry that great load upon His shoulders. As the soldiers struck Him cruelly, He fell several times under the heavy cross. (*Kneel*)

R:

My beloved Jesus, / it was not the weight of the cross / but the weight of my sins which made You suffer so much. / By the merits of this first fall, / save me from falling into mortal sin. / I love You, O my Jesus, with all my heart; / I am sorry that I have offended You. / May I never offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

---

**the 3rd station (continued)**

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Christ above in torment hangs  
She beneath beholds the pangs  
Of her dying, glorious Son

---

**the 4th station: Jesus meets his afflicted mother**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how the Son met his Mother on His way to Calvary. Jesus and Mary gazed at each other and their looks became as so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly. (*Kneel*)

R:

My most loving Jesus, / by the pain You suffered in this meeting / grant me the grace of being truly devoted to Your most holy Mother. / And You, my Queen, who was overwhelmed with sorrow, / obtain for me by Your prayers / a tender and a lasting remembrance of the passion of Your divine Son. / I love You, Jesus, my Love, above all things. / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never allow me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Is there one who would not weep,  
'whelmed in miseries so deep  
Christ's dear Mother to behold.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

---

**the 5th station: simon helps Jesus carry the cross**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how weak and weary Jesus was. At each step He was at the point of expiring. Fearing that He would die on the way when they wished Him to die the infamous death of the cross, they forced Simon of Cyrene to help carry the cross after Our Lord. (*Kneel*)

R:

My beloved Jesus / I will not refuse the cross as Simon did: / I accept it and embrace it. / I accept in particular the death that is destined for me / with all the pains that may accompany it. / I unite it to Your death / and I offer it to You. / You have died for love of me; / I will die for love of You and to please You. / Help me by Your grace. / I love You, Jesus, my Love; / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Can the human heart refrain  
From partaking in her pain  
In that Mother's pain untold?

---

**the 6th station: veronica offers her veil to Jesus**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider the compassion of the holy woman, Veronica. Seeing Jesus in such distress, His face bathed in sweat and blood, she presented Him with her veil. Jesus wiped His face, and left upon the cloth the image of his sacred countenance. (*Kneel*)



STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 6th station (continued)**

**R:**

My beloved Jesus, / Your face was beautiful before You began this journey;  
/ but, now, it no longer appears beautiful / and is disfigured with wounds and  
blood. / Alas, my soul also was once beautiful / when it received Your grace in  
Baptism; / but I have since disfigured it with my sins. / You alone, my Redeemer,  
can restore it to its former beauty. / Do this by the merits of Your passion; and  
then do with me as You will.

**ALL PRAY**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

**ALL SING**

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled  
She beheld her tender Child  
All with bloody scourges rent.

---

**the 7th station: Jesus falls the second time**

**LEADER**

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

**GROUP**

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**V:**

Consider how the second fall of Jesus under His cross renews the pain in all  
the wounds of the head and members of our afflicted Lord. (*Kneel*)

**R:**

My most gentle Jesus, / how many times You have forgiven me; / and how  
many times I have fallen again and begun again to offend You! / By the merits  
of this second fall, / give me the grace to persevere in Your love until death.  
/ Grant, that in all my temptations, I may always have recourse to You. / I love  
You, Jesus, my Love with all my heart; / I am sorry that I have offended You.  
/ Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then  
do with me as You will.

**ALL PRAY**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

**ALL SING**

For the sins of His own nation  
Saw Him hang in desolation  
Till His spirit forth He sent.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 8th station: Jesus speaks to the women**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how the women wept with compassion seeing Jesus so distressed and dripping with blood as he walked along. Jesus said to them, "Weep not so much for me, but rather for Your children." (*Kneel*)

R:

My Jesus, laden with sorrows, / I weep for the sins which I have committed against You / because of the punishment I deserve for them; / and, still more, because of the displeasure they have caused You / who have loved me with an infinite love. / It is Your love, more than the fear of hell, / which makes me weep for my sins. / My Jesus, I love You more than myself; / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never allow me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

O sweet Mother! Fount of Love,  
Touch my spirit from above  
Make my heart with yours accord.

---

**the 9th station: Jesus falls the third time**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how Jesus Christ fell for the third time. He was extremely weak and the cruelty of His executioners was excessive; they tried to hasten His steps though He hardly had strength to move. (*Kneel*)

R:

My outraged Jesus, / by the weakness You suffered in going to Calvary, / give me enough strength to overcome all human respect / and all my evil passions which have led me to despise Your friendship. / I love You, Jesus my Love, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never permit me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 9th station (continued)**

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Make me feel as You have felt  
Make my soul to glow and melt  
With the love of Christ, my Lord.

---

**the 10th station: Jesus is stripped of His garments**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how Jesus was violently stripped of His clothes by His executioners. The inner garments adhered to his lacerated flesh and the soldiers tore them off so roughly that the skin came with them. Have pity for your Savior so cruelly treated and tell Him. (*Kneel*)

R:

My innocent Jesus, / by the torment You suffered in being stripped of Your garments, / help me to strip myself of all attachment for the things of earth / that I may place all my love in You who are so worthy of my love. / I love You, O Jesus, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Holy Mother, pierce me through  
In my heart each wound renew  
Of my Savior crucified.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 11th station: Jesus is nailed to the cross**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider Jesus, thrown down upon the cross, He stretched out His arms and offered to His eternal Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. They nailed His hands and feet, and then, raising the cross, left Him to die in anguish. (*Kneel*)

R:

My despised Jesus, / nail my heart to the cross / that it may always remain there to love You and never leave You again. / I love You more than myself; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never permit me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Let me share with you His pain,  
Who for all our sins was slain,  
Who for me in torments died.

---

**the 12th station: Jesus dies upon the cross**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how Your Jesus, after three hours of agony on the cross, is finally overwhelmed with suffering and, abandoning Himself to the weight of His body, bows His head and dies. (*Kneel*)

R:

My dying Jesus, / I devoutly kiss the cross on which You would die for love of me. / I deserve, because of my sins, to die a terrible death; / but Your death is my hope. / By the merits of Your death, / give me the grace to die embracing Your feet and burning with love of You. / I yield my soul into Your hands. / I love You with my whole heart. / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 12th station (continued)**

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

Let me mingle tears with thee  
Mourning Him who mourned for me,  
All the days that I may live.

---

**the 13th station: Jesus is taken down from the cross**

LEADER

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

GROUP

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

V:

Consider how, after Our Lord had died, He was taken down from the cross by two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, and placed in the arms of His afflicted Mother. She received Him with unutterable tenderness and pressed Him close to her bosom. (*Kneel*)

R:

O Mother of Sorrows, / for the love of Your Son, / accept me as Your servant  
and pray to Him for me, / And You, my Redeemer, since you have died for me,  
/ allow me to love You, / for I desire only You and nothing more. / I love You,  
Jesus my Love, / and I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend  
You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

ALL PRAY

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

ALL SING

By the cross with you to stay  
There with you to weep and pray  
Is all I ask of you to give.

STATIONS  
OF THE CROSS  
CONT'D

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**the 14th station: Jesus is placed in the sepulcher**

**LEADER**

We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (*Genuflect*)

**GROUP**

Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**V:**

Consider how the disciples carried the body of Jesus to its burial, while His holy Mother went with them and arranged it in the sepulcher with her own hands. They then closed the tomb and all departed. (*Kneel*)

**R:**

Oh, my buried Jesus, / I kiss the stone that closes You in. / But You gloriously did rise again on the third day. / I beg You by Your resurrection that I may be raised gloriously on the last day, / to be united with You in heaven, to praise You and love You forever. / I love You, Jesus, and I repent of ever having offended You. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

**ALL PRAY**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

**ALL SING**

Virgin of all virgins blest!  
Listen to my fond request:  
Let me share your grief divine.

## SOLEMN INTERCESSIONS

Source:  
Roman Missal by the  
International Commission  
on English in the Liturgy  
Corporation

### 1. for holy church

Let us pray, dearly beloved, for the holy Church of God, that our God and Lord be pleased to give her peace, to guard her and to unite her throughout the whole world and grant that, leading our life in tranquility and quiet, we may glorify God the Father almighty.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, who in Christ revealed your glory to all the nations, watch over the works of your mercy, that your Church, spread throughout all the world, may persevere with steadfast faith in confessing your name.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### 2. for the pope

Let us pray also for our most Holy Father Pope Francis, that our God and Lord, who chose him for the Order of Bishops, may keep him safe and unharmed for the Lord's holy Church, to govern the holy People of God.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, by whose decree all things are founded, look with favor on our prayers and in your kindness protect the Pope chosen for us, that, under him, the Christian people, governed by you their maker, may grow in merit by reason of their faith.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### 3. for all orders and degrees of the faithful

Let us pray also for our Bishop N., for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the

Church and for the whole of the faithful people.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is sanctified and governed, hear our humble prayer for your ministers, that, by the gift of your grace, all may serve you faithfully.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### 4. for catechumens

Let us pray also for catechumens, that our God and Lord may open wide the ears of their inmost hearts and unlock the gates of his mercy, that, having received forgiveness of all their sins through the waters of rebirth, they, too, may be one with Christ Jesus our Lord.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, who make your Church ever fruitful with new offspring, increase the faith and understanding of (our) catechumens, that, reborn in the font of Baptism, they may be added to the number of your adopted children.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### 5. for the unity of christians

Let us pray also for all our brothers and sisters who believe in Christ, that our God and Lord may be pleased, as they live the truth, to gather them together and keep them in his one Church.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, who gather what is scattered and keep together what you have gathered, look kindly on the flock of your Son, that those whom one

SOLEMN  
INTERCESSIONS  
CONT'D

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Baptism has consecrated may be joined together by integrity of faith and united in the bond of charity.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**6. for the jewish people**

Let us pray also for the Jewish people, to whom the Lord our God spoke first, that he may grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants, graciously hear the prayers of your Church, that the people you first made your own may attain the fullness of redemption.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**7. for those who do not believe in Christ**

Let us pray also for those who do not believe in Christ, that, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they, too, may enter on the way of salvation.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, grant to those who do not confess Christ that, by walking before you with a sincere heart, they may find the truth and that we ourselves, being constant in mutual love and striving to understand more fully the mystery of your life, may be made more perfect witnesses to your love in the world.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**8. for those who do not believe in God**

Let us pray also for those who do not acknowledge God, that, following what is right in sincerity of heart, they may find the way to God himself.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, who created all people to seek you always by desiring you and, by finding you, come to rest, grant, we pray, that, despite every harmful obstacle, all may recognize the signs of your fatherly love and the witness of the good works done by those who believe in you, and so in gladness confess you, the one true God and Father of our human race.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**9. for those in public office**

Let us pray also for those in public office, that our God and Lord may direct their minds and hearts according to his will for the true peace and freedom of all.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, in whose hand lies every human heart and the rights of peoples, look with favor, we pray, on those who govern with authority over us, that throughout the whole world, the prosperity of peoples, the assurance of peace, and freedom of religion may through your gift be made secure.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**10. for those in tribulation**

Let us pray, dearly beloved, to God the Father almighty, that he may cleanse the



SOLEMN  
INTERCESSIONS  
CONT'D

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world of all errors, banish disease, drive out hunger, unlock prisons, loosen fetters, granting to travelers safety, to pilgrims return, health to the sick, and salvation to the dying.

*(Time of silence)*

Almighty ever-living God, comfort of mourners, strength of all who toil, may the prayers of those who cry out in any tribulation come before you, that all may rejoice, because in their hour of need your mercy was at hand.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

AT THE CROSS  
WITH MARY

An excerpt for reflection from:  
*Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary,*  
*Mother of God*  
Abbe Orsini, 1880

*Translated from the French*

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As he painfully passed down the long street which leads to the Judiciary Gate, a woman made her way through the crowd. This woman, remarkably beautiful, and bearing in her mild and sweet countenance the image of virtue, seemed wholly absorbed in unutterable grief. She suffered so much; she was so pale. Her eyes, which had shed all their tears, cast a look so dead — a look of sorrow so holy upon the frightful wounds of our Savior — that, when they beheld her, the daughters of Jerusalem muttered with compassion, "Poor Mother!". She glided through the people, who made room for her by an instinctive feeling of pity and sympathy. Some of the Pharisees with hardened hearts called Jesus, bathed as he was in perspiration, and ready to die with fatigue beneath the cross, by insulting names; yet, she did not hear them. The foreign soldiers who surrounded her Son made threatening signs to her; yet, she did not see them/ But when a number of lances, with their points directed to her breast, were thrust between her and Jesus, there came from her fixed and piercing eyes a lightening flash which revealed the blood of David, and her fine and inspired head assumed such an expression of sorrowful grandeur, and cool contempt of death, that the soldiers, overcome, slowly lowered their arms before the heroic and saintly woman. Savage as the life of the camp had made them, they remembered their own mothers.

Mary turned her trembling steps towards our Savior. She fixed eyes full of anguish on that humiliated form — dragging himself along, bleeding and half-clothed, beneath a heavy burden; on that imposing, merciful, and mild countenance, which she would have feared to ruffle by the slight contact of her chaste lips, and which, now swollen, blue, covered with filth and blood, scarcely retained any longer the image of the Creator. She passed her hand in sorrow across his forehead, as if to make sure that she was not the sport of some horrible hallucination. Not a groan relieved her oppressed heart, no gesture of despair initiated the spectators in the mysteries of her agony. They only thought she was going to die, and indeed she would have died a thousand

AT THE CROSS  
WITH MARY  
CONT'D

---

times during that solemn and heartrending pause, if He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb had not divinely supported her. Jesus soon perceived that motionless and mute figure, a few paces from him. Bending down before her, his forehead bowed beneath the burden of the cross, he pronounced the name of "Mother." At that word, which sounded like a funeral knell in the ears of the holy Virgin, a sharp pain pierced through her heart. She was seen to stagger and turn pale; then, sinking down, she fell full-length on those rough and reddened stones where Jesus had left traces of blood as he passed.

A young Galilean with a dark and dejected countenance, and a young woman drowned in tears, made themselves a passage to Mary. Thanks to their attentions, the Virgin of Sorrows recovered the use of her senses and the consciousness of that physical and moral martyrdom which no martyr, according to the Fathers, ever equalled. Doubtless, John and Magdalene did everything to removed her from the scene of blood and death which was preparing on Golgotha, but their entreaties were useless. Rising with difficulty, Mary began to climb, beneath the burning sun, the steepest side of Calvary: it was the shortest way, and that which they had made Jesus follow.

They had reached the fatal and hallowed place where the Lamb of God was about to satisfy the justice of incensed Heaven, by substituting himself for all other victims and loading himself with all our miseries. There it was that the great sacrifice was about to be offered, one hand reaching to the original transgression, and the other into the night of future things, even to the consummation of the ages. This small, rocky declivity was the new altar, whence the blood of Christ was to flow in streams to wash away the sins of the world and annul for ever the compact of perdition, which delivered us over at our birth to the angels of the abyss. *But what had become of the sacred victim? Where did his executioners conceal him from the desolate eyes of his mother?* Mary cast her anxious looks all over the bare mountain — the people, she saw in expectation; the crosses, laid down upon the ground; the workmen, digging with perfect indifference the deep holes which were to receive the three instruments of punishment. And Jesus — where was he then?

He appeared, but in what a condition! — stripped of the last of his garments, without a shred to cover his discoloured flesh and bleeding wounds — He who was so chaste and pure! His executioners, dragging him ignominiously along, exposed him thus some time to the derision of the people. Then the Just One laid himself down upon the cross, that bed of honour offered to him by the gratitude of men as the price of his immense love! It was a spectacle too frightful to behold for those who loved him; they dragged Mary some paces off, into a sort of natural grotto, where she remained standing, white and cold as marble. There came from without a confused noise, like that of the bees of Engaddi, when the Israelite shepherd drives them out of the hollow of their oak-trees. From time to time, in the midst of this gloomy recitative there arose all at once a tempest of shouts, cries of derision, and frightful bursts of laughter: the populace of all nations has ever had ferocious instincts, but that of the Hebrews surpassed itself on this particular occasion.

In an interval of profound silence, employed, no doubt, in some new barbarity which captivated the attention of the multitude, a stroke of the hammer was heard, — a dull stroke, falling upon the wood and the bruised

AT THE CROSS  
WITH MARY  
CONT'D

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flesh. Magdalene, shuddering, pressed close to Mary, and the beloved disciple leaned instinctively against the side of the grotto. A second blow, duller, more stifled, and more ill-omened, was again heard; it was followed by two or three others, falling at regular intervals, and then all was told. "See, they are nailing him to the cross," coolly observed a Roman soldier. John and Magdalene exchanged looks of desolation; they were under a sentiment like that which is felt in the midst of a nocturnal tempest, when the cries of the shipwrecked, whom it is impossible to succour, are borne on the waves, and are extinguished, one after another, at the bottom of the waters. But Mary! — a cold perspiration spread over her frame, a convulsive trembling shook her limbs; she too, poor feeble woman, had just been crucified; for never did confessor, stretched upon the rack, never did martyr in the midst of flames, undergo in soul and body tortures so dreadful.

They soon distinguished the sharp friction of the cords on the pulleys; the cross was slowly raised up in the air, and the Son of man, with his face turned towards those western lands, which had so long waited for the light, was planted like a standard in the sight of unbelieving nations; so it was written. Then the reprobate people gave a hoarse and prolonged roar of joy: "Hail, King of the Jews! If God loves him, let him deliver him! If thou art the Son of God, O Nazarean, come down!" And the thief crucified on his left hand cursed him also, amid the chokings of his agony. Jesus, maintaining with calm and sublime dignity his great character as prophet and God Saviour, scaled in silence with his blood the exalted doctrines of the new law. No complaint, no reproach escaped him amid the infamous punishment which he underwent in the sight of a whole city: he looked down with mercy upon this people so far gone astray; and, wishing to appease the divine justice in favour of those who crucified him, "Father," he said with his dying voice, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The Virgin had left the temporary asylum where she had taken refuge, and walked with her head cast down towards the place of execution. At a little distance from the tree of infamy, rough soldiers were casting lots for the seamless robe which she had wrought with her hands (It is an ancient tradition that the Blessed Virgin had herself woven the tunic of her Son), and were making a noisy partition of those sacred garments which had wrought so many miracles. A slight shudder passed over the features of Mary; she thought of the time when, rich in nothing but the love of Jesus, but free from immediate cares, she used to work in the evenings at the texture of this holiday tunic, and this thought gave her a desolating sorrow, for the lightening flash which showed her in the past the sight of her days of happiness did but deepen the darkness of her misery. She lifted up her eyes to heaven, to seek thence, as she ever did, strength to suffer, and her look met that of the crucified God. At that dreadful spectacle her languid feet were fast fixed to the ground, and she remained petrified with so great horror, with so frightful a shock, that what she had felt up to that time appeared to her no more than a sorrowful dream — a frightful, but almost effaced vision; *and all was absorbed in the cross.*

Jesus casting on the Blessed Virgin a sweet and mysterious look, seemed to say to her, as on the previous evening to his apostles, "Mother, the hour has come!"

AT THE CROSS  
WITH MARY  
CONT'D

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But what hour?

The hour most memorable and fruitful in extraordinary events of which the sun's shadow had marked the passage since man had parcelled out the duration of time to keep account of its passage; the hour when the Son of God was about to triumph over the world, over death and hell, and even the divine justice itself; the hour of the accomplishment of the oracles, the abolition of the sacrifices, the reinstatement of woman, the freedom of the slave, and our eternal redemption. And the Virgin thought she was passing before her eyes the patriarchs, the righteous kings, the prophets inspired of God, who bowed down before Christ, like the sheaves of the sons of Jacob before the mysterious sheaf of Joseph. And she thought she saw Moses and Aaron laying at the foot of the new Tree of Life, the Ark of the Covenant, the Ephod, the Rational, the Plate of Gold, and the Almond Rod, the symbol of the Hebrew priesthood, the mission of which was about to terminate; then David, placing there his prophetic harp by the side of the sword of Phinees, the sacred knife of Abraham, and the brazen serpent. The priests and the victims, the rites and ordinances, the types and symbols, gathered about the cross there awaited their consummation; and the book with the seven seals of brass was laid open at the feet of the Great High Priest according to the Order of Melchizedek, who took the place of the Aaronites. The old world, receding like the waves, which slowly recoil upon themselves, gave place to other images. Mary then thought she saw all the nations of the earth waiting at the foot of the cross, there to receive the gospel. Ethiopia and the islands stretched out their hands towards the Messiah; the desert, which began to rejoice, flourished like the rose; the knowledge of God filled the earth, as the great waters cover the sandy bed of the oceans; and a thousand voices seemed to repeat in a thousand, barbarous idioms, "Christ has overcome, blessed be His Name!"

The noble and generous woman forgot for a short time the poignant sufferings which tortured her, and united herself in sympathy with the triumph of the law of grace, and the great social regeneration; but the vision of glory was not long before it vanished, and sorrow re-entered at every pore; like Rachel, Mary wept over her firstborn, and would not be comforted.

Meanwhile, all nature seemed to participate in the suffering of her God; the daylight gradually became obscured, and the decreasing light gave a mournful tint to that vast and sterile region, so well suited for the crime of which it was the theatre. Every moment the darkness thickened; the dew fell by the sudden interruption of the heat; the eagles shrieked as they resumed their nocturnal shelter; the jackals howled on the banks of the Cedron, and Calvary, in itself so melancholy, took the appearance of a huge catafalque of black marble. The people, strongly impressed by this unusual event, began to keep the silence of fear; and some few voices, insulated and disdainful, the voices of the Pharisees and chiefs of the synagogue, alone continued to utter maledictions against Christ.

The stars soon appeared through the dark crape which veiled the face of the firmament, like funeral torches burning round a coffin, and cast a fearful, greenish light upon the theatre of the deicide, which gave the masses of spectators standing in groups on the sides of Gihon the air of an assembly of demons and spectres. They looked at each other and turned pale. In vain

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did the scribes and Pharisees — too far plunged in the waters of crime to attempt to regain the bank — strive to attribute this prodigy to natural causes; the more the absence of light was prolonged, the less did their reasons appear conclusive. The old men, shaking their grey heads, declared that they had never seen an eclipse; and the learned men versed in the science of the Chaldeans maintained, on the other hand, that no eclipse was either foreseen or possible in the actual position of the moon. (*Philegon relates that in the 202nd Olympiad, corresponding with the year 33, there was the greatest eclipse of the sun ever seen, and that at the hour of noon the stars appeared in the heavens; but astronomy demonstrating that there was no eclipse in that year, obliges us to acknowledge that the cause of that darkness was wholly supernatural. 'We observed,' says St. Dionysius the Areopagite — who was at that time at Heliopolis — "that the moon came unexpectedly to interpose between the sun and the earth, although it was not the time for such a conjunction in the natural order of those laws to which the heavenly bodies are subject, &c."*)

This eclipse, of three hours' duration, was one of the prophecies connected with the Messiah, which were intended to mark the anger of Heaven when Christ should be put to death. The prophet Amos had said, "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that the sun shall go down at mid-day, and I will make the earth dark in the day of light." This darkness extended to Egypt, where at that time was St. Dionysius the Areopagite, who was studying philosophy at Hermopolis. Struck with terror, the young Greek cried out, addressing himself to his preceptor Apollophanes, "Either the world is coming to an end, or the God of nature suffers."

Amidst the general consternation, Jesus was occupied with his faithful friends, who had rallied round his cross in the hour of his ignominy. Touched with the courage of John, and the profound sorrow which this young and ardent disciple did attempt to conceal, he would leave him a pledge of his divine affection. He could not bequeath to him a part of his earthly goods, he who had not a stone whereon to lay his head, and who was about to owe to the charity of a disciple even the loan of a tomb. He had nothing left in the world but his mother — his mother, who had never left him, and who was dying at his death. He solemnly bequeathed her to his favorite disciple, as a pledge of those heavenly goods which he reserved for him in the kingdom of his Father. Knowing how much he was loved by these two holy souls, he foresaw, with his adorable goodness, the dreadful isolation in which his death was about to leave them, and would strengthen these two plants, devoid of support by intertwining their separated branches.

By this arrangement, which added a new and cherished interest in her life, the Virgin must have understood that it was not granted her to follow her Son to the tomb, that she had not arrived at the termination of her pilgrimage on earth. She resigned herself to the divine decree out of love for us, whom she adopted in the person of the holy apostle. The sacrifice of Mary almost equalled then, humanly speaking, that of Jesus Christ. He willingly consented to die; and she to live! They were two mighty hearts, inflamed with love for men, and which alone fully understood each other for their thoughts were not our thoughts, and the gold of their virtues was without alloy.

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The manner in which Jesus bequeathed Mary to the young fisherman of Bethsaida was dignified and simple, like every act of his mortal life: "Woman, behold thy son," and to the beloved disciple, "Behold thy mother."

If he did not use a more tender name when speaking to his mother, it was because he knew the power of the name which he thought proper to omit, and because he would not re-open wounds already so painful and profound.

"Afterwards, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, said 'I thirst.' Now, there was a vessel set there full of vinegar. And they put a sponge full of vinegar about hyssop, and put it to his mouth." Infamous wretches to the very end!

Jesus, having taken the vinegar, said, "It is consummated." Then, willing to prove to the world that he died, not by the power of death, but by a formal act of his will, he uttered a loud cry, bowed down his head, and expired!

*Kneel and take a moment of silence*

At that moment the idols of paganism shook upon their pedestals; the star of Moses, which had shone from only one point of the globe and was to shine only for a time, descended to the horizon of the valleys, and the sun of the gospel, destined to give light to the world from one pole to the other, and to endure as long as the world, arose brilliantly from the side of the aurora. But God owed prodigies to the despised dignity of his Son, and they were not delayed. To the supernatural darkness, which began to clear away, succeeded the horrible convulsions of an earthquake, which overthrew twenty cities in Asia. (*Pliny and Strabo speak of this earthquake. "It was so violent," say both these authors, "that it was felt even as far as Italy."*) At the same time the veil of the temple was rent, the rocks were split, and many bodies of the saints, which were in the sleep of death, arose and came into Jerusalem, where they caused fresh alarm among the people, already filled with consternation.

Then it was that a wonderful reaction was effected in favour of Jesus: the centurion and his soldiers, who had presided at the execution, cried out with one voice that the prophet of Nazareth was certainly more than man; and that immense multitude of people, who had overwhelmed Christ in his agonies with insults, shouts, and mockery, returned down the mountain striking their breasts, and repeating with terror, "Indeed this was the Son of God!"

In the midst of the cries of distress of the people, who fled without knowing which way to direct their steps, and while Golgotha was rending her rocky sides, there was seen, by the pale light which gleamed on this scene of horror, a woman standing and completely unmoved in the midst of the convulsions and ruins of nature. This woman seemed inaccessible to the general alarm; with her hands joined in the attitude of prayer, she was absorbed in the sorrowful contemplation of the crucified prophet.

And the daughters of Jerusalem began again to shed tears, saying with compassion, "Poor Mother!"

Towards evening, the Pharisees, unwilling that the bodies should remain on the cross, lest the sanctity of the Sabbath which would begin at nightfall should be violated, went to request of Pilate permission to take them away. This permission being obtained, they set up ladders against the gibbets, where the two crucified thieves were still in agonies, and after rudely unfasten-

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ing their feet and hands, they finished them by breaking their arms and legs. As to Jesus, as he was quite dead, a soldier contented himself with piercing his side with a lance, and the divine blood which was to wash away the crimes of the world ran down in great drops upon the earth. At some distance, two women covered with veils, one of whom leaned upon the other in an attitude which betrayed the most heartrending grief, timidly beheld the proceedings of the Roman soldiers: they were Mary and Magdalene, for Magdalene too was there; and in the distance were perceived the other women from Galilee, who had left all to devote themselves to Jesus, and who had not forsaken him in the hour of punishment and ignominy. "Honour to them!" says Abeilard, "for when the disciples and apostles fled like cowards to the mountains, those weak but courageous creatures accompanied Christ even to the foot of the cross, and did not leave him till he was laid in the sepulchre!"

Then Joseph of Arimathea came up, a rich senator, who had obtained of Pontius Pilate the body of Jesus, of whom he was a disciple in secret, to pay him the honours of sepulture. He took him down from the cross, and prepared to wrap him up in a winding-sheet of fine linen from Egypt, which he had purchased at Jerusalem, when he beheld at his feet a woman pale as death, who stretched out her arms with the most affecting and sublime sorrow, to receive the crucified God. This woman, whose whole body trembled and was convulsed with shudderings of agony, had no voice left to articulate the request which seemed to move upon her lips, but there was not, upon her face bathed in tears, a muscle which did not petition. The senator, who recognized Mary, made a sign of sympathetic compassion, and laid upon her trembling knees the divine burden with which he had respectfully laden his shoulders. Then the Blessed Virgin could give herself up to the bitter joy of pressing to her suffering and bleeding heart the disfigured body of her Son, and of applying her colourless lips to the wounds which had been made by the nails of the cross. Magdalene, on her knees, bathed with her warm tears the bleeding feet of her Lord, and moaned like a wounded dove.

holy  
Saturday



AN ANCIENT  
HOMILY FOR  
HOLY SATURDAY

Source:  
Pontifical University  
Saint Thomas Aquinas  
via the Vatican

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Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silent because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes into them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: 'My Lord be with you all.' And Christ in reply says to Adam: 'And with your spirit.' And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

'I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: Have light, and those who sleep: Rise.

'I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

'For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form; that of slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

'Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image.

'See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

'I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.

'But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise, but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make the cherubim worship you as they would God.

'The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness; the treasures of good things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages.

## THE EXSULTET

Source:  
Roman Missal by the  
International Commission  
on English in the Liturgy  
Corporation

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,  
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult, let  
the trumpet of salvation sound aloud our  
mighty King's triumph!

Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods  
her, ablaze with light from her eternal  
King, let all corners of the earth be glad,  
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.

Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,  
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,  
let this holy building shake with joy, filled  
with the mighty voices of the peoples.

Lift up your hearts.

*We lift them up to the Lord.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*It is right and just.*

It is truly right and just, with ardent love of  
mind and heart and with devoted service  
of our voice, to acclaim our God invisible,  
the almighty Father, and Jesus Christ, our  
Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the  
eternal Father, and, pouring out his own  
dear Blood, wiped clean the record of our  
ancient sinfulness.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover,  
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true  
Lamb, whose Blood anoints the doorposts  
of believers.

This is the night, when once you led our  
forebears, Israel's children, from slavery  
in Egypt and made them pass dry-shod  
through the Red Sea.

This is the night that with a pillar of fire  
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night that even now, through-  
out the world, sets Christian believers  
apart from worldly vices and from the  
gloom of sin, leading them to grace and  
joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night, when Christ broke the  
prison-bars of death and rose victorious  
from the underworld. Our birth would  
have been no gain, had we not been  
redeemed.

O wonder of your humble care for us!  
O love, O charity beyond all telling, to  
ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed  
completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault that earned so great,  
so glorious a Redeemer!

O truly blessed night, worthy alone to  
know the time and hour when Christ  
rose from the underworld!

This is the night of which it is written: The  
night shall be as bright as day, dazzling is  
the night for me, and full of gladness.

The sanctifying power of this night dispels  
wickedness, washes faults away, restores  
innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourn-  
ers, drives out hatred, fosters concord,  
and brings down the mighty.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,  
accept this candle, a solemn offering,  
the work of bees and of your servants'  
hands, an evening sacrifice of praise,  
this gift from your most holy Church. But  
now we know the praises of this pillar,  
which glowing fire ignites for God's honor,  
a fire into many flames divided, yet never  
dimmed by sharing of its light, for it is fed  
by melting wax, drawn out by mother  
bees to build a torch so precious.

O truly blessed night, when things of  
heaven are wed to those of earth, and  
divine to the human.

Therefore, O Lord, we pray you that this  
candle, hallowed to the honor of your  
name, may persevere undimmed, to  
overcome the darkness of this night.

THE EXSULTET

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Receive it as a pleasing fragrance, and  
let it mingle with the lights of heaven.

May this flame be found still burning by  
the Morning Star: the one Morning Star  
who never sets, Christ your Son, who,  
coming back from death's domain, has  
shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.

*Amen.*

easter  
sunday

RENEWAL  
OF BAPTISMAL  
PROMISES

Source:  
New Roman Missal,  
3rd Edition

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Do you renounce Satan?

*I do.*

And all his works?

*I do.*

And all his empty show?

*I do.*

Or:

Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the  
freedom of the children of God?

*I do.*

Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that  
sin may have no mastery over you?

*I do.*

Do you renounce Satan, the author and  
prince of sin?

*I do.*

Do you believe in God, the Father  
almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

*I do.*

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only  
Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin  
Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose  
again from the dead, and is seated at the  
right hand of the Father?

*I do.*

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the  
Holy Catholic Church, the communion  
of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the  
resurrection of the body, and life  
everlasting?

*I do.*

And may almighty God, the Father of our  
Lord Jesus Christ who has given us new  
birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and  
bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins,  
keep us by his grace, in Christ Jesus our  
Lord, for eternal life.

**Amen.**

Sprinkle those present with holy water  
or make the sign of the cross.

BLESSING OF  
THE FIRST MEAL  
OF EASTER

Source:

Book of Blessings by the  
International Commission  
on English in the Liturgy

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LEADER

Christ is risen. Alleluia.

GROUP

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

One of those present reads a text of sacred Scripture

DEUTERONOMY 16:1-8

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the book of Deuteronomy,

Observe the month of Abib by keeping the Passover of the LORD, your God, since it was in the month of Abib that he brought you by night out of Egypt. You shall offer the Passover sacrifice from your flock or your herd to the LORD, your God, in the place which he chooses as the dwelling place of his name. You shall not eat leavened bread with it. For seven days you shall eat with it only unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, that you may remember as long as you live the day of your departure from the land of Egypt; for in frightened haste you left the land of Egypt. Nothing leavened may be found in all your territory for seven days, and none of the meat which you sacrificed on the evening of the first day shall be kept overnight for the next day.

You may not sacrifice the Passover in any of the communities which the LORD, your God, gives you; only at the place which he chooses as the dwelling place of his name, and in the evening at sunset, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt, shall you sacrifice the Passover. You shall cook and eat it at the place the LORD, your God, chooses; then in the morning you may return to your tents. For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh there shall be a solemn meeting in honor of the LORD, your God; on that day you shall not do any sort of work.

Alternatively, you can read from:

Isaiah 55:1-11 — Come all you who are thirsty

Luke 24:13-35 — They knew Christ in the breaking of the bread

*(all join hands)*

LEADER

God of glory, the eyes of all turn to you  
as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death.  
Bless us and this food of our first Easter meal.  
May we who gather at the Lord's table  
continue to celebrate the joy of his resurrection  
and be admitted finally to his heavenly banquet.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**



let there be light