



Liturgy and Prayer Resources for Catholic Communities During Suspension of Liturgical Celebrations Due to Coronavirus (2020)

During the period of suspension of public liturgies in response to the Coronavirus crisis, Catholics can take heart from one of the key decrees of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) on Christ's presence in the liturgy:

*“Christ is always present in his Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of his minister, ‘the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross’ but especially under the Eucharistic elements. By his power he is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptises it is really Christ himself who baptises. He is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly when the Church prays and sings, for he promised: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them’”
(Mt 18:20).*

[Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963) art. 7]

If parishioners pray at home at the same time they would normally be together praying at Mass, there is a very real sense in which two or three are gathering in Christ's name, in the unity of their prayer rather than of their physical person. Individual and family prayer based on the Liturgy of the Word at Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours and other sources provides members of parishes and families with an opportunity to honour Christ's presence in the domestic Church as those present pray to God in thanksgiving for gifts received, and for the needs of the Church and the world.



RESOURCE PREPARED BY THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

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WEBSITES

- <https://liturgyhelp.com/> (Creative Ministry Resources, Hobart, TAS)
- <https://www.liturgia.com.au/> (Liturgy Brisbane, QLD)
- www.universalis.com – liturgical prayers and scriptures for each day

CREATING SPACE FOR PRAYER

1. Create a prayerful, welcoming space;
2. Include familiar liturgical symbols: water, cross, Bible, greenery/flowers and others as appropriate;
3. Light a candle and utilise music and singing;
4. Foster a reflective atmosphere of praise, thanks and intercession.

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EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

+ Denotes making the Sign of the Cross

INTRODUCTION

MORNING

All make the sign of the cross.

V. Lord, + open our lips.

R. And we shall praise your name.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen (*Alleluia – outside Lent*).

or

EVENING

All make the sign of the cross.

V. O God, + come to our aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

SEASONAL HYMN OR SONG OF PRAISE/ THANKSGIVING

PENITENTIAL ACT

(see *alt texts in Roman Missal (2010) 1578*)

Lord Jesus, you were lifted up to draw all people to yourself:

Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

You shouldered the cross, to bear our suffering and sinfulness:

Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

You open for your people the way from death into life:

Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

GLORY TO GOD

(on Sundays outside Lent and Advent; Solemnities and Feasts)

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of Good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord, God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer:
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 16:1, 6–7, 10–13

David is anointed by Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him: God does not see as man sees: man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

R. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. R.

2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. R.

3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. R.

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. R.

SECOND READING Ephesians 5:8–14

Anything exposed by the light will turn into light

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light.

That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Jn 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

GOSPEL

JOHN 9:1-41

The blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts

I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;

the night will soon be here when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world

I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his

eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement

that I have come into this world,

so that those without sight may see

and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were,

you would not be guilty,

but since you say, "We see,"

your guilt remains.'

EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

SCRIPTURAL REFLECTION

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Psalm 23(22) (Refrain verse 1)

Psalm 23(22), the shepherd psalm, is perhaps the best known, most loved and most utilised of all the psalms because of its simple yet rich expression of trust in God.

The story is told of a great orator who often recited Psalm 23(22) at public gatherings. When he finished his recitation the admiring listeners would break into enthusiastic applause. At one such gathering a small boy whose parents had recently died came up to him and asked if he could recite the psalm. The orator gave permission though he had qualms about the boy's lack of training in public speaking. When the boy finished there was silence and the orator noted tears in the eyes of the listeners. 'The people never weep when I recite the psalm,' he said. 'Sir', a voice from the crowd replied, 'you know the psalm; the boy knows the shepherd'.

This story is appropriate because it highlights the very personal character of Psalm 23(22). The psalmist does not say, 'The Lord is a good shepherd', rather 'The Lord is my shepherd'. It is a first person testimony filled with gratitude, trust, yielding and thanksgiving. It has been penned not by a theorist but by someone who has walked in the valley of darkness and experienced the companionship and help of the Lord.

The Jewish leaders in today's Gospel knew the Scriptures very well; sadly they did not know the Lord of the Scriptures. They were blind to the presence of God in the good man called Jesus who cured the blind on the Sabbath and went about doing good. Lord, that we may see!

Michael Goonan SSP

CHRIST WILL SHINE ON YOU

Today's stories show God offering blessing through anointing with oil and washing with water. These ritual actions and their blessings speak to us of the power of Christian baptism, which makes each one of us a chosen child of God, able to see with the eyes of faith.

In 1 Sam God chooses a king for the people of Israel. God selects not on appearances but on a person's heart. After seven sons are presented and rejected, God instructs the prophet to choose the shepherd boy, the one nobody thought of for the task. On this one, anointed with oil by God's prophet, the spirit of the Lord settles and remains, to lead God's people.

In the Gospel we hear one of the great stories of our tradition. From early in the story, Jesus shines as the light of the world as he brings sight to a man born blind. The actual healing of the blind man is told briefly. Most of this long story is taken up with human power struggles over what the healing means. As we hear the story of the healing told and retold by the man who now sees, we are invited to see with him. Washed in the waters of Siloam, with the once-blind man we now see and worship Jesus as the Son of Man, the light of the world.

Similarly, the letter to the Ephesians calls to us "Wake up from your sleep and Christ will shine on you." We respond with the joy of the Psalm, "My cup is overflowing."

Michele Connolly RSJ

St Pauls Publications and the authors have allowed the publication of this reflection to support the spiritual needs of Catholics unable to attend Mass at this time.



EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Introduction

Conscious of our common dignity as members of God's family, let us place our petitions with faith and hope in God's healing power.

Intentions

We pray for our Holy Father, Pope Francis, and for all those responsible for leadership in our Church. May they be a source of spiritual support and healing for all our brothers and sisters during this time of international medical crisis. Let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all leaders of local government. May they exercise their responsibilities to ensure the safety of communities and individuals with wisdom and compassion, particularly the aged, disabled and other vulnerable members of society. Let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all doctors, nurses, caregivers, public health officials and civic leaders. May God richly bless their work as they try to respond to the Coronavirus emergency with compassion and concern for the common good. Let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all men and women who work in medical research. May they enjoy every support in their endeavours to find cures and effective vaccines for medical disease that plague the human family. Let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all who have died recently, particularly the victims of Coronavirus. May they rest in the peace of Christ and rise in glory on the last day. Let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Conclusion

Gracious and loving God, you are the source of the healing we need. In this time of trial, we place our firm trust in you, confident in your unbounded mercy.

We ask our prayer through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us join our prayers with the prayer Jesus gave us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

St Alphonsus Ligouri, alt. (1696-1787)

CONCLUSION

PRAYER

Lord God, you give the world new life
by mysteries which are beyond our grasp.
May your Church not be deprived of earthly help
while she makes progress by the strength of these eternal
gifts.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

BLESSING

+ The Lord bless us,
and keep us from all evil,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

CONCLUDING SEASONAL HYMN OR SONG OF PRAISE/THANKSGIVING

EXCERPTS FROM THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

PSALM AND CANTICLE FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

E.g. Psalm 41 (42)

- R.** My soul is thirsting for the living God:
when shall I see him face to face?
1. Like the deer that yearns
for running streams,
so my soul is yearning
for you, my God. **R.**
2. My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God. **R.**
3. These things will I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and
thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy. **R.**
4. O send forth your light and your truth;
let these be my guide.
Let them bring me to your holy
mountain
to the place where you dwell. **R.**
5. And I will come to the altar of God,
the God of my joy.
My Redeemer, I will thank you on the
harp,
O God, my God. **R.**
6. Why are you cast down, my soul,
why groan within me?
Hope in God; I will praise him still,
my Saviour and my God. **R.**

BENEDICTUS (Morning)

Luke 1:68–79 (ICET tr.)

All make the sign of the cross.

1. Blessed be + the Lord, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty saviour,
born of the house of his servant David.
2. Through his holy prophets he promised of old
that he would save us from our enemies, from the
hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.
3. This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
4. You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
5. In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of
death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
6. Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

MAGNIFICAT (Evening)

Luke 1:46–55 (ICET tr.)

All make the sign of the cross.

1. My soul + proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour
for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
2. From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
3. He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
4. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
5. He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.
6. Glory to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever. Amen.

VARIOUS PRAYER RESOURCES

PRAYER FROM VOTIVE MASS FOR THE SICK

[*Roman Missal (2010) p. 1378*]

Collect

Let us pray:

O God, who willed that our infirmities
be borne by your Only Begotten Son
to show the value of human suffering,
listen in kindness to our prayers
for our brothers and sisters who are sick;
grant that all who are oppressed by pain,
distress or other afflictions
may know that they are chosen

among those proclaimed blessed
and are united to Christ
in his suffering for the salvation of the
world.
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.

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A PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

Almighty and all-merciful God,
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death,
save us in this time of crisis;
grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;
watch over all medical people
as they tend the sick and work for a cure;
stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;
if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,

that hope may never die
and the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
may shine upon us and the whole world.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.
Holy Mary, health of the sick, pray for us.
St Joseph, guardian of us all, pray for us.

The Most Reverend Mark Coleridge
Archbishop of Brisbane

ECUMENICAL PRAYER FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The National Council of Churches, who have invited all of us to pray this prayer at 7pm each day, but especially on Sunday 29 March which we will mark as a National Day of Prayer in this time of crisis:

Gracious God,
We give thanks anew for your providence and presence.
We prayerfully seek your grace, amidst COVID-19 here and
overseas.
We pray for those in need of healing.
We pray for your peace with those who are anxious or
grieving.
We pray you will continue to strengthen and sustain
all those who are serving in response.
We pray for your Holy Spirit's discernment

amidst the many choices and decisions
facing our national, community and medical leaders.
We pray we each might see quickly what more we can do
to help those who are vulnerable.
This prayer for our nation in the family of nations,
with all that is on our hearts,
we gather now and pray
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GUIDELINES FOR SCRIPTURAL REFLECTION Ten Principles of Lectio Divina

*(based on writings of Fr Michael Casey, OCSO
from Tarrawarra Abbey, Yarra Glen, VIC)*

1. Recognise the value of regularity - lectio should be done according to rules: fixed times, fixed periods, in season and out of season.
2. Allocate time. Nobody finds time; you have to make it.
3. Choose a quiet, temperate, harmonious, dedicated place. The place is more important than most people think.
4. Choose reading that is able to sustain your attention. Try the Gospels, one by one, taking a passage each day.
5. Vocalise as you read -- this will slow down the reading, and helps ensure that your words and your thoughts move together.
6. Progress through a whole book -- "in order and entirely" (per ordinem et integro) it says in the Rule of St Benedict -- rather than leaping about within it, or between books.
7. Read closely, word by word, line by line; every word must be understood. It is all too easy to pass over words that are unfamiliar, challenging or shocking, but these are often the ones that have something to say to you.
8. Allow yourself to puzzle over obscurities.
9. Actively attempt to make the text meaningful -- the purpose of lectio is to form the mind in Christ.
10. Activate, if necessary, the different stages: start with lectio (reading), then move to meditatio (chewing over the words), then onto oratio (prayer) and finally contemplatio (when you allow the Holy Spirit to act in the heart). This is not a method, but a description of what, in the experience of monks, happens in an hour's lectio divina.

The Holy Spirit, says Fr Casey, is as active in the reading of Scriptures as He was in their writing. The power of lectio comes from the Spirit being present in the interaction between Scripture and our own experience -- of life and of God.

Source: Austen Ivereigh, "Learning from the Master" in America Magazine
(18 July 2009)

<https://www.americamagazine.org/content/all-things/learning-lectio-master>

Further Reading: Michael Casey, Sacred Reading: The Art of Lectio Divina. Ligouri Publications, 1996.

