



## SAINT PAUL SEMINARY

The Seminaries of Saint Paul

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

**Background** – As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the public celebration of Mass has been suspended throughout many Dioceses in the United States. Many of the faithful, particularly families with children at home, desire to fulfill their duty to God and the Third Commandment in keeping holy the Lord's Day even in the absence of Mass; but there is little guidance on how or what to do.<sup>1</sup> This document is intended to serve as a guide for the spiritual father or head of the family to maintain contact with our ancient liturgical traditions in communion with the Catholic Church throughout the world today. While it should be made clear, especially to younger children, that this is not the Mass – it is intended to connect us to what is familiar in a paraliturgical manner while in these extraordinary circumstances. This guide was approved for use by the USCCB in a April 6, 2020 email.

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

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

## April 9, 2020 – Thursday of the Lord's Supper

### Introductory Rites

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

#### Entrance Antiphon [Cf. Gal 6:14]

*Leader:* We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection, through whom we are saved and delivered.<sup>2</sup>

*Family:* We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection, through whom we are saved and delivered.

### Introduction

*Invite the family to make the sign of the cross.*

*Leader:* We gather here to celebrate the [Holy Thursday, when Our Lord instituted the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Priesthood]... Unfortunately, we are not able to celebrate Mass today because [the Coronavirus Pandemic has limited our ability to hold public Masses]. Let us be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, Death, and Resurrection.<sup>3</sup>

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

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

*Family:* Blessed be God Forever!

### The Penitential Act<sup>5</sup>

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

*Family:* I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

*Leader:* May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

*Family:* Amen.

**Gloria**

*The hymn of great joy is said or chanted on this special day.<sup>6</sup> Consider ringing a bell as you pray it to assist the expression of joy. Afterwards, there should be no bells until the Gloria of the Easter Vigil.*

*All:* 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.<sup>7</sup>

**Collect<sup>8</sup>**

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

*Leader:* Let us pray.

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

O God, who have called us to participate in this most sacred Supper, in which your Only Begotten Son, when about to hand himself over to death, entrusted to the Church a sacrifice new for all eternity, the banquet of his love, grant, we pray, that we may draw from so great a mystery, the fullness of charity and 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.<sup>9</sup>

*Family:* Amen

**Liturgy of the Word<sup>10</sup>**

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

**Reading 1: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14**


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*Reader:* A reading from the Book of Exodus

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,

“This month shall stand at the head of your calendar;

you shall reckon it the first month of the year.

Tell the whole community of Israel:

On the tenth of this month every one of your families

must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household.

If a family is too small for a whole lamb,

it shall join the nearest household in procuring one

and shall share in the lamb

in proportion to the number of persons who partake of it.  
 The lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish.  
 You may take it from either the sheep or the goats.  
 You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month,  
 and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present,  
 it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight.  
 They shall take some of its blood  
 and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel  
 of every house in which they partake of the lamb.  
 That same night they shall eat its roasted flesh  
 with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

“This is how you are to eat it:  
 with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand,  
 you shall eat like those who are in flight.  
 It is the Passover of the LORD.  
 For on this same night I will go through Egypt,  
 striking down every firstborn of the land, both man and beast,  
 and executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt—I, the LORD!  
 But the blood will mark the houses where you are.  
 Seeing the blood, I will pass over you;  
 thus, when I strike the land of Egypt,  
 no destructive blow will come upon you.

“This day shall be a memorial feast for you,  
 which all your generations shall celebrate  
 with pilgrimage to the LORD, as a perpetual institution.”

*Reader:* The word of the Lord

*Family:* Thanks be to God

### **Responsorial Psalm Ps 116:12-13, 15-16BC, 17-18.**

*Reader:* Our responsorial psalm is: **Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.**

*All:* Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

*Reader:*

How shall I make a return to the LORD  
 for all the good he has done for me?  
 The cup of salvation I will take up,  
 and I will call upon the name of the LORD.

*All:* Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

*Reader:*

Precious in the eyes of the LORD  
is the death of his faithful ones.  
I am your servant, the son of your handmaid;  
you have loosed my bonds.

*All:* Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

*Reader:*

To you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
and I will call upon the name of the LORD.  
My vows to the LORD I will pay  
in the presence of all his people.

*All:* Our blessing-cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

## **Reading 2: 1 Cor 11:23-26**

*Reader:* A reading from the first Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you,  
that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over,  
took bread, and, after he had given thanks,  
broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."  
In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying,  
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."  
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord

*Family:* Thanks be to God

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

## **Verse Before the Gospel Jn 13:34**

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

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

*Reader:* I give you a new commandment, says the Lord: love one another as I have loved you.

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

*The Gospel should be read by the spiritual father or head of the household. The family should be reminded at this time that we are called to live the Gospel by our lives.*

**Gospel: Jn 13:1-15**

*Leader:* A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

*Family:* Glory to you, O Lord!<sup>11</sup>

*All should sign themselves with a cross on their forehead, their lips, and their heart saying quietly:*

*All:* May the Lord be on my mind, and on my lips, and in my heart!

*Leader:* Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father.

He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end.

The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over.

So, during supper,

fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power

and that he had come from God and was returning to God,

he rose from supper and took off his outer garments.

He took a towel and tied it around his waist.

Then he poured water into a basin

and began to wash the disciples' feet

and dry them with the towel around his waist.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him,

"Master, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered and said to him,

"What I am doing, you do not understand now,

but you will understand later."

Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered him,

"Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me."

Simon Peter said to him,

"Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well."

Jesus said to him,

"Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed,

for he is clean all over;

so you are clean, but not all."

For he knew who would betray him;

for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean."

So when he had washed their feet

and put his garments back on and reclined at table again,

he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you?

You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am.

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."

*Leader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Family:* Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ!

### **Reflection on the Readings<sup>12</sup>**

*All sit. This reflection can be an opportunity for the spiritual father or head of the family to teach and apply the scripture passages to the family's daily life. Perhaps share what the Eucharist and/or the Priesthood have meant to you in your life. Especially if there are young children present, you may consider using prudent use of dialogue (questions and answers).<sup>13</sup> You can also look up and view a homily from one of the many on the web (e.g. Bishop Robert Barron or <https://adw.org/coronavirus-dispensation-and-prayers/>) or read one of the great homilies for the day from the Church Fathers.*

### **Period of Silence<sup>14</sup>**

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

### **Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful<sup>15</sup>**

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

*Leader:* On this holy night, the Lord commanded us to celebrate the Mass in memory of him. He then went into the garden to pray. Desiring that communion once again with our spiritual family, we unite ourselves in prayer this night with Our Lord in the garden and through him present these prayers to our Father in Heaven.

*Reader:* For all priests throughout the world, especially those who suffer from criticism or the effects of scandal while faithfully living out their vocations. May Our Lord accept our prayers this night in thanksgiving for the priesthood he instituted and give us the grace to love and cherish our priests, we pray to the Lord . . .

*Reader:* For an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, that the Lord, who on this night gave the Church the gift of the priesthood will continue to call our children to a life of service to the Gospel. We pray to the Lord . . .

*Reader:* That as we journey through this spiritual desert where we are unable to fully participate in the Eucharist, we grow in our appreciation for the sanctity of this night when Our Lord first instituted this source and summit of our being. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* We remember tonight the apostle who struck the ear of the high priest's servant and Our Lord's exhortation that "those who live by the sword die by the sword." That we, even in times of trial, fear, and violence, heed our Lord's command and imitating Him, submit ourselves to the will of our Heavenly Father. We pray to the Lord . . .

*Reader:* For all those desiring entry into full communion with the Church this Easter might soon worship with us; and may all those that seek to follow Christ soon find unity, an end to divisions and a spirit of forgiveness and collaboration. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* For an end to the coronavirus pandemic throughout the world, in thanksgiving for the declines we have begun to see, and for healing for all those afflicted. We also pray for those who have died and the consolation of their families. We pray to the Lord...

*Leader:* Father in Heaven, please let this cup pass from us, trusting that Your will be done. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Family:* Amen

### **Prayer to St. Joseph, Hope of the Sick<sup>16</sup>**

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

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

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

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

### **Rite of Spiritual Communion<sup>17</sup>**

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

#### **Lord's Prayer**

*Leader:* The Father provides us with food for eternal life. Let us pray for nourishment and strength.<sup>18</sup>

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

#### **Invitation to [Spiritual] Communion**

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

*Leader:* Let us make acts of faith, hope and love<sup>19</sup> to prepare ourselves to make our Spiritual Communion to unite ourselves with all the Masses our priests our celebrating in our absence and on our behalf:



*Act of Faith*

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

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

*Act of Hope*

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

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

*Act of Love*

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

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

**St. Alphonsus' Act of Spiritual Communion**

*All:* My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire you in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.<sup>22</sup>

**[Spiritual] Communion Antiphon**

*All:* [1 Cor 11:24-25] This is the Body that will be given up for you; this is the Chalice of the new covenant in my Blood, says the Lord; do this, whenever you receive it, in memory of me.<sup>23</sup>

## **Act of Thanksgiving<sup>24</sup>**

*Leader:* Let us together pray an Act of Thanksgiving

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

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

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

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

## **Concluding Rite<sup>25</sup>**

*All stand.*

## **Invitation to Pray [for the world]**

Pope Francis' prayer to Mary during the Coronavirus Pandemic<sup>26</sup>

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

## **Blessing<sup>27</sup>**

*Leader:* Grant, almighty God, that, just as we are renewed by the Supper of your Son in this present age, so we may enjoy his banquet for all eternity. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.<sup>28</sup>

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

*Family:* Amen.

## Sign of Peace<sup>29</sup>

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

## Closing Hymn<sup>30</sup>

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

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

<sup>2</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 3<sup>rd</sup> typical ed. (Washington D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011), 299.

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

<sup>4</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §188.

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

<sup>6</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 299.

<sup>7</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 522.

<sup>8</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §189.

<sup>9</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 299.

<sup>10</sup> *Lectionary*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, at [www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040920-lord-s-supper.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/040920-lord-s-supper.cfm), accessed April 5, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §195.

<sup>12</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §196.

<sup>13</sup> Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children* (1 November 1973). *Adoremus Bulletin* [www.adoremus.org/2007/12/31/Directory-for-Masses-With-Children/](http://www.adoremus.org/2007/12/31/Directory-for-Masses-With-Children/), accessed March 23, 2020, §48.

<sup>14</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §197.

<sup>15</sup> *The Roman Missal*, §20.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. [www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/prayer-for-st-josephs-protection-329](http://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/prayer-for-st-josephs-protection-329).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Sunday Celebrations*, §204ff.

<sup>18</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §205.

<sup>19</sup> [www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213](http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. CCC 1817.

<sup>21</sup> [www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213](http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213).

<sup>22</sup> [www.stalphonsusno.com/pray-with-us-act-of-spiritual-communion/](http://www.stalphonsusno.com/pray-with-us-act-of-spiritual-communion/).

<sup>23</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 312.

<sup>24</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §211.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Sunday Celebrations*, §212ff.

<sup>26</sup> [www.cny.org/stories/text-of-popes-prayer-to-mary-during-coronavirus-pandemic.20746](http://www.cny.org/stories/text-of-popes-prayer-to-mary-during-coronavirus-pandemic.20746).

<sup>27</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §214.

<sup>28</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 312.

<sup>29</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §215.

<sup>30</sup> *Sunday Celebrations*, §216.