



## 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 June 3, 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.

## June 7, 2020 – Sunday of the Most Holy Trinity

### Introductory Rites

*Gather the family together and begin by reading or chanting the following opening hymn or “Entrance Antiphon.” All stand.*

**Entrance Antiphon** *Leader:* Blest be God the Father, and the Only Begotten Son of God, and also the Holy Spirit, for he has shown us his merciful love.<sup>2</sup>

*Family:* Blest be God the Father, and the Only Begotten Son of God, and also the Holy Spirit, for he has shown us his merciful love.

### Introduction

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

*Leader:* We gather here to celebrate the Lord’s Day. Sunday has been called the Lord’s day because it was on this day that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life. Unfortunately, we are not able to celebrate Mass today because [the Coronavirus Pandemic has limited the size of our 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 chanted or said on this special Day.<sup>6</sup>*

*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.*

God our Father, who by sending into the world the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification made known to the human race your wondrous mystery, grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith, we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.

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 34:4b-6, 8-9**

*Reader:* A reading from the Book of Exodus

---

Early in the morning Moses went up Mount Sinai  
as the LORD had commanded him,  
taking along the two stone tablets.

Having come down in a cloud, the LORD stood with Moses there  
and proclaimed his name, "LORD."  
Thus the LORD passed before him and cried out,  
"The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God,  
slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity."  
Moses at once bowed down to the ground in worship.

Then he said, "If I find favor with you, O Lord,  
do come along in our company.  
This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins,  
and receive us as your own."

*Reader:* The word of the Lord

*Family:* Thanks be to God

**Responsorial Psalm** Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56.

*Reader:* Our responsorial psalm is: **Glory and praise for ever!**

*All:* Glory and praise for ever!

*Reader:*

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever;  
And blessed is your holy and glorious name,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages.

*All:* Glory and praise for ever!

*Reader:*

Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory,  
praiseworthy and glorious above all forever.

*All:* Glory and praise for ever!

*Reader:*

Blessed are you on the throne of your kingdom,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

*All:* Glory and praise for ever!

*Reader:*

Blessed are you who look into the depths  
from your throne upon the cherubim,  
praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

*All:* Glory and praise for ever!

**Reading 2:** 2 Cor 13:11-13

*Reader:* A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters, rejoice.  
Mend your ways, encourage one another,  
agree with one another, live in peace,  
and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.  
All the holy ones greet you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

*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: cf. Rv 1:8**

*Reader:* Alleluia, alleluia.

*All:* Alleluia, alleluia.

*Reader:* Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; to God who is, who was, and who is to come.

*All:* Alleluia, alleluia.

*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 3:16-18**

*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:*

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him might not perish  
but might have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,  
but that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him will not be condemned,  
but whoever does not believe has already been condemned,  
because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Family:* Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

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

*All are seated. 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. Draw in current events. Bring the Gospel to 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.*

#### **Profession of Faith: Nicene Creed<sup>15</sup>**

*All **stand** and process together:*

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

*Instruct the Family to bow their heads at these words:*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
 I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins  
 and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead  
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### **Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful<sup>16</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:* Today's Solemnity reminds us more than ever that we were created for relationship. Our prayers today beg the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to give us the grace to reflect their love for one another in the love we have in Christ for our brothers and sisters. Let us then ask the Most Holy Trinity to hear and answer our prayers...

*Reader:* We pray for the leadership of our Church, especially our Holy Father and our Bishops, during these times of turmoil and civic unrest, may they receive wisdom to lead and to call us as Catholics to right judgment and prudence in responding to hatred, violence, and disunity. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* That as the Spirit of God enflamed the bush before Moses, may that same Spirit continue to set our hearts afire to burn with the love of Jesus and give us the courage to share the Gospel through our lives. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* Like Moses, we acknowledge before the Lord that too often we are a stiff-necked people. We too like Moses bow down before the Lord and beg that he pardon our wickedness and sins and receive us as His own. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* That even in times of difficulty, trial, fear, and uncertainty, we may never fail to give glory and praise to the God of our fathers who is praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* St. Paul's words to the Corinthians echo loudly today. In the wake of so much hatred this week we beg for the grace to mend our ways so that we can encourage and agree with one another on the need for greater racial justice and harmony in our nation. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* We pray for those who, in light of the week's events, quickly jump to condemnation; may their anger and sorrow find comfort in John's Gospel knowing that out of love for the world, God sent Jesus to save us, not to condemn. We pray to the Lord...

*Reader:* We continue to pray this week for all those who suffer from the coronavirus directly or indirectly. May our Lord continue to answer our prayers for healing for our nation and the world. We pray to the Lord...

*Leader:* Most Holy Trinity, we adore you. Allow nothing to trouble the peace that that we find in you, our unchanging God. Bring us each day more deeply into your mystery and life so that vigilant in our faith we may be dedicated entirely to adoring you and fully given over to your creative action. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

*Family:* Amen.

### **Prayer to St. Joseph, Hope of the Sick<sup>17</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>18</sup>**

*Although without a Priest, we cannot offer the Mystery of Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross, on this Easter Sunday 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>19</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>20</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>21</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>22</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>23</sup>

**[Spiritual] Communion Antiphon**

*All:* [Gal 4:6] Since you are children of God, God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of his Son, the Spirit who cries out: Abba, Father.<sup>24</sup>

**Act of Thanksgiving<sup>25</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>26</sup>**

*All stand.*

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

Pope Francis' prayer to Mary during the Coronavirus Pandemic<sup>27</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>28</sup>**

*Leader:* May the Lord bless [us] and keep [us].

*Family:* Amen.

*Leader:* May he let his face shine upon [us] and show [us] his mercy.

*Family:* Amen.

*Leader:* May he turn his countenance towards [us] and give [us] his peace.<sup>29</sup>

*Family:* Amen.

*Leader:* May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.<sup>30</sup>

*Family:* Amen.

### **Sign of Peace<sup>31</sup>**

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

### **Closing Hymn<sup>32</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 DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011), 495.

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

<sup>4</sup> USCCB, *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*, 387.

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

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

<sup>9</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 495.

<sup>10</sup> *Lectionary*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, [www.usccb.org/bible/readings/060720.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/060720.cfm).

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

<sup>12</sup> USCCB, *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/), §48.

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

<sup>15</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §199.

<sup>16</sup> *The Roman Missal*, §20, 384.

<sup>17</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>18</sup> Cf. USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §204ff.

<sup>19</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §205.

<sup>20</sup> [www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213](http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. CCC 1817.

<sup>22</sup> [www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213](http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Preghiera&id=213).

<sup>23</sup> [www.stalphonsusno.com/pray-with-us-act-of-spiritual-communion/](http://www.stalphonsusno.com/pray-with-us-act-of-spiritual-communion/).

<sup>24</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 498.

<sup>25</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §211.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §212ff.

<sup>27</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>28</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §214.

<sup>29</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 679.

<sup>30</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §214.

<sup>31</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §215.

<sup>32</sup> USCCB, *Sunday Celebrations*, §216.