



Parent Pages

Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church*

*The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness.

Holy Week with your Family

As we prepare to enter into this sacred time of holy week, we will look at the scripture and ritual of Palm Sunday and the Triduum, and how your children and family may experience these moments as the domestic church. The passion, death, and resurrection of Christ is one event, that is the Paschal Mystery, which is celebrated in the Triduum. Sofia Cavalletti writes, "In attempting to consider the Easter Triduum for what it truly is – the celebration of one single event – we can see how the light of Holy Thursday illuminates even the tragic event of Good Friday with the grandeur and solemnity of a liturgical celebration. In this way, Holy Thursday can be seen as the beginning of that "mortal fray" between life and death, as it is described in the "Sequence" on Easter Sunday:

*In mortal fray now death is slain;
Life conquered death in brave campaign.
The Lord of life o'er all does reign. Alleluia!*

- *Ways to Nurture the Relationship with God, p 82*

The Holy Week Prayer Table

Francesca and Patrizia Cocchini (Italian sisters who lead the work of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in Rome (where they remain on total "lock-down") have shared with us something they are suggesting their atrium parents might do with their children at home:

For Holy Week, create a family prayer table (if you don't already have one). Involve the children in setting it up. With the Triduum in mind (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter), what images might you come up with for each of those events? (Perhaps an image copied from a book, perhaps a drawing of the child?) You might make a "trypitch" (3 pieces of cardboard or foam core board, taped together so that they stand up) on which to place the images you find.

Then, each day of Holy Week gather at your prayer table and read the Gospel text of the day together, allowing for prayerful response (silence, comments, verbal prayer, sung prayers) as the Spirit moves.

Palm Sunday

Let us welcome Jesus into our homes today, as he was welcomed into the city of Jerusalem. What might that look like for your family? You may choose to walk in procession from your



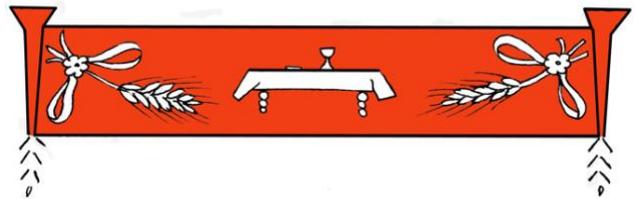
doorway to your prayer table. What could you carry as you process? At liturgy, we walk in procession with palm branches. If you do not have your blessed palm branches from the previous year, your children may want to make their own palm branches. What words do we proclaim as we welcome the Lord into our midst?

Your family may enjoy welcoming the Lord in song. You will find a beautiful song “Blessings to the King” on our Covid-19 webpage.

What is your parish or diocese offering as a resource for prayer? Our friends at Liturgy Training Publications offer a lovely Palm Sunday prayer service for your family. You may adapt it for the needs and ages of those in your home.

Holy Thursday

The gospel tells us that Jesus took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet. Jesus asks his disciples, “Do you realize what I have done for you?” He then instructs his followers to do what he has done. How do you understand what Jesus did and said that night after washing their feet? What do those words mean for your family? How will you live those words during the time of this pandemic?

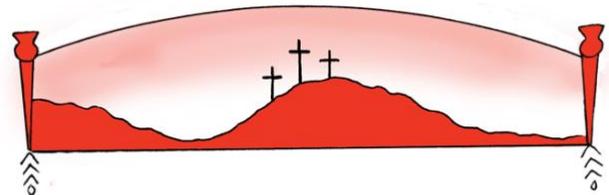


The love of Christ has gathered us as a family together into one. How do we live this unity as a family? Let us place ourselves in service to each other. We ask the Lord to teach us to be like him: to give humbly and love with our whole hearts. You may decide as a family to prayerfully wash each other’s feet. One individual may wash the feet of all family members, or each one may take a turn, washing the feet of the next family member. When each person’s feet have been washed, gently dry their feet with a towel.

What is your parish or diocese offering as a resource for prayer? Our friends at Liturgy Training Publications offer a lovely Holy Thursday prayer service for your family. You may adapt it for the needs and ages of those in your home.

Good Friday

The cross is a sign of God’s great love for the world. Do you have a cross or crucifix in your home? If not, a simple cross may be made with two sticks and twine or yarn.



At the prayer table, place your family cross in a place of honor. You may want to reflect upon:

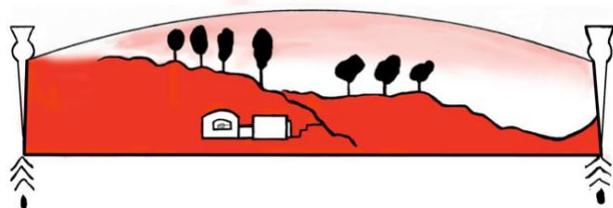
- where you have seen the great love of God today.
- Is there someone who needs to know the great love of God?
- Who in our world is sharing the love of God with others?

Pass the family cross from person to person. When each person holds the cross, he or she can pray silently or aloud. How can we honor the cross on our prayer table?

What is your parish or diocese offering? Here is from our friends from Liturgy Training Publications offers a lovely Good Friday prayer service for your family. You may adapt it for the needs and ages of those in your home.

Holy Saturday

He is Risen! Today let us spend time as a family deciding how we will transform our Lenten prayer space into our Easter prayer environment. Are there symbols of new life – flowers, colorful Easter eggs, candles, etc. to create a beautiful table? We will also change the color of our prayer table from purple to white, the color of light.



This Lenten and Easter Season has been a change from what we are used to as a family. How will this Lenten and Easter change us? Will this year's experience transform the life of our family?



PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

WITH A READING FROM THE GOSPEL FOR **SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020**

OPENING

Today is Palm Sunday and begins Holy Week, a very important week in the Church. We will remember Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, and his passion and death.

✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PSALM

(For a longer psalm, see page xiv.)

Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.

Look to him, and be radiant;
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

GOSPEL

Matthew 21:1ac–2, 6–11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When they had come near Jerusalem, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and

spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Gospel of the Lord.

◆ All sit and observe silence.

FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Think about this silently in your hearts. How can we welcome Jesus in our hearts today?

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray to God for our needs and the needs of others: our family, neighborhood, and the world. For each need we say, "Lord, hear our prayer."

◆ All may add their own prayers here.

Let us pray: **Our Father . . . Amen.**

O God,
we sing our Hosannas of praise:
Jesus is our beloved teacher.
Jesus is our Lord and savior.
May we follow his way of love.
We pray this in Christ Jesus' name.

Amen.

✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

PRAYER FOR MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2020



OPENING

Jesus criticized the religious leaders of his time for serving themselves rather than caring for the people. When Jesus' popularity began growing quickly, those leaders felt so threatened that they got people to lie about Jesus so that they could accuse him of a crime.

✦ All make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PSALM

(For a longer psalm, see page xiv.)
Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19

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The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

GOSPEL

Matthew 26:57, 59–62b, 63–64a, 65c–66

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. The chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said,

'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so." Then the high priest said, "You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death."

The Gospel of the Lord.

◆ All sit and observe silence.

FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Think about this silently in your heart. When angry, do you ever accuse people of things they didn't say or do?

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray to God for our needs and the needs of others: our family, neighborhood, and the world. For each need we say, "Lord, hear our prayer."

◆ All may add their own prayers here.

Let us pray: **Our Father . . . Amen.**

God of mercy,
give us the courage to always speak the truth.
May our words be helpful and supportive.
May our actions be honest and kind.
We ask this in Christ's name.

Amen.

✦ All make the Sign of the Cross.



OPENING

Pilate was the Roman governor in Jerusalem. Pilate didn't think Jesus had done anything to deserve death, but he was afraid for his own job. If there was a riot because people were angry, the Roman emperor would remove him. Pilate could have helped Jesus but he didn't.

✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

**In the name of the Father, and of the
Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

PSALM

(For a longer psalm, see page xiv.)
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◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

GOSPEL

Matthew 27:2, 15–17, 21c–22, 24c, 26

A reading from the holy Gospel according
to Matthew.

The chief priests and elders bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you,

Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” And they said, “Barabbas.” Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!” Pilate took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood.” So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

The Gospel of the Lord.

◆ All sit and observe silence.

FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Think about this silently in your heart. Pray to have courage to defend people when they are being treated unjustly.

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray to God for our needs and the needs of others: our family, neighborhood, and the world. For each need we say, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

◆ All may add their own prayers here.

Let us pray: **Our Father . . . Amen.**

Holy and loving God,
Jesus bore his trials with dignity
and with faith in you.

May we be constant in our faith,
even when it is difficult.

We ask this in Christ's name.

Amen.

✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2020



OPENING

In the ancient world, crucifixion was a death sentence of shame and disgrace. It was usually reserved for slaves, criminals of the worst sort from the lowest levels of society, military deserters, and especially traitors. It is almost impossible to imagine what Jesus' disciples and friends must have felt to see him being treated so cruelly.

✦ All make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PSALM

(For a longer psalm, see page xiv.)
Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.

Look to him, and be radiant;
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

The LORD saves the crushed in spirit.

◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

GOSPEL

Matthew 27:27–31

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his

right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

◆ All sit and observe silence.

FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Think about this silently in your heart. Is there someone who is sick or hurting that you would like to pray for today?

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray to God for our needs and the needs of others: our family, neighborhood, and the world. For each need we say, "Lord, hear our prayer."

◆ All may add their own prayers here.

Let us pray: **Our Father . . . Amen.**

Holy God,
we thank you for Jesus,
our king and our savior.
May we follow his example and be obedient
to your will for us.
We pray in his name.

Amen.

✦ All make the Sign of the Cross.

HOME PRAYER

HOLY THURSDAY

Before you begin, find the reading (John 13:3–5) in your Bible, ask for a volunteer to read it, and help the reader to practice reading it a few times. You could begin with a simple song, such as “Jesus, Remember Me,” or “Amen.” (We don’t sing “Alleluia” until the Easter Vigil.) An older child or adult reads the leader parts.

LEADER

Today is Holy Thursday, and this evening we will remember two important things that Jesus did for his disciples and for us. On this night of the Last Supper, Jesus offered himself in the form of bread and wine and said, “This is my Body. . . . This is my Blood. Do this in memory of me.” Later, he washed the feet of his followers, teaching them by example how we must be a servant for all.

- ✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LEADER: Psalm 27:1, 4, 11, 13–14

Let us repeat the Psalm Response:
Teach me your way, O LORD.

ALL: Teach me your way, O LORD.

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

ALL: Teach me your way, O LORD.

One thing I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD,
and to inquire in his temple.

ALL: Teach me your way, O LORD.

I believe that I shall see the goodness
of the LORD
in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD;

be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

ALL: Teach me your way, O LORD.

- ◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

LEADER: John 13:3–5

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

- ◆ Read the Gospel passage from the Bible.

The Gospel of the Lord.

- ◆ All sit and observe silence.

FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Why did Jesus, the disciples’ leader,
wish to be their servant?

LEADER:

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father . . . Amen.

LEADER:

Almighty God,
we remember Jesus’
act of service of washing his friends’ feet.
May we honor you with
our acts of love and service today and always.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

- ✙ All make the Sign of the Cross.

HOME PRAYER

GOOD FRIDAY

Before you begin, find the reading (John 18:33–37) in your Bible, ask for a volunteer to read it, and help the reader to practice it a few times. You could begin with a simple song, such as “Jesus, Remember Me,” or “Amen.” (We don’t sing “Alleluia” until the Easter Vigil.) An older child or adult reads the leader parts.

LEADER:

Today we remember Jesus’ anguish and Death on the Cross. It is a sad time we don’t understand. But Good Friday is also a day that we recall the goodness of God’s Son who chose to die so that he could save us from sin and death. This day gives us so much hope because of the promise of new life!

✦ All make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LEADER:

Psalm 31:1, 2, 5a, 21

Let us repeat the Psalm Response:
Into your hand I commit my spirit.

ALL: Into your hand I commit my spirit.

In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;
do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.

Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily.

Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.

ALL: Into your hand I commit my spirit.

Blessed be the LORD,
for he has wondrously shown his steadfast
love to me
when I was beset as a city under siege.

ALL: Into your hand I commit my spirit.

◆ All stand and sing **Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

LEADER:

John 18:33–37

A reading from the holy Gospel according
to John.

◆ Read the Gospel passage from the Bible.

The Gospel of the Lord.

◆ All sit and observe silence.

LEADER:

As I reflect on Jesus’ love for me, how can
I thank him?

LEADER:

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father . . . Amen.

LEADER:

Today we remember Jesus’ great love.
Help us to honor him with our lives.
We ask this in the name of the Father,
the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.