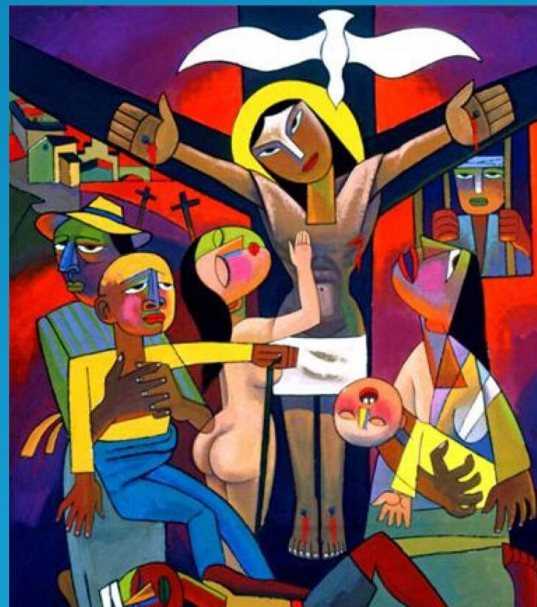


THREE HOLY DAYS

WORSHIP AT HOME

2020



SAINT  **PAUL'S**
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
PEORIA • ILLINOIS

Dear friends at St. Paul's,

Welcome, wherever you are, to Holy Week. For many centuries, followers of Jesus have gathered together to retrace and remember the last days of Jesus Christ, especially the three sacred days that make up the Triduum ("three days"). Usually we celebrate these holy days gathered together at church, but this year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will celebrate together but separately wherever we are. We are refraining from being together, but we may still enter into the Holy Week of Jesus in our homes and places of refuge. We are dispersed but not despairing.

What follows are prayers and practices for each of the three days - but one thing that is always special about these days is that we believe that what we remember and celebrate in these services cannot be separated so together they make one event, one liturgy, one service.

We encourage you to remember that your home is a sacred place, and make a place this week to remember that. Throughout this week, we will be attentive to the worshipful-ness of our homes and places where we observe Holy Week. Set aside a holy place in your home for Holy Week. Perhaps a simple side table covered with a cloth of any color. Whatever you have is enough. Place a few things to help *you* enter the presence of God: a cross, a bible, a candle. If you have children, encourage them to choose one item for your holy place. The table should have at most 5-6 things—simplicity is best.

This service was created for home use. It has been written so that various parts can be shared out among those present. Each part is either meant to be read by a single person, or by all. And this is indicated with parts for all written in bold font and parts for one written in regular font. The single-person parts may be shared and a single leader is not required. While this service assumes a small gathering, it may also be prayed by an individual who, while physically alone, is nevertheless gathered in spirit with the rest of the church this day.

Resources in addition to the Book of Common Prayer and Book of Occasional Services:

- barefoottheology.com - *The Rev. Josephine Robertson and the Rev. Joseph Peters-Mathews*
- *Triduum under Quarantine Webinar* by *Dr. Lisa Kimball and the Rev. Dr. James Farwell*
- *Home Worship for the Three Days* by *Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church*
- *Holy Week Liturgy for St. Aidan's Episcopal Church* by *the Rev. Mary Kate Rejouis*

MAUNDY THURSDAY



Maundy Thursday gets its name from the Latin word *Mandatum*, meaning “commandment,” and it is Jesus’ final commandment to his followers in John’s Gospel, “Love one another as I have loved you,” that we remember today. The washing of feet, which has its origins in the Gospel according to St. John, is one of the most ancient and universal rites in the Christian Church. It is a reminder of the humility necessary to be servants with one another. On Maundy Thursday we also remember the last supper that Jesus ate with his friends, which has become for us the Holy Eucharist. This year, we can remember the last time we received Holy Communion, and look again to receive this gift, together, in the future. All that happens on this night remind us that we are called to join with Jesus as servants in all that he does. This prayer from Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) describes the heart of Maundy Thursday

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours;
no hands but yours; no feet but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world.
Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good.
Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.*

Concerning the Service Tonight

Tonight’s part of the service takes place over a simple meal. It comes from an old Christian practice called the Agape meal, which remembers the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples. As you set your table, the setting and foods should be simple. Traditional foods include soup, cheese, olives, dried fruit, bread, and wine, or whatever beverage makes sense for those gathered.

OPENING

Beloveds, tonight is a holy night. Tonight we join with Christians around the world as we remember the last night our Lord spent with his friends. We gather around a table, and with all those who remember tonight. Though we are dispersed, we are together, in spirit and in truth.

Tonight is about friendship, and love. But not all the stories tonight are happy, because suffering and evil are real. So tonight we will eat a meal, we will share stories, and we will pray together.

THE BLESSINGS AND THE MEAL

At the time appointed, all gather around the table, standing as able. After a time of silence, the presider offers the following blessings.

This portion of the service may be used at any time a meal is shared among Christians. It follows the shape of the last supper, and therefore will sound familiar and much like the Eucharist. However a priest is not required because the elements are not consecrated. They are however blessed, something all Christians are called to do.

Over Bread

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and you have fed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. Let us be fed again soon with that bread of life. And as grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Over Wine

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The whole company together then blesses the rest of the meal, saying together.

Holy and lifegiving God, we thank you for the bounty of your Creation laid before us. We ask you to bless it, that it may be to us a holy meal. We give thanks for all those who labored so that it might sustain us, and we ask that through it you would give us the strength to be your good stewards; to care, and tend your creation, and to care especially for our siblings, all the people of this world. Tonight, be with all the members of our community who we love and miss, those who cannot be here with us to share this meal. We ask these things by the grace of Jesus Christ our Brother and the Holy Spirit our friend and guide. Amen.

The meal should be enjoyed by all. If several are gathered, they first serve one another, as Jesus served us. As feels appropriate the following stories should be read by members of the gathered group while the rest continue their meal. These stories can be scattered throughout the meal as seems appropriate. Conversation and questions are encouraged, for this is a gathering of friends.

THE READINGS

John 13:1-15

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord--and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord Jesus, after he had supped with his disciples and had washed their feet, said to them, "Do you know what I, your Lord and Master, have done to you? I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done."

Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.

I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you.

Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.

By this shall the world know that you are my disciples: That you have love for one another.

As the meal is concluded and the dishes are still on the table the following is read

John 18.1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "For whom are you looking?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he", they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "For whom are you looking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Tonight we are missing our normal routines, our communities, and friends. Many are alone, isolated and afraid, Jesus waits with us all tonight, even as we wait with him. Jesus knows what loneliness feels like, what fear tastes like. Jesus knows the heartbreak of being alone when you want most to be with people you love. Tonight we hold vigil with the sick, the fearful, the lonely, and with all who risk their own lives to protect and care for ours.

We are invited to clear away the dishes, and clean up the remains of our meal in silence, and with prayer. Tonight this table was our altar, and this home our sanctuary. Let us cleanse it of all that has come before this moment: of our anxiety, our worry, our sorrow, and our shame.

The table may then be cleared by all present, as each is able. The Christ candle may be left lighted. One person may be designated to read Psalm 51 while the table is cleared, and table cloth or decoration removed. The table is then wiped down with the clean damp cloth, and dried.

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *

in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

Wash me through and through from my wickedness *

and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, *

and my sin is ever before me.

Against you only have I sinned *

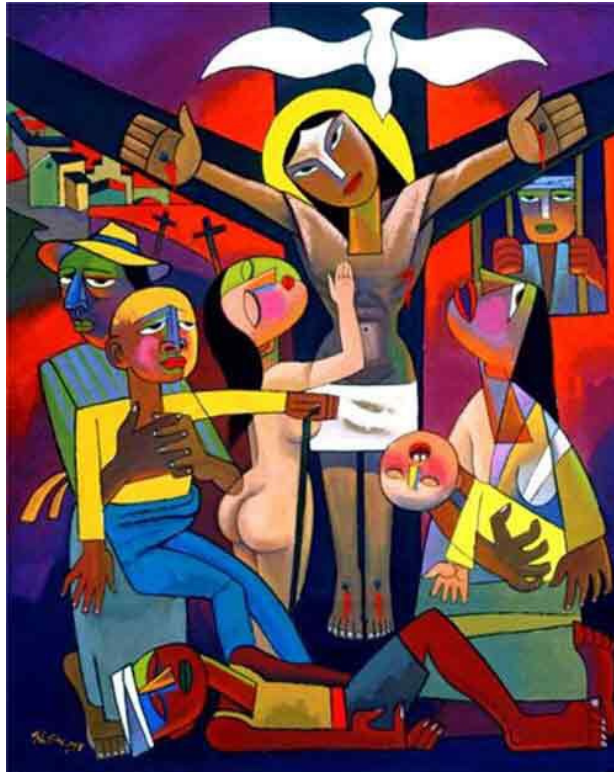
and done what is evil in your sight.

And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment.
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.
For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
I shall teach your ways to the wicked, *
and sinners shall return to you.
Deliver me from death, O God, *
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
O God of my salvation.
Open my lips, O Lord, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, *
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
Be favorable and gracious to Zion, *
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices,
with burnt-offerings and oblations; *
then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.

When the table is cleared all gather together for a final prayer and invitation to keep vigil.

Holy One, draw near to your people this night, wait and watch with us; for our hearts are heavy. Send your holy angels to watch over the sick, and to guide the hands of those who tend to them. And we beseech you, comfort us as a Mother soothes her beloved children. May we watch, and wait, strengthened by your presence. **Amen.**

GOOD FRIDAY



Good Friday is the most solemn day of the church year, the day we remember when Jesus loved us so fully that he was willing to die for us on the cross. Yet on this day, we don't just remember that this happened once two thousand years ago - on this day, we join with Jesus in love for the world, and then we pray for every imaginable need of the world, remembering that Jesus held the pain of the whole world on the cross. As we join with Jesus today, we will read the story of his death, and then we will join together in prayer. These prayers are called the 'solemn collects' of Good Friday. I encourage you to pray them, and I encourage you to add your own prayers for the pain and suffering of the world too, for that is what we join together to bring to God today.

Remember again that all of our three holy days are one service - that they are all a liturgy of death and resurrection. Today does not stand alone, and the cross never stands alone. The reason that we remember the cross, the reason that we remember the death of Jesus today is because it is not the end of the story. Today we remember evil and suffering in our world because they are very real, and they are very much still among us, but we should never let our prayers and worship be separated from the knowledge that what we remember in these most holy days is death AND resurrection - that evil and suffering are real, and yet they are not the end. Life and love have triumphed, and Easter is coming.

This service can be done seated, such as in a living room, or outdoors in a garden or other quiet place. If done inside lights should be low and soft. If possible a single candle should be placed in the midst of those gathered and should be lit before the service begins.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE TELLING OF THE PASSION

The Passion story is introduced in the following manner

Today we follow Jesus to the cross and the grave. Let us tell together the story that we might remember God's love for us, especially when we are afraid, isolated, or sick.

As the story of Jesus' passion is long, consider telling it paragraph by paragraph with each person present reading in turn until the whole story is told. Everyone who is able to read should be encouraged to share in the telling of this sacred story. (If it is more appropriate for those gathered, this story could be read from a children's Bible.)

John 18.1-19.42

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas bought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him."

So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full

of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

At the end of the reading, the last reader may say:

Let us sit in silence with those who laid Jesus to rest.

A measured silence from at least one minute, but preferably three to five minutes, is observed.

THE SOLEMN COLLECTS

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Let us pray for the holy catholic Church of Christ throughout the world; for all those who meet in homes on these holy days, for those isolated due to illness or age, that all your people might be one.

Silence

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those to whom their care is entrusted. That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind; for the hungry and the homeless, the destitute, and the oppressed, for the sick, the wounded, and the crippled, for those in loneliness, fear, and anguish, for those who face temptation, doubt, selfishness, and despair, for the sorrowful and bereaved, for prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger, that God in mercy comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

All say together the anthem

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

**If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him.**

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

prayed by all gathered

**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.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The service concludes with the following prayer. The candle should be blown out as the prayer is concluded.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and forever. Amen.

EASTER VIGIL



The Easter Vigil is the climax of our story and gathering as the community of Christ. The Great Vigil uses the symbols of life and earth: fire, water, bread, wine. We use the power of sacred story to remember that we are the people of God and God works in us and through us in the world. The vigil is a night that begins in darkness, in the shadow of death, after remembering Jesus's death on Good Friday. But death is not the final word, in Christ, so we kindle a fire as a sign that the love of God is deeper and stronger than death. *Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:39). So we begin in the dark and light the new fire, and the new Paschal candle. This year, because we cannot gather, we invite you to light your own fire and remember that we are all the light of the world, that the light of Christ still burns brightly throughout our world.

During the Easter Vigil, we tell our story by the light of the fire - we tell the stories of the people of God through history. Then we eventually make it to the story of Jesus's resurrection, and when we do, we remember our own baptism, and we sing and proclaim the Resurrection of Christ for the first time this year, and look forward to the time when we will gather again at God's table.

Tonight the liturgy that follows is one that you can share on your own with those you live with, or that you can join in with others virtually if you would like to remember that we share the proclamation of new life together. Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

This service should take place after dinner, but before dessert. Extra goodies — baked goods, celebratory beverages, treats to mark this night — should be prepared in advance for the conclusion of this service. We invite you to either find a way to light a fire - in a fire pit or fire place. Whether or not you have a fire, a special candle should be set aside for this service, ideally a pillar candle that can burn throughout Easter in a space of comfort and respite. Comfortable seating is encouraged for this service.

THE LIGHTING OF THE NEW FIRE

Someone lights the new fire.

Beloved in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to linger in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord in which, by virtue of our baptism into his death, into the hope of his resurrection, we celebrate the New Life we have received by his Mercy, awaiting the time when we may gather again around your holy altar.

Let us pray.

O God, you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rejoice, all heavenly choirs of angels!
Christ has conquered; the risen Savior shines upon you.
This is the night in which the true Lamb is slain.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

This the night in which the children of Israel were led through the sea.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

This is the night in which all who believe in Christ are renewed in grace.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

Holy Father, accept our living sacrifice of this candle in your honor. May Christ, the light of the world, bring us healing. May Christ, your light in us, drive away darkness and fear. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find our faith ever burning, our love of mercy and justice ever afire – he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

This candle can be burned for the remainder of the Great Fifty Days whenever a family gathers to eat or someone sits for quiet.

HEARING SALVATION'S HISTORY

Then the following stories are read aloud. After each story, those who have memories of the stories are invited to share those memories — a funny time they heard this story, who they associate with it, where they learned it most truly, etc. This is a night for telling stories of good news. After the story, someone says the paired prayer. Lights should be kept dim for these stories — just enough light for a reader.

(If you join in virtually, we might tell different stories, or might tell the stories in creative ways. If you would prefer to tell different stories, all of the options are listed in p. 288-291 of the BCP. You may choose any stories you like, but you must include the story of Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea.)

Let us hear the story of God's saving work in history, the story of how God saved his people throughout all ages, and let us know that in whatever dangers we face in our own day, God's hands are still mighty to save.

Story 1: The story of Creation —Genesis 1.1-2.2

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged

bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.

Thanks be to God.

At home: Stories about the Creation story — and stories about creation, its beauty, and God’s work — may be shared.

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Story 2: The Flood — Genesis 7.1-5, 11-18; 8.8-18; 9.8-13

Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.”

And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark, they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

In the six hundred first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

Then God said to Noah, “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came

out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.

Thanks be to God.

At home: Stories about torrential downpours, rainbows, and fun and scary times with water may be shared.

Almighty God, you have placed in the skies the sign of your covenant with all living things: Grant that we, who are saved through water and the Spirit, may worthily offer to you our sacrifice of thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Story 3: Israel’s Deliverance at the Red Sea — Exodus 14.10-15.1

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” But Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.” The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

Thanks be to God.

At home: Stories about getting away safe, God delivering the people, or unexpected blessings may be shared.

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

REMEMBERING BAPTISM AND TELLING ITS STORY

Before we hear the Good News of our Savior's resurrection, let us pray for those who are being baptized this night and those whose baptisms are delayed because of pandemic and hear of God's acts of salvation through Water and the Spirit.

After some silence

Story 4: Baptized into Christ's Death and Resurrection — Romans 6.3-11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Thanks be to God.

Stories about baptism may be shared: stories of one's own, or by witnesses of others.

Having remembered those who will be baptized, and hearing how we have been joined to Christ in baptism, let us reaffirm our baptismal promises.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,**

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

With God's help, I will continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

With God's help, I will persevere in resisting evil, and whenever I fall into sin, return to the Lord.

With God's help, I will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

With God's help, I will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving my neighbor as myself.

With God's help, I will strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PROCLAIMING CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Everyone present takes a turn leading the following exchange.

One Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

After everyone has proclaimed the resurrection,

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Let's hear one more story: the story of an empty tomb.

Story 5: Jesus' Resurrection — Matthew 28.1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

Thanks be to God.

Stories of Easters past may be shared as preparations for sharing Easter treats take place.

O God of love, you are the true sun of the world, evermore risen and never going down: We pray you to shine in our hearts and drive away the darkness of sin and the mist of error. We pray that we may, this day and all our lives long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

SHARING THE EASTER FEAST

In this dispersed setting, the Eucharist is not available, but Christ is present whenever two or three are gathered in his name, and the disciples knew him in the breaking of the bread. Enjoy the rest of your Easter feast with whatever is celebratory and special to you on this night!

Eternal giver of life and light, this holy night shines with the radiance of the risen Christ. Renew your church with the Spirit given us in baptism, that we may worship you in sincerity and truth and may shine as a light in the world, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!