



## **A GUIDE TO CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK IN THE HOME**



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## Palm Sunday (April 5)

Today, we invite you to create a sacred space at home. We recommend inviting the entire family to participate in choosing the location. Place the following items on a table in the sacred space:

- A cloth. Color doesn't matter, but consider either purple for Lent or red for Holy Week, and then switching to white for the Easter Vigil.
- A candle. This candle can be lit during prayer to remind us of God's abiding presence.
- A cross. If you don't have a physical one, consider printing or coloring a picture of a cross.
- An empty bowl. Water serves as a reminder of our baptism and the bowl can be filled beginning at the Easter Vigil.
- A Bible and/or Book of Common Prayer. If you don't have one, consider printing favorite Scripture passages from the Internet or hand writing them.
- Any other icon or religious art which inspires you.
- Some branches or cuttings from your yard or garden, to symbolize the palms traditionally used in church.

Once the space has been assembled, light the candle and pray together as a family, using the following rite:

*One:* Our help is in the name of the Lord.

*All:* The maker of heaven and earth.

*One:* The Lord be with you.

*All:* And also with you.

*One:* Let us pray. Almighty God, who sanctifies the places dedicated to your name, pour out your grace on this house of prayer, that all who here call on your name may experience your grace; through Christ our Lord.

*All:* Amen.

If you wish, you can then take the branches or cuttings and make a procession through the home, using the following prayers traditional to the celebration and blessing of a home, as adapted from the Book of Occasional Services. Consider rotating among the family who reads the prayers in each area.

At the entrance

Sovereign Lord, you are Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: Send your servants out from this place on many errands, be our constant companion in the way, and welcome us upon our return, so our coming and going they may be sustained by your presence, O Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a study or library

O God of truth, eternal ground of all that is, beyond space and time yet within them, transcending all things yet pervading them: Show yourself to us, for we go about in ignorance; reveal yourself to us, for it is you that we seek, O Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

In a bedroom

O God of life and love, the true rest of your people: Sanctify to your servants their hours of rest and refreshment, their sleeping and their waking; and grant that, strengthened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we may rise to serve you all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a child's room

Heavenly Father, your Son our Savior took young children into his arms and blessed them: Embrace the child whose room this is with your unfailing love, protect him/her from all danger, and bring him/her in safety to each new day, until he/she greets with joy the great day of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a guest room

Loving God, you have taught us to welcome one another as Christ welcomed us: Bless those who from time to time share the hospitality of this home. May your fatherly care shield them, the love of your dear Son preserve them from all evil, and the guidance of your Holy Spirit keep them in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a bathroom

O holy God, in the incarnation of your Son our Lord you made our flesh the instrument of your self-revelation: Give us a proper respect and reverence for our mortal bodies, keeping them clean and fair, whole and sound; that, glorifying you in them, we may confidently await our being clothed upon with spiritual bodies, when that which is mortal is transformed by life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In an office or workshop

O God, your blessed Son worked with his hands in the carpenter shop in Nazareth: Be present, we pray, with those who work in this place, that, laboring as workers together with you, we may share the joy of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a kitchen

O Lord our God, you supply every need of ours according to your great riches: Bless the hands that work in this place, and give us grateful hearts for daily bread; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a dining room

Blessed are you, O Lord, King of the universe, for you give us food and drink to sustain our lives: Make us grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a living room or family room

Give your blessing, Lord, to all who share this room, that we may be knit together in fellowship here on earth, and joined with the communion of your saints in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Finally, return to your sacred space and recite this final prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love [to each other and] to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us; and preserve us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and for ever. *Amen.*

We strongly encourage you to use the sacred space for individual and/or family prayer throughout the week. You may use a Book of Common Prayer or the very easy-to-use website [https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/daily\\_prayer.php](https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/daily_prayer.php).



## Maundy Thursday (April 9)

Today, we invite the family to ritually wash their hands and gather for an agapé meal, which will be followed by a brief service of prayer and Scripture, and then the stripping bare of the family's sacred space.

### Hand washing

*One:* We begin by washing, as we were washed in our baptism. We cleanse our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of new birth. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we were commanded to love, and to cleanse our hands, and gather in spirit, is how we love the vulnerable, whom Jesus loved. May we be instruments of love. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.

*Each person present then washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water. Once washed each should help with setting the table as they are able.*

### Agapé Meal

*A meatless meal is to be preferred. The setting should be austere and the foods sparse and simple. Appropriate foods include soup, cheese, olives, dried fruit, bread, and wine. At the time appointed, all gather around the table, standing as they are able. After a time of silence, the presider offers the following blessings.*

#### 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.*

#### 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 the Other Foods

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*The meal is now eaten. If several are gathered, they should serve each other.*

## The Word and the Prayers

*At the end of the meal, the seventeenth chapter of the gospel of John is read:*

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

‘I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you

have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

‘I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

‘Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.’

*Reader:*       The Word of the Lord

*All:*           Thanks be to God.

*A simple hymn can be sung. The following portion of Psalm 63 is then said. If there is more than one voice, it is said in unison.*

- 1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,  
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
- 2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place;  
that I might behold your power and your glory.
- 3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself;  
my lips shall give you praise.
- 4 So will I bless you as long as I live  
and lift up my hands in your Name.
- 5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness,  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips.
- 6 When I remember you upon my bed,  
and meditate on you in the night watches.
- 7 For you have been my helper,  
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.
- 8 My soul clings to you,  
your right hand holds me fast.

## Stripping the Sacred Space

You are now invited to clean up from the meal and then remove all of the items from your sacred space and put them away. You may also wish to cover or remove all religious art or artifacts found in the house. This parallels the stripping of the altar customarily done in the church. Once it is bare, you can wash the table in silence and place a simple black cloth on it if you have one. When you have finished, recite the following prayer.

*One:* The Lord be with you.

*All:* And also with you.

*One:* Let us pray.

*One:* O God of the crucified and risen One, from whom no trial or trouble can separate us: you feed us with your Word and soothe us with your Spirit, closer to us than breath itself.

Make us glad this night for the life of your servant Jesus;

Make us servants of all for the sake of Jesus;

who for our sake gave his life for the salvation of all.

In the Name of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

This concludes our Maundy Thursday observance.





## Good Friday (April 10)

We suggest that you place only a cross (or the images on the following pages) in your empty sacred space and gather there for this service. Once you have had a moment to collect yourselves, begin...

*One:* 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.*

*These solemn collects may be prayed kneeling, standing, or seated. You can (and perhaps should) rotate through readers.*

*One:* 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.

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

*(Pray in silence)*

*One:* 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.*

*All:* 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.

*(Pray in silence)*

*One:* 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.*

*All:* 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  
May 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.

*(Pray in silence)*

*One:* 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.*

*All:* 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.

*(Pray in silence)*

*One:* 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.*

*The next portion of the service is traditionally the veneration of the cross. You are invited to kneel in front of the cross, kiss it, or do what feels appropriate. You may use the following woodcut prints to aid in your reflection:*



*When everyone has had sufficient time to venerate the cross, the following is said:*

*One:* We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

*All:* Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*One:* 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,

*All:* Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*The service concludes with the following prayer. You are encouraged to spend the rest of the night in quiet contemplation.*

*One:* 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 for ever. *Amen.*



## The Great Vigil of Easter (April 11)

This service is celebrated in the evening hours, perhaps after the family dinner but before dessert. If possible, begin with the home in darkness. You should gather around your sacred space, which has now been covered with a white cloth and had all of the sacred items returned to it: an unlit candle, a cross, a Bible, a bowl (now filled with water), and anything else which feels right. Until we can gather once again around the Paschal candle in the church, your family candle will be a fitting substitute. If you have your baptismal candle(s) at home, this is a great time to bring them out!

### Lighting of New Fire

*One:* 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. *Amen.*

*The candle(s) are now lit and the Exsultet (an ancient sacred hymn) is said/sung:*

*One:* Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King.

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and let your holy courts, in radiant light, resound with the praises of your people.

*One:* The Lord be with you.

*All:* And also with you.

*One:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*All:* It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*One:* It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son.

How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and man is reconciled to God.

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.*

## Hearing Salvation's History

*One:* Let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, how he saved his people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

*Reader #1:*

The story of Creation from Genesis. 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.

*Reader:*       The Word of the Lord.

*All:*            Thanks be to God.

*One:* Let us pray. 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.*

*Reader #2:*

The story of The Flood from Exodus. 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.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*All:* Thanks be to God.

*One:* 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.*

*Reader #3:*

The story of Israel’s deliverance at the Red Sea from Exodus. 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.”

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*All:* Thanks be to God.

*One:* 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.*

*One:* 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 then let us hear of God’s acts of salvation through water and the Spirit.

*(Some time is allowed here for silent prayer, and then the next reader begins...)*

*Reader #4:*

A reading from the Book of Romans. 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.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*All:* Thanks be to God.

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

*All:* 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.

*One:* 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. *Amen.*

## Proclaiming Christ's Resurrection

*One:* Alleluia! Christ is Risen!  
*All:* The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*Each person present takes a turn repeating the proclamation and others respond.  
After everyone has taken a turn, everyone prays together:*

*All:* 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.*

*One:* Let us hear one last story: the story of an empty tomb.

*Reader #5:*

The story of Jesus' Resurrection from the Gospel of Matthew. 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.”

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*All:* Thanks be to God.

*One:* 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.

*One* Alleluia! Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us!

*All* Therefore let us keep the feast! Alleluia!

*One* When we share our bread with one another

*All* The Lamb of God will make us one.

*HAPPY EASTER, FRIENDS! GO AND CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION!*



## Easter Morning (April 12)

This morning we invite you to join with countless others around to country to watch the festive Eucharist at the National Cathedral ([cathedral.org](http://cathedral.org)). Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is scheduled to preach.