

Prayer at Home – Third Sunday of Easter (Yr A)

Gather with family or on your own. Place an opened Bible on a table. Light a candle, white if possible, and place a crucifix and some flowers beside it and a bowl of water.

Begin with:

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

Antiphon: Cry out with joy to God, all the earth;
O sing to the glory of God's name.
And offer God glorious praise, alleluia.

Risen Lord, you make your word plain to us. **LORD, HAVE MERCY.**
Paschal Lamb, you make our hearts burn within us. **CHRIST, HAVE MERCY.**
Lord of life, you companion us on our pilgrim way. **LORD, HAVE MERCY.**

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

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

O God of mystery,
Out of death you delivered Christ Jesus,
And he walked in hidden glory with his disciples.

Stir up our faith,
That our hearts may burn within us
At the sound of his word,
And our eyes be opened to recognised him
In the breaking of the bread.

Through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,
Who lives and reigns with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.

First Reading

Acts 2:14, 22-33

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

It was impossible for him to be held by the power of Hades.

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd in a loud voice: "People of Israel, listen to what I am going to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you all know. This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified by men outside the Law. You killed him, but God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since, as David says of him:

'I saw the Lord before me always,
for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me.
So my heart was glad
and my tongue cried out with joy:
my body, too, will rest in the hope
that you will not abandon my soul to Hades
nor allow your holy one to experience corruption.
You have made known the way of life to me,
you will fill me with gladness through your presence.'

"Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us. But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne, what he foresaw and spoke about was the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not experience corruption. God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witness to that. Now raised to the heights by God's right hand, he has

received from the Father the Holy Spirit, who was promised, and what you see and hear is the outpouring of that Spirit".

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 15:1-2, 5, 7-11

R. Lord, you will show us the path of life

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;

it is you yourself who are my prize.' **R.**

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.

I keep the Lord ever in my sight:

since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. **R.**

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.

For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. **R.**

You will show me the path of life,
and the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. **R.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

A reading from the first letter of St. Peter

The ransom that was paid to free you was the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.

If you are acknowledging as your Father one who has no favourites and judges everyone according to what he has done, you must be scrupulously careful as long as you are living away from your home. Remember, the ransom that was paid to free you from the useless way of life your ancestors handed down was not paid in anything corruptible, neither in silver nor gold, but in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely Christ; who, though known since before the world was made, has been revealed only in our time, the end of the ages, for your sake. Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for that very reason - so that you would have faith and hope in God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Lord Jesus, make your word plain to us:
make our hearts burn with love when you speak.*

Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 24:13-35 (JB)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

They recognised him at the breaking of the bread.

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, "What matters are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas answered him, "You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days." "What things?" he asked. "All about Jesus of Nazareth", they answered, "who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing."

Then he said to them, "You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?" Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. "It is nearly evening," they said, "and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at the table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?"

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, "Yes it is true, The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

As Pope Francis likes to say, there are some Christians whose lives are like Lent without Easter and that they constantly look as though they have just come back from a funeral. That's not to be us says Pope Francis. The story of Emmaus is the story of two who thought that Easter had not happened and who did look as though they were just coming back from a funeral. Then, suddenly, all of that turns around when their eyes were suddenly opened.

When we look at the pattern of the story we can see the pattern of what we do here each week. It is the pattern of the liturgy. Firstly, the two disciples are on a journey, like the journey of any of us. We are all on the way to somewhere. But what is the direction of this journey – to God or away from God? Towards our best selves, or away from whom God has made us to be? These two are travelling away from Jerusalem; the whole of Luke's gospel has been a journey towards Jerusalem, and now these two have given-up and they walk away.

But something amazing happens; Jesus joins them. He begins with where the disciples are at. He walks beside them. Our liturgies always begin with "where we are at". We bring ourselves – our lives, our problems, our hopes, our dreams, our thanks, our fears, our disillusionment. And we say, "Well, God, this is us; this is who we are today; please Lord, have mercy!" We are reminding both God and ourselves that God is a merciful God.

Next, on the way to Emmaus, Jesus speaks about all the stuff (a literal translation from the Greek) about himself in the scriptures. That's what we do. We listen to scripture, and the homilist tries to say something sensible about how this story relates to our story.

Then the two disciples say to Jesus, "Stay with us." That's what we do, as we place our prayers of intercession before God and one another. We say, "As we, the whole family, face these dramas in our life and our world, stay with us, Jesus. We pray, do not abandon us!" Essentially, that is what every prayer of intercession is about – Stay with us, Lord!

Then they have Eucharist – Jesus takes the loaf, blesses, breaks, and gives it to them. This is the moment in which they recognise the Risen Christ. Every

Christian community has recognised the Risen Christ in the breaking of bread since that first Easter morn. It is only a glimpse – as soon as we recognise Jesus, he vanishes. Like us, we only see glimpses of the Risen Christ in liturgy, in moments of life, in family, in friends, in encounters, in strangers. Just glimpses – but that is enough.

They returned to Jerusalem filled with the light of the Resurrection. We too are dismissed at the end of each liturgy, to return to our “Jerusalem,” to the reality of life. But we return with fresh eyes, having glimpsed the Risen Christ. That is why our lives can never be like Lent without Easter.

Apostles’ Creed:

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
At the words that follow, up to and including 'the Virgin Mary', all bow.
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come 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 life everlasting. Amen.

Bless yourself making a cross with some water from the bowl.

Prayers of Intercession

INTRODUCTION: God calls us to respond in faith to the risen Lord. Let us bring our needs and those of the world before the God of all.

For the Church separated in this Easter season; that we might be inspired to be visible signs of Christ’s presence, leading many to believe in the hope of the Resurrection. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

For peace in this Easter Season; that Christ’s words of peace to his disciples will calm our anxieties and fears. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

For those who have difficulty believing or those who have lost their faith; that the deepest yearnings of their heart will lead them to God. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

For our dispersed communities during this Easter Season; that we will discover a renewed sense of connection and communion with one another. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

For those suffering in mind or body during this Easter Season, particularly those affected in any way by the coronavirus; that the Resurrected Christ, who bore the wounds of all humanity, may touch their lives with renewed courage and hope. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

For those who have died, especially those who are dying alone this Easter Season; that they may come to know the joy of the Easter feast. RISEN LORD, HEAR US.

Almighty and all-merciful God,
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,
in whom there is no shadow of death,
save us in this time of crisis;
grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;
watch over all medical people
as they tend the sick and work for a cure;
stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;
if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,
that hope may never die
and the light of Easter, the triumph of life,
may shine upon us and the whole world.
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

***Holy Mary, health of the sick, pray for us.
St Joseph, guardian of us all, pray for us.***

Placing our faith in the power of the cross and trusting that we are united to all Christians, in all times and in all places, on this sacred day we dare to pray:

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.

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

Let us pray.

Look with kindness upon your people, O Lord,
and hold us close to you.
Lift our hearts in hope that we all may share in the future glory of the new
heavens and the new earth.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord God,
Strength of the weary, medicine of the weak,
Be near to us as we call on you.
May you be our nourishment during this time
and renew us daily in your love.

May God bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.