

THE HOLY WEEK

INTRODUCTION

Holy Week of Christians leads us, through the door of Palm Sunday, to the heart of the Paschal Mystery celebrated in the sacred Triduum of passion, death and resurrection of the Lord. To enter into this mystery, every year the Church offers dilated spaces and relaxed times, precious words and intense gestures for the community encounter with the Lord. In the body of the Church, which assumes the concrete face of the community, Easter inscribes in the person of the believer a seal of belonging, a covenant pact.

How can we experience all this in the time of the pandemic, which forces us to remain closed in our homes? The Church's proposal is that of not giving up living Easter, praying and even celebrating, not only through the various possible forms of spiritual communion at the celebrations that will take place this year without popular participation. The invitation is to make your home a space for prayer and celebration.

The supporting document that the National Liturgical Office makes available offers families and individuals a domestic celebration scheme for Holy Week, in communion with the celebrations of the Paschal Mystery that take place in cathedrals and parish churches, without personal participation with the people. The elements of this proposal are nothing more than the words and gestures of the liturgy, in the belief that - suitably adapted to the domestic condition and reception capacity of the youngest - they can be continued in speaking and in acting. The words are those of the word of God - especially the Gospels and the Psalms - and of the liturgy, rich in a treasure of prayer to know and meditate on. The gestures find at home the great signs of the liturgy: an olive branch, or the shoot of a spring plant, to enter Holy Week; the Crucifix, detached from the wall and kept close, before the eyes, in the place dedicated to prayer; a candle that lights up and lights up again, with particular intensity on the night of the Vigil; the Scriptures, reopened to find a voice; the icon of the Virgin, Mother of the Church in prayer; the water that commemorates Baptism; the daily bread and the wine of the feast, in the memory and nostalgia of the Eucharist. The domestic Church rediscovers the fundamentals of faith celebrated in church, of the blessing that can be raised to God by a priestly people and by a parental ministeriality.

The supporting document, which presents a prayer pattern for each moment of Holy Week - on Palm Sunday, on the evening of Holy Thursday, on Friday of Passion, on the eve of Easter, on Sunday of the great feast - may seem demanding, or perhaps it is closer to us than we can think. The task of adapting the "dress" of the liturgy and of the prayer of the Church to the "size" of the single family is a challenge that reminds us how it is possible to transform a situation of difficulty and unease into an opportunity for growth.

This is an excerpt from the supporting document of the Italian Bishops' Conference for the families, in the translation of the Conference of Spiritual Assistants to the OFS.



Holy Thursday in family

This year, in this most important moment of the liturgical year the Christian communities cannot meet to celebrate the central mysteries of our faith.

But still, each family can live a moment of prayer in communion with the Church. This evening will be, above all else, an occasion to raise thanks to the Lord for the gift of the Eucharist, memory of his Easter and source of life for the Church and for each believer, that Jesus Christ handed over to his disciples on the vigil of his Passion.

Each family can adapt these prayers according to the necessity.

It is good to choose a space in the house suitable to celebrate and pray together with dignity and recollection. Where possible, a small “place of prayer” can be created (cf. CCC, 2691) or even just a corner of the house where we can place the Bible opened, the image of the crucifix, an icon of the Virgin Mary, a candle, to be lit at the right time. The family could gather in prayer when the bells of the parish church accompany the “Gloria” during the Mass in the Lord’s Supper.

This Prayer can be led by any of the parents.

Leader: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Blessed be God the Father who in his Son Jesus Christ gave life for us.

All: Blesse be the Lord for ever.

Leader: This evening our churches will host, as every year, the celebration of the Supper of our Lord, but they will not be able to welcome the many faithful who make up the holy assembly. While staying home we join in the prayer of the whole Church.

We thank the Lord for the Eucharist, the living memory of the Easter that Jesus has entrusted before his suffering, mystery of love that teaches us to make our life a gift. We thank him for the gift of the priests who announce the Gospel in our communities with generosity and dedication.

Let us thank the Lord for the new and great commandment of fraternal love for which we too can be bread broken in fraternal charity. We recognize in the cross of Jesus, where the suffering of many brothers is reflected, the source of our life and our peace. Together we say:

All: We will never boast of anything else if not of the cross of Jesus Christ, our Lord: he is our salvation, life and resurrection; through him we have been saved and set free.

Leader: Let us pray together the Psalm 116

All: Your cup, O Lord, is the gift of salvation

What shall I return to the LORD
for all his goodness to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.

All: Your cup, O Lord, is the gift of salvation

I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.
Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his faithful servants.

All: Your cup, O Lord, is the gift of salvation

Truly I am your servant, LORD;
I serve you just as my mother did;
you have freed me from my chains.

All: Your cup, O Lord, is the gift of salvation

I will sacrifice a thank offering to you
and call on the name of the LORD.
I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people,

All: Your cup, O Lord, is the gift of salvation

LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

Leader: From the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (11: 23-26)

Brothers, for I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Word of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Here you can have a time for personal prayer and meditation

TO YOU LORD WE RAISE OUR PRAYERS

Leader: On this evening of love that opens the days of Easter, let us enter with Jesus to the mystery of his death and resurrection. The Eucharist that gathers the Christians is the food and the drink for the life of the world. Let us be grateful to the Lord who wanted to stay with us forever and raise our praise to him and for all let us pray.

Leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for the Eucharist that you, before handing yourself to men, willed give to the humankind as a pledge of your love and a living sign of your presence:

All: Let us learn to share our life to be one with our brothers.

Leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for the commandment of love that teaches us to love brothers and sisters as you loved us:

All: Enable us to contemplate your face and serve you in every brothers and sisters in need.

Leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for the ministry of many priests, especially for those most fatigued and strained:

All: Bless them with your grace and give them strength to guide the brothers and sisters to you and comfort them with your Word.

Leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for all the gestures of charity and service that the Church fulfils in your name:

All: Let us have concern about those who are poor, sick and needy and carry the burden of each other.

Leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for the unity of your disciples, the precious treasure that you asked to the Father before dying on the cross:

All: Make us abandon all mistrust and bring down every barrier that separates us and to collaborate in the construction of a single Church.

Leader: We are entering the days of Easter when Jesus passed from this world to the Father and loved his own to the end. Like him we carry in our hearts the sufferings and expectations of all men and women and with him we pray:

Our father...

Leader: O Jesus, our Master and Lord, you, at the hour of passing from this world to the Father, washed the feet of the disciples and in the Eucharist you left us the testament of your love, let us learn from you to exchange this immense gift in mutual love and fraternal service. You, who live and reign forever and ever.

All: Amen

LET US CALL UPON THE BLESSING OF THE FATHER

Leader: Grant your blessing to our family, O Father, and look lovingly at your children who moan because of the disease of Corona Virus; enable us to celebrate soon with all the brothers and sisters the holy Supper that your Son has entrusted to us to live forever by your gift.

All: Amen.

Each one makes a sign of the cross and thus conclude the prayer.



Good Friday in Family

In the afternoon of this day, the family comes together in a space of the house dedicated to family prayer. We recommend to keep the Bible open on a table and a lighted lamp. During the prayer the crucifix or an image of the crucified Christ will be introduced.

Prayer can be led by one of the parents.

Leader: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

All: Amen.

Leader: Remember, Father, of your mercy; always sanctify and protect this family, for which Christ, your Son, by his blood inaugurated the Paschal mystery. He lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Leader: On this day the Church never celebrates the Eucharist, but adores the Holy Cross, commemorating her origin from the side of Christ who dies on the Cross and from this royal throne gives salvation to the whole humanity. Thus accomplish the great love that the Father has for all his children. We too, as a family, would like to receive this infinite gift of love. In our family we would like to gaze at Him who was crucified for us. The face of Christ that we contemplate on the cross is disfigured because it is charged with our sins. But it is at the same time transfigured, for his eyes remain fixed on Father, in whose hands he abandons himself.

Leader: Let us pray together with the Psalm

R. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

In you, LORD, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.
Into your hands I commit my spirit;
deliver me, LORD, my faithful God.

R. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

I am the utter contempt of my neighbors
and an object of dread to my closest friends—
those who see me on the street flee from me.
I am forgotten as though I were dead;
I have become like broken pottery.

R. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

But I trust in you, LORD;
I say, “You are my God.”
My times are in your hands;
deliver me from the hands of my enemies,
from those who pursue me.

R. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Let your face shine on your servant;
save me in your unfailing love.
Be strong and take heart,
all you who hope in the LORD.

R. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

The following Gospel narration can be read in the form of a dialogue with calm
and attention (4 voices: Narrator, Pilate, Others and Jesus)

From the Gospel of St. John (19)

Narrator: At that time the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate:

Others: “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.”

Narrator: Pilate answered,

Pilate: “What I have written, I have written.”

Narrator: When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, “They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.” So this is what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her,

Jesus: “Woman, here is your son,”

Narrator: and to the disciple;

Jesus: “Here is your mother.”

Narrator: From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said:

Jesus: “I am thirsty.”

Narrator: A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said:

Jesus: “It is finished.”

Narrator: With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The word of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Jesus Christ.

Here we can have a time for personal meditation.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Leader: The salvation realized by the sacrifice of Christ overcome every barriers of the earth and reach to all men and women. Especially on this day and in this period of great difficulties all over the world, let us pray to God our Father.

Leader: For the whole Church:

Lord, give her unity and peace and protect her all over the world.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For the Pope, Bishops, priests and deacons:

Lord, give them life and health and preserve them as guide and pastors of your people.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For all the baptized and the catechumens who desire to be part of the Church:
Lord, according to the gift of your grace, enable all the members of the community to serve you faithfully.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For the unity of the Christians:
Lord, gather and guard all in your Church

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For the Hebrew brothers and for the non-Christians:
Lord, help the Hebrews to progress in their fidelity to the covenant and enable the others to walk in your presence.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For those who do not believe in God:
Lord, make that, living in goodness and rectitude, they reach at the knowledge of the true God.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For the rulers:
Lord, illumine their mind and their hearts to strive for the common good in true liberty and in true peace.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: For the poor and troubled especially in the present time:
Lord, turn the pandemic away, drive away hunger, give peace, extinguish hatred and violence, grant health to the sick, strength and support to health workers, hope and comfort to families and eternal salvation to those who have died.

All: **We pray to you, hear us Lord.**

Leader: Now, with the same sentiments of Jesus Christ, let us take to our hearts the suffering and aspirations of men and women and united with him let us pray:

All: Our Father...

TO YOU LORD WE RAISE OUR PRAYERS

The crucifix is brought in. A few moments of silent adoration can be done. After this, together, praise Christ, died for our salvation. Following the prayers, we can bless our body with the sign of the Cross.

Leader: Here is the Cross, to which Christ our Saviour, was hung. Come, let us adore him.

Leader: Lord Jesus, we contemplate your Cross, tree of eternal salvation, comfort of the whole universe.

All: **Our strength is the cross of Christ.**

Leader: The cross is our shadow in the heat, nourishment in our hunger, fountain for our thirst.

All: **Our strength is the cross of Christ.**

Leader: The cross is the mantle in our shame, is the strength in our weakness, wisdom of God in our foolishness.

All: **Our strength is the cross of Christ.**

SIGNED BY THE CROSS

Leader: In the rite for the admission to the catechumenate of those who want to become Christians, there is the gesture of the sign of the cross on the forehead and on the senses of the candidates. We, who are already baptized, now will resume that gesture, and by doing the sign of the cross, we open ourselves and entrust our whole life to Christ.

Each time, the words of prayer are accompanied by the sign of the cross with the thumb on the indicated parts of the body.

Leader: Let us receive the cross on the forehead: Christ protect us with the sign of his love, to learn to know him and to follow him.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Each one makes a sign of the cross on the forehead.

Leader: Let us mark our ears with the sign of the cross, to hear the voice of the Lord.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Each one makes a sign of the cross on the ears.

Leader: Let us mark our eyes with the sign of the cross, to see the splendor of the face of God.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Everyone signs the eyes

Leader: Let us mark our mouth with the sign of the cross, to respond to the Word of God.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Everyone signs the mouth.

Leader: Let us mark our chest with the sign of the cross, so that Christ dwells in our hearts by means of our faith.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Everyone signs the chest.

Leader: Let us mark our shoulders with the sign of the cross, to sustain the yoke of Christ.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Everyone signs the shoulders.

LET US INVOKE THE BLESSING OF THE FATHER

Leader: O Father, shower your blessing on all of us and on all humanity; for the death of your son grant us your forgiveness, console us with your grace and sustain us on the journey of life.

All: Amen.

At the conclusion of this moment of prayer everyone makes the sign of the cross.

PRAYER IN THE FAMILY

ON EASTER NIGHT



This is the night when, from the first centuries of the life of the Church, Christian communities came together to celebrate “the mother of all vigils”. It is the most important moment of the liturgical year. The pandemic emergency we are experiencing now prevents us from coming together to celebrate the mystery that lies at the heart of our faith. However, even on this vigil night for the Lord, each family can live a moment of prayer in communion with the whole Church.

This prayer, which is good to start when it gets dark, will be, above all else, the way to confess that Christ, our Easter, has overcome the darkness of the world and continues to transit from darkness to light, from confused mutism to the Word that keeps the promise burning, from a faltering faith to the certainty that the blessings of the Lord are not finished.

It is good to choose a suitable space in the house to pray together with dignity and recollection. Where possible, a small “place of prayer” can be created (cf. CCC, 2691), or even just a corner of the house where we can place, according to the rhythm of this night’s prayer, the signs of the Light, the Word, the Water and the broken Bread.

Prayer can be led by dad or mom. Each family will be able to adapt the scheme as needed.

THE NIGHT WILL SPLENDOUR LIKE THE DAY

Leader: Blessed be God the Father who through his Son Jesus Christ gave Himself fully to us so that we have life.

All: Blessed be the Lord forever.

Leader: There are certain nights when the darkness seems to have no end. Our concerns find no rest, our questions are not answered, our words are suspended, our actions are no longer enough. We feel the need for a new word, not yet pronounced, of an extra strength, of the presence of an Other. This is the night of the Passage of God who, like a flash of light, cuts through the night and opens a path. We enkindle a light now, a flame that advance in the midst of obscurity. It is dimming and is fragile, like life; brightens the face and gives new hope. It is Christ, your Lord, the Light of the world.

A candle or a lamp is lit, to be placed at the center of the place of prayer. While lighting lamb, you can proclaim together:

All: The light of Christ who resurrect gloriously
destroys the darkness of the heart and of the spirit.

Leader: An ancient hymn, sung in front of the lighted candle, reveals the secret of this night. It is an invitation to welcome and cherish the grace that this night inhabits, so that it becomes a source of light for the joy of humanity.

Leader: Rejoice the choir of the Angels,
exult the heavenly assembly:
a hymn of glory salutes the triumph of the risen Lord.
Rejoice the earth flooded with such great splendor:
the light of the eternal King has overcome the darkness of the world.
May Mother Church rejoice,
shining with the glory of his Lord,
and also in this house of ours they resonate
festive acclamations.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: This is the real Easter, when the real Lamb is killed,
who with his blood consecrates the houses of the faithful.
This is the night, O Father,
in which you freed the children of Israel, our fathers,
from the slavery of Egypt,
and you passed them unharmed across the Red Sea.
This is the night
in which you have overcome the darkness of sin
with the splendor of the pillar of fire.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: This is the night
that saves the believers in Christ all over the earth
from the darkness of sin and the corruption of the world,
consecrates them to the love of the Father
and unites them in the communion of saints.
This is the night
in which Christ, breaking the bonds of death,
rises victorious from the tomb.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: O immensity of your love for us, Father!
O priceless sign of goodness:
to redeem the slave, you sacrificed your Son!
The sin of Adam was really necessary,
which was destroyed with the death of Christ.
Happy fault, that deserved to have such a great redeemer!
The holy mystery of this night defeats evil,

washes the faults, restores innocence to sinners,
joy to the afflicted.
O truly glorious night,
that reunite the earth with the sky
and man to his creator!

All: You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!

Leader: So we pray to you, Lord,
that this little candle, offered in honor of your name
to illuminate the darkness of this night,
shine with light that never goes out.
Come up to you as a fragrant perfume
And blend in with the stars in the sky.
You find it lit the morning star,
the star that knows no sunset:
Christ, your Son, who rose from the dead,
makes his quiet light shine on men
and lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen, amen, amen.

According to the circumstances the following hymn can be adapted.

Leader 1: The fire of Easter,
The flame of love
Kindle on Earth,
Kindle in us, Lord.

All: Kindle in us, Lord!

Leader 2: You, the fire of Easter,
You, the flame of love
Shine in this night,
Shine in us, Lord.

All: Shine in us, Lord!

Leader 3: O fire of Easter,
O flame of love
Enlighten our face,
Enlighten our heart.

All: Enlighten our heart!

THE WORDS THAT NARRATES A NEW LIFE

Leader: On Easter night, a new word pierces the silence. A word that is ancient and always alive, a word that comes from God and tells his story with men resounds in silence. In attentive listening to these precious syllables, let us pray with the whole Church. “O Father, the whole world sees and recognizes that what is destroyed is rebuilt, what is aged is renewed and everything returns to its integrity, through Christ who is the beginning of all things”.

The Bible is opened and placed on the table, close to the candle.

Leader 1: Through the Word everything was created and in Christ everything will be redeemed.

Leader 2: Let us hear the Word of God from the book of Genesis (1: 1, 26-31).

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

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.

The Word of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

From Psalm 32

All: Bless the Lord, my soul!

You are so great, Lord, my God!

You are clothed with majesty and splendour,
wrapped in light as a mantle.

How many are your works, Lord!

You made them all wisely;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Bless the Lord, my soul.

Leader 1: What God has done with a powerful hand to free the people from slavery, now Jesus, the liberator from evil and death, does it for everyone at Easter.

Leader 2: Let us hear the Word of God from the book of Genesis (14: 15-15:1).

In those days the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

Then the angel of God who went before the host of Israel moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness; and the night passed without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down upon the host of the Egyptians, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel; for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." So Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its wonted flow when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled into it, and the LORD routed the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not so much as one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. And Israel saw the great work which the LORD did against the Egyptians, and the people feared the LORD; and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying:

Leader 1: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; (Ex 15, 1b-6. 17-18)
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.
The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Leader 2: The LORD is a man of war;
the LORD is his name.
"Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea;
and his picked officers are sunk in the Red Sea.

Leader 3: The floods cover them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.
Thy right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
thy right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

Leader 4: Thou wilt bring them in,
and plant them on thy own mountain, O LORD,
the place which thou hast made for thy abode,
the sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands have established.
The LORD will reign for ever and ever.”

Leader: Let us pray to the Lord.

O God, who illumines this most holy night with the glory of the resurrection of your Son, revive the spirit of the children of your family, because, renewed in body and soul, we will be always faithful to your love with which the earth is full. For Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us hear the Word of God from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (6: 3-11).

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

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For 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.

The Word of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Everyone stands up. In the song of the EASTER ALLELUIA, we acclaim the Risen Lord. Children can now enrich the place of prayer with the lighting of other candles, based on the number of those gathered in prayer.

All: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Leader: O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!
Let Israel say,
“His steadfast love endures for ever.”

All: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Leader: the right hand of the LORD is exalted,
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!
I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the LORD.

All: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Leader: The stone which the builders rejected
has become the head of the corner.
This is the LORD’s doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

All: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Leader: Let us hear the Word of God from the Gospel according to St. Mathew. (28: 1-10)

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Mag’dalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. Lo, I have told you.” So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Hail!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and

worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

The Word of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Jesus Christ.

WATER THAT GIVES AGAIN FRESHNESS TO LIFE

A bowl with water is placed in the middle of the place of prayer, next to the lighted candle and the Bible.

Leader: Mystery and beauty of light, mystery and power of the Word, mystery and grace of water. We wish to remember the hour of grace of that first blessing which is ours Baptism. In that water we buried our closures and insensitivity, ours resentments and our meanness and we came out clothed in transparent simplicity, of desire for proximity. Baptism affects within us the form of the love of Christ and our whole life can only become a narration of this new form of life.

LITANY OF THE SAINTS

We are living these days as a time of intercession and we want to do it in communion with believers everywhere and at all times. This is why we join the Church in Heaven, to accompany and strengthen our prayer.

Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy	Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy
Holy Mary, Mother of God	Pray for us
St. Michael,	Pray for us
Holy Angels of God,	Pray for us
St. John the Baptist,	Pray for us
St. Joseph,	Pray for us
Saints Peter and Paul,	Pray for us
St. Andrew,	Pray for us
St. John,	Pray for us
Holy Apostles and Evangelists,	Pray for us

St. Ana,	Pray for us
St. Mary of Magdalene,	Pray for us
Holy disciples of the Lord,	Pray for us
St. Stefan,	Pray for us
St. Lawrence,	Pray for us
Saints Perpetua and Felicita,	Pray for us
St. Agnes,	Pray for us
Holy martyrs of Christ,	Pray for us
St. Gregory,	Pray for us
St. Augustine,	Pray for us
St. Athanasius,	Pray for us
St. Basil,	Pray for us
St. Martin,	Pray for us
Saints Cyril and Methodius,	Pray for us
St. Benedict,	Pray for us
St. Francis of Assisi,	Pray for us
St. Clare of Assisi,	Pray for us
St. Louis,	Pray for us
St. Elizabeth of Hungary,	Pray for us
St. Domenic,	Pray for us
All the Saints of God	Pray for us

(We can invoke the intercession of the patron saints of each member of the family)

In your mercy,	Save us, Lord
From all evil,	Save us, Lord
From all the sufferings of these days,	Save us, Lord
From all sin,	Save us, Lord
From eternal death,	Save us, Lord
Through the mystery of your Incarnation,	Save us, Lord
Through your death and resurrection,	Save us, Lord
Through the gift of the Holy Spirit,	Save us, Lord

We sinners pray to you, Hear us, Lord
Jesus, Son of the living God, Hear our prayers
Jesus, Son of the living God, Hear our prayers

LET US BLESS THE LORD FOR THE GIFT OF WATER AND INVOKE HIS BENEDICTION

Once the Litany of the Saints is over, we thank God for the gift of water and
renew together the faith in Baptism

Leader: We praise, O God the Creator,
 who, through water and the Spirit
 gave form and face to all humankind and the universe.

All: **Glory to you, Lord**

Leader: We bless you, O Christ,
 who, from the side pierced on the cross
 brought forth the sacraments of our salvation.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

Leader: We glorify you, O Holy Spirit,
 Who, from the baptismal womb of the Church,
 made us reborn as new creatures.

All: **Glory to you, Lord.**

RENEWAL OF OUR BAPTISMAL FAITH

At the end of the penitential journey of Lent, we renew the profession of baptismal faith with
which we renounced Satan and committed ourselves to serve God in the Church.

Leader: Do you renounce sin, to live in the freedom of the children of God?

All: **I renounce.**

Leader: Do you renounce the temptations of evil, in order not to let yourself be dominated
 by sin?

All: **I renounce.**

Leader: Do you renounce Satan, the origin and cause of every sin?

All: **I renounce.**

Leader: Do you believe in God, Almighty Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth?

All: **I believe.**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: **I believe.**

Leader: Do you 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?

All: **I believe.**

All: **This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

WAITING FOR THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Leader: All the signs of this night lead us to the Eucharist. The present situation prevents us to physically participate in the banquet of life together with our brothers of faith, but we want to thank the Lord for this gift which, even in this difficult time, does not fail, rather it kindles our desire and purifies our expectation.

A piece of broken bread is placed on the table, close to the lighted candle, the Bible and the Water.

Leader: Let us present all our praises and petitions to the Father, through the prayer of the children that was given to us on the day of our Baptism:

All: **Our Father...**

Leader: Free us, O Father, from all the evil, save us from the dangers and fears of this period, make us to taste the joy that your Son Jesus, the first fruit among the resurrected, has brought to the whole world.

LET US PRAISE JESUS, CLEAR LIGHT, LIVING WATER AND TRUE FOOD

Leader 1: Jesus, you are for us
the true food of salvation
that conquer the evil

Leader 2: Jesus, you are for us
the true manna in the desert
that extinguishes hunger

Leader 3: Jesus, you are for us
the clear light of salvation
that enlightens the Earth

Leader 4: Jesus, you are for us
the living water spring
that quenches the World

Leader 5: Jesus, you are for us
the new song of exultation
that announce the feast.

LET US INVOKE THE BLESSING OF THE LORD

Leader: In this hour of prayer we have not forgotten our difficulties: we have met darkness, situations that leave us speechless, our fears. We met them, but we lived them following Jesus, supported by his strength. We have prayed to be able to participate in the victory of Jesus over death. Maybe from tonight the death will make us a little less afraid. And there will be a little more space for love. For this now we invoke the blessing from above, to continue to let ourselves be loved by God and by who are close to us. Living and loving are closely linked: we live only when life is left to be shaped by love. This is why Christ is risen.

Leader: Let the Father, who makes life sprout even in the closed sepulchres, bless us.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let the Son, who is always with us, living and Risen, bless us.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his gifts, bless us.

All: Amen.

The prayer can be concluded with the Marian antiphon of the Easter period,
Regina Coeli.

Leader: Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

All: For He whom thou didst deserve to bear, Alleluia.

Leader: Has risen as He said, Alleluia.

All: Pray for us to God, Alleluia.

Leader: Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.

All: Because Our Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.

Let us pray

O God, Who by the Resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has been pleased to give joy to the whole world, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER IN THE FAMILY

ON EASTER NIGHT



This is the night when, from the first centuries of the life of the Church, Christian communities came together to celebrate “the mother of all vigils”. It is the most important moment of the liturgical year. The pandemic emergency we are experiencing now prevents us from coming together to celebrate the mystery that lies at the heart of our faith. However, even on this vigil night for the Lord, each family can live a moment of prayer in communion with the whole Church.

This prayer, which is good to start when it gets dark, will be, above all else, the way to confess that Christ, our Easter, has overcome the darkness of the world and continues to transit from darkness to light, from confused mutism to the Word that keeps the promise burning, from a faltering faith to the certainty that the blessings of the Lord are not finished.

It is good to choose a suitable space in the house to pray together with dignity and recollection. Where possible, a small “place of prayer” can be created (cf. CCC, 2691), or even just a corner of the house where we can place, according to the rhythm of this night’s prayer, the signs of the Light, the Word, the Water and the broken Bread.

Prayer can be led by dad or mom. Each family will be able to adapt the scheme as needed.

THE NIGHT WILL SPLENDOUR LIKE THE DAY

Leader: Blessed be God the Father who through his Son Jesus Christ gave Himself fully to us so that we have life.

All: Blessed be the Lord forever.

Leader: There are certain nights when the darkness seems to have no end. Our concerns find no rest, our questions are not answered, our words are suspended, our actions are no longer enough. We feel the need for a new word, not yet pronounced, of an extra strength, of the presence of an Other. This is the night of the Passage of God who, like a flash of light, cuts through the night and opens a path. We enkindle a light now, a flame that advance in the midst of obscurity. It is dimming and is fragile, like life; brightens the face and gives new hope. It is Christ, your Lord, the Light of the world.

A candle or a lamp is lit, to be placed at the center of the place of prayer. While lighting lamb, you can proclaim together:

All: The light of Christ who resurrect gloriously
destroys the darkness of the heart and of the spirit.

Leader: An ancient hymn, sung in front of the lighted candle, reveals the secret of this night. It is an invitation to welcome and cherish the grace that this night inhabits, so that it becomes a source of light for the joy of humanity.

Leader: Rejoice the choir of the Angels,
exult the heavenly assembly:
a hymn of glory salutes the triumph of the risen Lord.
Rejoice the earth flooded with such great splendor:
the light of the eternal King has overcome the darkness of the world.
May Mother Church rejoice,
shining with the glory of his Lord,
and also in this house of ours they resonate
festive acclamations.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: This is the real Easter, when the real Lamb is killed,
who with his blood consecrates the houses of the faithful.
This is the night, O Father,
in which you freed the children of Israel, our fathers,
from the slavery of Egypt,
and you passed them unharmed across the Red Sea.
This is the night
in which you have overcome the darkness of sin
with the splendor of the pillar of fire.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: This is the night
that saves the believers in Christ all over the earth
from the darkness of sin and the corruption of the world,
consecrates them to the love of the Father
and unites them in the communion of saints.
This is the night
in which Christ, breaking the bonds of death,
rises victorious from the tomb.

All: **You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!**

Leader: O immensity of your love for us, Father!
O priceless sign of goodness:
to redeem the slave, you sacrificed your Son!
The sin of Adam was really necessary,
which was destroyed with the death of Christ.
Happy fault, that deserved to have such a great redeemer!
The holy mystery of this night defeats evil,

washes the faults, restores innocence to sinners,
joy to the afflicted.
O truly glorious night,
that reunite the earth with the sky
and man to his creator!

All: You are the light, you are the life. Glory to you, Lord!

Leader: So we pray to you, Lord,
that this little candle, offered in honor of your name
to illuminate the darkness of this night,
shine with light that never goes out.
Come up to you as a fragrant perfume
And blend in with the stars in the sky.
You find it lit the morning star,
the star that knows no sunset:
Christ, your Son, who rose from the dead,
makes his quiet light shine on men
and lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen, amen, amen.

According to the circumstances the following hymn can be adapted.

Leader 1: The fire of Easter,
The flame of love
Kindle on Earth,
Kindle in us, Lord.

All: Kindle in us, Lord!

Leader 2: You, the fire of Easter,
You, the flame of love
Shine in this night,
Shine in us, Lord.

All: Shine in us, Lord!

Leader 3: O fire of Easter,
O flame of love
Enlighten our face,
Enlighten our heart.

All: Enlighten our heart!

THE WORDS THAT NARRATES A NEW LIFE

Leader: On Easter night, a new word pierces the silence. A word that is ancient and always alive, a word that comes from God and tells his story with men resounds in silence. In attentive listening to these precious syllables, let us pray with the whole Church. “O Father, the whole world sees and recognizes that what is destroyed is rebuilt, what is aged is renewed and everything returns to its integrity, through Christ who is the beginning of all things”.

The Bible is opened and placed on the table, close to the candle.

Leader 1: Through the Word everything was created and in Christ everything will be redeemed.

Leader 2: Let us hear the Word of God from the book of Genesis (1: 1, 26-31).

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

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.

The Word of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

From Psalm 32

All: Bless the Lord, my soul!

You are so great, Lord, my God!

You are clothed with majesty and splendour,
wrapped in light as a mantle.

How many are your works, Lord!

You made them all wisely;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Bless the Lord, my soul.

Leader 1: What God has done with a powerful hand to free the people from slavery, now Jesus, the liberator from evil and death, does it for everyone at Easter.

Leader 2: Let us hear the Word of God from the book of Genesis (14: 15-15:1).

In those days the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

Then the angel of God who went before the host of Israel moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness; and the night passed without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down upon the host of the Egyptians, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel; for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." So Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its wonted flow when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled into it, and the LORD routed the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not so much as one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. And Israel saw the great work which the LORD did against the Egyptians, and the people feared the LORD; and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying:

Leader 1: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; (Ex 15, 1b-6. 17-18)
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.
The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Leader 2: The LORD is a man of war;
the LORD is his name.
"Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea;
and his picked officers are sunk in the Red Sea.

Leader 3: The floods cover them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.
Thy right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
thy right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

Leader 4: Thou wilt bring them in,
and plant them on thy own mountain, O LORD,
the place which thou hast made for thy abode,
the sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands have established.
The LORD will reign for ever and ever.”

Leader: Let us pray to the Lord.

O God, who illumines this most holy night with the glory of the resurrection of your Son, revive the spirit of the children of your family, because, renewed in body and soul, we will be always faithful to your love with which the earth is full. For Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us hear the Word of God from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (6: 3-11).

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

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For 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.

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St. Louis,	Pray for us
St. Elizabeth of Hungary,	Pray for us
St. Domenic,	Pray for us
All the Saints of God	Pray for us

(We can invoke the intercession of the patron saints of each member of the family)

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From all evil,	Save us, Lord
From all the sufferings of these days,	Save us, Lord
From all sin,	Save us, Lord
From eternal death,	Save us, Lord
Through the mystery of your Incarnation,	Save us, Lord
Through your death and resurrection,	Save us, Lord
Through the gift of the Holy Spirit,	Save us, Lord

We sinners pray to you,	Hear us, Lord
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Leader: Do you renounce Satan, the origin and cause of every sin?

All: **I renounce.**

Leader: Do you believe in God, Almighty Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth?

All: **I believe.**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: **I believe.**

Leader: Do you 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?

All: **I believe.**

All: **This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

WAITING FOR THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Leader: All the signs of this night lead us to the Eucharist. The present situation prevents us to physically participate in the banquet of life together with our brothers of faith, but we want to thank the Lord for this gift which, even in this difficult time, does not fail, rather it kindles our desire and purifies our expectation.

A piece of broken bread is placed on the table, close to the lighted candle, the Bible and the Water.

Leader: Let us present all our praises and petitions to the Father, through the prayer of the children that was given to us on the day of our Baptism:

All: **Our Father...**

Leader: Free us, O Father, from all the evil, save us from the dangers and fears of this period, make us to taste the joy that your Son Jesus, the first fruit among the resurrected, has brought to the whole world.

LET US PRAISE JESUS, CLEAR LIGHT, LIVING WATER AND TRUE FOOD

Leader 1: Jesus, you are for us
the true food of salvation
that conquer the evil

Leader 2: Jesus, you are for us
the true manna in the desert
that extinguishes hunger

Leader 3: Jesus, you are for us
the clear light of salvation
that enlightens the Earth

Leader 4: Jesus, you are for us
the living water spring
that quenches the World

Leader 5: Jesus, you are for us
the new song of exultation
that announce the feast.

LET US INVOKE THE BLESSING OF THE LORD

Leader: In this hour of prayer we have not forgotten our difficulties: we have met darkness, situations that leave us speechless, our fears. We met them, but we lived them following Jesus, supported by his strength. We have prayed to be able to participate in the victory of Jesus over death. Maybe from tonight the death will make us a little less afraid. And there will be a little more space for love. For this now we invoke the blessing from above, to continue to let ourselves be loved by God and by who are close to us. Living and loving are closely linked: we live only when life is left to be shaped by love. This is why Christ is risen.

Leader: Let the Father, who makes life sprout even in the closed sepulchres, bless us.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let the Son, who is always with us, living and Risen, bless us.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his gifts, bless us.

All: Amen.

The prayer can be concluded with the Marian antiphon of the Easter period,
Regina Coeli.

Leader: Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

All: For He whom thou didst deserve to bear, Alleluia.

Leader: Has risen as He said, Alleluia.

All: Pray for us to God, Alleluia.

Leader: Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.

All: Because Our Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.

Let us pray

O God, Who by the Resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has been pleased to give joy to the whole world, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

EASTER SUNDAY

PRAYER IN THE FAMILY, BEFORE THE MEALS



The Lord is risen from the dead! Alleluia! Today is the most important feast for Christians and the family it is called to celebrate the feast not only with a moment of prayer, in communion with the whole community that cannot gather for the Eucharist because of the Corona Virus, but living in joy and thanksgiving the simplest gestures of living together, beginning with the greeting with which the day begins: “Happy Easter in the Lord!”. The festive breakfast made together, a call to relatives, friends and lonely people, the festive dinner prepared with care, the prayer that celebrates the reason for the feast: everything sings of joy and everything is called to be bright, because the light of the risen Lord has overcome the darkness of death!

Around the table, before the festive meal:

PRAISE TO RISEN CHRIST

Leader: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us repeat together: This is the day that the Lord has made. Alleluia!

All: **This is the day that the Lord has made. Alleluia!**

Leader: Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!

All: **Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!**

Leader: Today we are in feast, because the Lord is risen:

Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!

All: **Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!**

Leader: Today death and life confronted each other in a prodigious duel: The Lord of life was dead, but now, alive, triumphs! Let us rejoice and exult. Alleluia!

All: **Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!**

Leader: Today the stone rejected by the builders has become the corner stone: this was done by the Lord and is a marvel in our eyes. Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!

All: **Let us rejoice and exult: Alleluia!**

A song of Alleluia

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Leader: Let us hear the word of the Lord, from the Gospel of St. John (20: 1-9)

Now on the first day of the week Mary Mag'dalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The disciples rush to the sepulchre, to seek the risen Lord. It would have been nice to meet him living, in person, but the sign of the Resurrection is an empty tomb that invites us to believe, understanding the Scriptures. We too would have liked to run to church to meet the Risen Lord in the signs of the Eucharist celebrated with the brothers and sisters of the community. The sign that is given to us is this domestic Church which, while waiting to be able to go out from the

house and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, now thanks the Lord for his gifts, even in the midst of trial.

BENEDICTION OF THE CHILDREN IN REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

The father and the mother, with folded hands, take turns in pronouncing the blessing:

Leader: Be blessed, God the creator and saviour of your people, in the gift of Baptism you made us your children and brothers among us: help our family so that it becomes a sign of your love.

All: Glory to you, Lord.

The father and the mother sign on each other's forehead the blessing of the Lord.

Leader: We bless you, because through the Resurrection of your Son a new life has sprung up for our children: may your blessing guard them and protect them in your love.

All: Glory to you, Lord.

The father and the mother sign the blessing of the Lord on their children's foreheads.

Leader: We glorify you, good Father, because in the trials of life You are the One who does not abandon in darkness, but gives life and freedom. May your blessing free us from evil and save us from all danger.

All: Glory to you, Lord.

The whole family makes the sign of the cross on their body.

BLESSING THE TABLE WHILE WAITING FOR THE EUCHARISTIC MEALS

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, showed yourself to your disciples in the breaking the bread, stay among us: by giving thanks for your gifts in the joyful light of Easter, we welcome you as a guest in our family, to be guests in your Kingdom one day. You who live and reign forever and ever.

All: Amen.

The prayer can be concluded with the singing of the Alleluia, or with the Marian antiphon of Easter Time, Regina Coeli.

Leader: Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.
All: **For He whom thou didst deserve to bear, Alleluia.**
Leader: Has risen as He said, Alleluia.
All: **Pray for us to God, Alleluia.**
Leader: Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.
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