



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

Fourth Sunday of Lent (A)

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish, this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

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

All: **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION

Leader: Jesus said "I will be with you always, even to the end of the ages." We think for a moment of his presence here, with us now, in our home.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Leader: Before we worship, we think of our lives, especially acknowledging our faults and failings. After a moment of silence, we ask forgiveness for our sins, saying:

Leader: You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray. O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

GOSPEL READING

John 9:1,6-9,13-17,34-38

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him. The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

Leader: This Gospel is not just about physical blindness: it is about "spiritual sight" or faith, being able to see beyond the present moment, to God's world, God's vision, God's plan. Often we are "trapped" in the demands of the present world, or we submit ourselves to our own desires, fads and fancies (like the Pharisees in the Gospel). Jesus invites us to a more profound way of looking at things. Are there events in your own life at the moment where you need Jesus to touch you, to open your eyes to see things differently?



A thought for younger family members: have you ever played "Blind Man's Bluff"? It's a game where one person wears a blindfold so they cannot see, and they have to try and catch someone else, just going by sounds. It's not easy – and it would be easy to be mean to someone who couldn't see! When the man in the Gospel got his sight back it must have felt wonderful. But then he found that people were still being mean to him. He knew that Jesus would never be mean to him, and he believed in Him. How can Jesus help us if we are struggling?

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: Let us pray that we may walk by the light of gospel faith.

Leader: Let us pray for the pastors of the universal church, Pope Francis, and all bishops and priests who have been anointed for service; may their personal love for Christ bring spiritual refreshment to God's people. We ask in faith:

All: Guide us by your Spirit, O Christ.

Leader: For Christians who have grown slack in faith and morals; may the Spirit renew within them the light of baptismal grace and remove any moral blindness to racism, violence, drug abuse, and gender discrimination. We ask in faith:

All: Guide us by your Spirit, O Christ.

Leader: For those who have died in Christ; may the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead fill them with eternal light and life. We ask in faith:

All: Guide us by your Spirit, O Christ.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: 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. Amen.

Leader: God of eternal light, you have cast out the power of darkness through the life-giving death of Christ. Continue to draw the church into the fullness of your divine life by the working of your Spirit. Grant our prayers through Christ, our Lord.

PREPARATION FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Leader: Lord God, by the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus your Son has led the human race that walked in darkness into the radiance of the faith and has brought those born in slavery to ancient sin through the waters of regeneration to make them your adopted children. At the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION



All: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

THANKSGIVING PSALM

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.**

FINAL PRAYER AND BLESSING

Leader: O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world, illuminate our hearts, we pray, with the splendour of your grace, that we may always ponder what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty and love you in all sincerity. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: **Amen.**