

BRINGING HOLY WEEK HOME

A PALM SUNDAY
TO EASTER SUNDAY
COMPANION



2020

A most special week

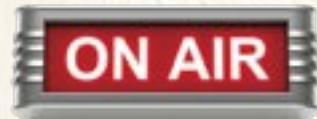
For Christians, Holy Week is the most important week of the year. Holy Week lasts from Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday and reaches its highpoint in what we call the Easter Triduum – those three great days from the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper to Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. Reflecting on the Scriptures and turning to ritual and symbols, Christians throughout the world, journey with Jesus through those final days of his life, his passion, his death and resurrection. In the process, we experience God's redemptive presence, our faith is deepened, our hope is renewed and our commitment to living a life of love of God and one another is strengthened.

A different way of praying as a community of faith

This year our celebrations will be very different from anything that has gone before. The restrictions in place because of the Covid-19 Pandemic mean that as a Christian Community we cannot gather together for our usual religious services. This will not prevent us from uniting spiritually and taking time to pray, to reflect and to make this Holy Week a truly enriching experience of the presence of God in our lives. This guide is to assist us in walking the journey of Holy Week 2020 together, even if we must be apart.

Broadcast ceremonies

We are blessed that many of the traditional ceremonies associated with Holy Week will be livestreamed over the internet or broadcast on radio or television. While recognising that this cannot fully substitute for being present at the ceremony, this guide is designed to help deepen your participation in those broadcasts and to assist you in getting the most out of them spiritually. For those who wish, the liturgical texts of the various ceremonies are available at <https://us.magnificat.net/free>.



In the home

Not everyone can watch the broadcast ceremonies. For those who cannot, this guide has a simple prayer ritual for each day of Holy Week that can be celebrated alone or with your household.

Prayer space

Please set up a prayer space in a prominent place in your home. There, each day, you can place different symbols or things of meaning to you and your family. You might start by placing in the prayer space the most beautiful candle you have to remind us of the living presence of Jesus among us and a Bible which contains God's Word.



To do

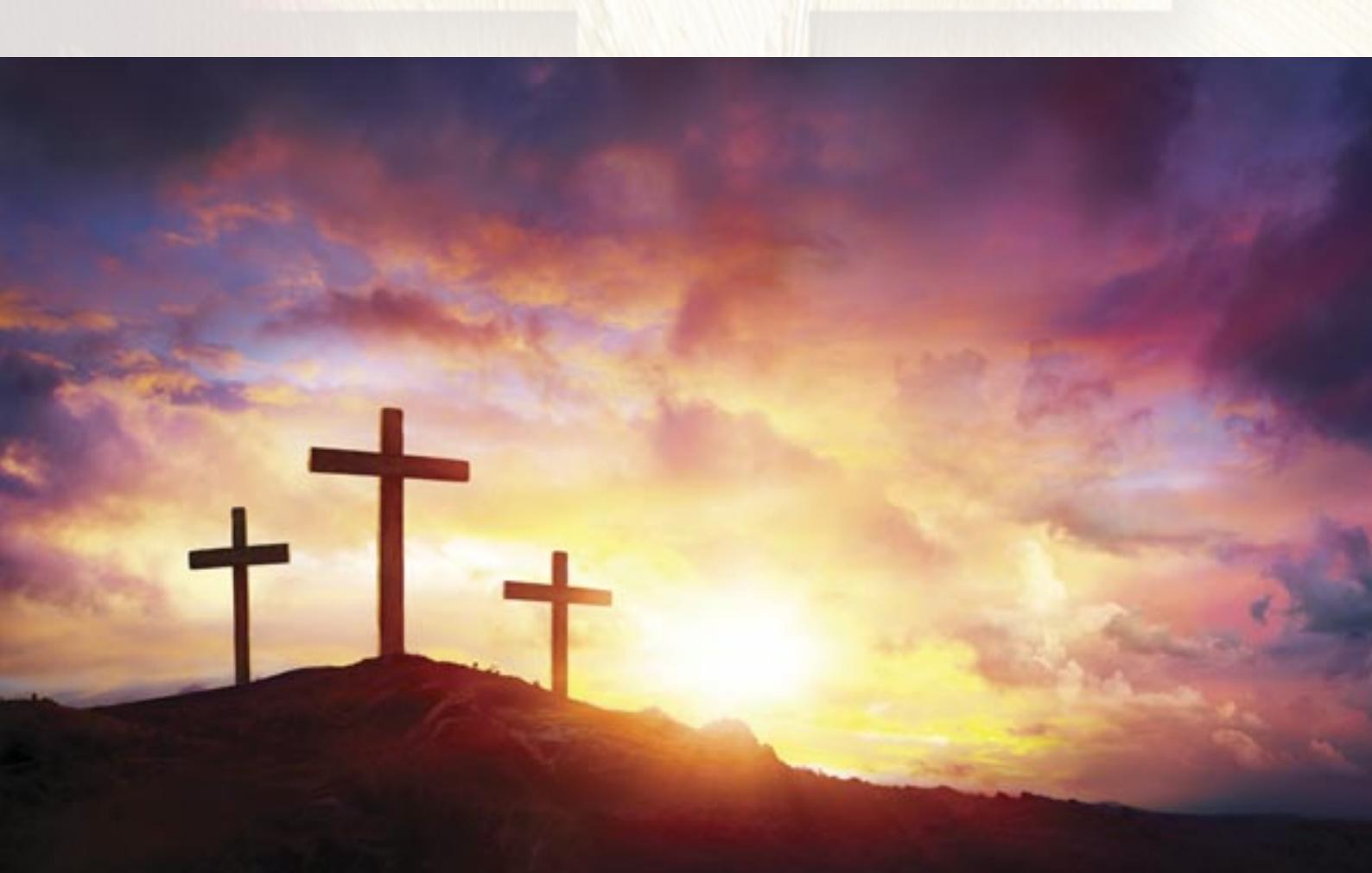
Each day there will be a call to action. To do something different or significant that puts the message of that particular day into practice.

Other opportunities for prayer and reflection

During the week there may be other opportunities for prayer – why not pray the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, a guided meditation or the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Safety

This guide is designed for use by a single household. All safety advice, including that for people cocooning within a household, should be adhered to. If using candles, please do so safely.



Prayer to Our Lady of Knock and photo used by kind permission of Knock Shrine.
The Prodigal Son (p. 15) © thinkstock.com. The Washing of Feet (p. 18) © Shutterstock.
The Easter Vigil (p. 26) © Valerie O'Sullivan. All other photos © istockphotos.com.

This guide was prepared by Julie Kavanagh (Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin), Sheena Darcy (Diocese of Elphin), Bishop Michael Duignan (Diocese of Clonfert) – Special thanks to Colette Dower for Graphic Design and Typesetting. April 2020.



PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

On Palm Sunday we commemorate Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem before the days of his passion and crucifixion. Great crowds had gathered to welcome the famous preacher and miracle worker from Galilee. How fickle people can be! In only a few days, many of that same crowd are shouting 'Crucify him', 'Crucify him!' as they demand of Pilate that Jesus be brutally put to death.

Scripture tells us

'When they were near Jerusalem and had come in sight of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives [...] Great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in his path. The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed were all shouting: 'Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.' (Matthew 21:1-11)



Deepening our Participation in the Broadcast Celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Pick some green branches from your garden to represent the branches people waved on that first Palm Sunday. If you do not have access to a garden perhaps take some pieces of cloth to represent the cloaks the people of Jerusalem laid before Jesus. Place one of these in your sacred space and give one to each person present.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- Normally, the Palm Sunday celebration begins with a reading from the Gospels describing Jesus' dramatic entry into Jerusalem. There follows a blessing of palm and olive branches and a solemn procession to the Church. This year, however, the ceremony may start instead with a **simple blessing of branches**. As this takes place hold your branch or piece of cloth aloft to be blessed.
- The **Readings** focus on Jesus' passion and death. The Prophet Isaiah paints a picture of the servant of God ready to suffer for the people. The Psalm is the one prayed by Jesus on the Cross: 'My God, my God why have you abandoned me!' The Second Reading from St Paul speaks of Jesus' ultimate exaltation, while in the Gospel we hear the traditional account of Jesus' Passion from Matthew.
- The Eucharist will be celebrated as normal. At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart, take some time to truly welcome his presence. He knows the lot of our human suffering. Ask him to be with all those who suffer at this time and to be with you, your family and our whole world.

A Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather around the sacred space with the other members of your household. If possible, take some green branches from your garden to represent the branches people waved on that first Palm Sunday. If you cannot gather some branches, perhaps take some pieces of cloth to represent the cloaks laid before Jesus on this entry to Jerusalem.



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

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we recall today your entry into Jerusalem those many years ago. The people waved branches and sang in welcome. As we prepare to walk with you thought that first Holy Week, we pause to become aware of your presence and welcome you into our hearts (*Pause in Silence*)

Let us say together '**Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest.**'

Reading

'And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.' (From the Gospel of the day, full text Mt 26:14-27:66)

For the full text of the Gospel of the day visit.

(<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/readings/?feature=sunday>)

Reflection

Jesus enters Jerusalem. The liturgy invites us to share in the joy and celebration of the people who cry out in praise of their Lord; a joy that will fade and leaves a bitter and sorrowful taste by the end of the account of the Passion. This celebration seems to combine stories of joy and suffering, mistakes and successes, which are part of our daily lives as disciples. It somehow expresses the contradictory feelings that we too, the men and women of today, experience: the capacity for great love... but also for great hatred; the capacity for courageous self-sacrifice, but also the ability to 'wash our hands' at the right moment; the capacity for loyalty, but also for great abandonment and betrayal. (Pope Francis, 25th March 2018.)

Ritual Action

Place the branches or pieces of cloth in the sacred space.

Intercessions *Light the Candle*

As we light this candle we take a moment to remember and pray for Christians throughout the world who will celebrate this week as holy. (*Pause*) We pray for our needs and the needs

of the world. We remember in our prayer ... (*Bring your intentions to God*) **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Prayer

Loving Father be with us in these days as we recall how the divine goodness of Jesus had to struggle with the darkness of this world. Help us in our own daily struggles to live the life you created us for. Lead us to triumph as Jesus did so that we may always live in your presence. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

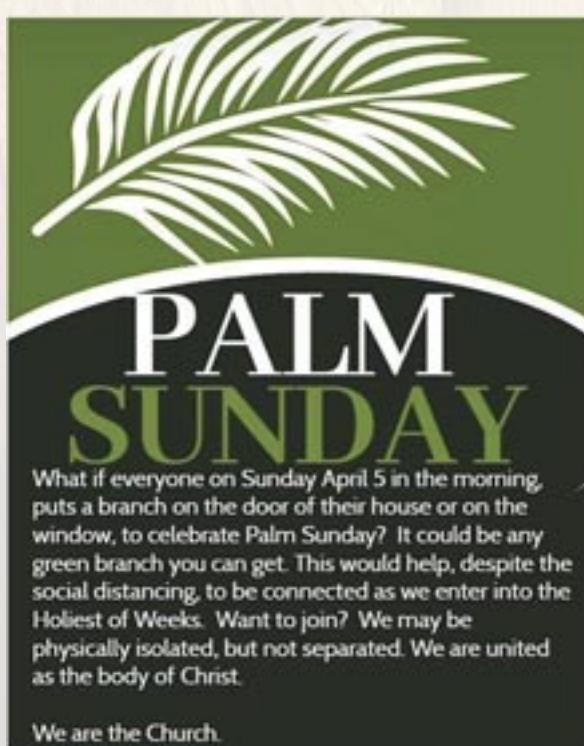
Blessing

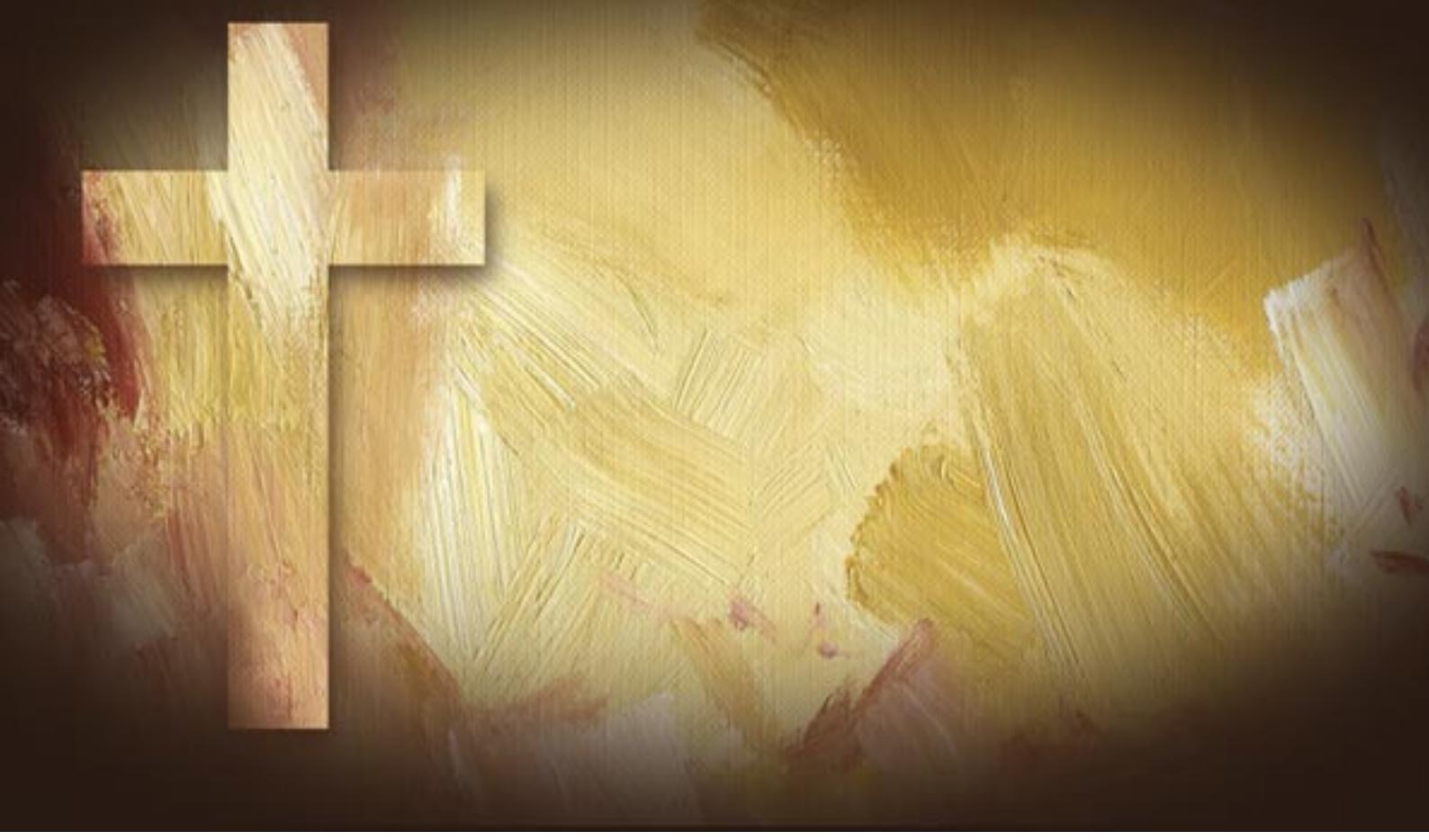
The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross ...

To do

Place a piece of palm or a green branch on your door to let people know it is Palm Sunday. Post a picture of your sacred space on Social Media (using the hashtag #holyweekathome) and let people know that you are preparing to celebrate the greatest week of the church year. Pick a character from the bible to walk with you through this Holy Week – for example Peter, Mary, Mary Magdalen, one of the Apostles, an ordinary citizen of Jerusalem – try to see what they see, imagine their thoughts and feelings as the events unfold.





MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

The Journey of Holy week continues. Today we focus on the village of Bethany on the outskirts of Jerusalem and the house of Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

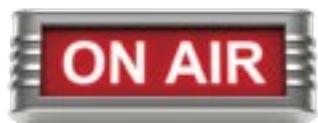
Scripture tells us

'Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. [...] Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. The House was full of the scent of the ointment.' (John 12:1-11)

Deepening our participation in the broadcast celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a jar of olive oil (if you can add other sweet smelling oils to it) in your sacred space.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- You will find that Mass is celebrated as normal today. The church **decoration is minimal** and following an old tradition you may notice holy pictures and crucifixes are covered in purple to heighten our sense of longing for the resurrection.
- In spite of impending doom a sense of faith and trust in God emerges from the **Readings**. The Prophet Isaiah speaks of God upholding his servant, his chosen one and endowing him with his Spirit so that he may bring 'true justice to the nations'. The Psalm takes up this theme: 'Though an army encamp against me, my heart would not fear'. In the Gospel we see a composed Mary anoint Jesus' feet with expensive ointment as if preparing him for some great suffering. An indignant Judas moves ever closer to betrayal.
- At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart. Take some time to truly welcome his presence. Ask him how he felt during those days. Speak to him friend to friend.

A Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather with some members of your household, if you can. Place a small glass jar of olive oil in the sacred space.

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



Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, in your last days, Mary anointed your feet with the best of oil she could find. She sensed that a long and difficult road lay ahead for you. She was preparing you for the suffering of your passion and death. Lord, be with the whole world in these days of great suffering and death. Abundantly anoint us with your strength for the trials and tribulations of life. Ease our anxiety, comfort us in our sorrow. Amen.

Reading

'Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. [...] Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. The house was full of the scent of the ointment.' (From the Gospel of the day, full text John 12:1-11)

Reflection

The anointing of Jesus is deeply poignant. The custom at the time was to anoint the body of someone who had died with oils before they were laid to rest. Mary, without knowing it, was preparing Jesus' body for the suffering it was to undergo. Suffering and pain, sickness and death are a mysterious constant in life. For Christians, Jesus' journey through suffering, through pain and through death to the glory of the resurrection gives us hope. He shows us a

God who stands on the side of the sick, on the side of the suffering and on the side of the dying. We hope in a God who, although we may not fully understand it, ultimately brings goodness out of bad, health out of sickness, comfort out of fear, and even life out of death. That same God, we pray, is with us at this time of anxiety and suffering and that same God will lead us to a time where the dark clouds that loom over us are no more.

Ritual Action

Using an individual cotton bud or a piece of cotton wool dipped in the oil, each person makes the sign of the cross on their forehead saying:

May the Lord be my strength and my protection both now and forever. Amen

Intercessions *Light the candle*

As we light this candle we pray especially for all those who are sick from the Coronavirus and for all those who have died and their families. We pray for all those who are worried or anxious because of the effect the current crisis is having on their lives. (*Pause*) We remember in our prayer (*Bring your intentions to God*) **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

May the Lord support us all the day long,
till the shades lengthen and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.

Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging,
and holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen.

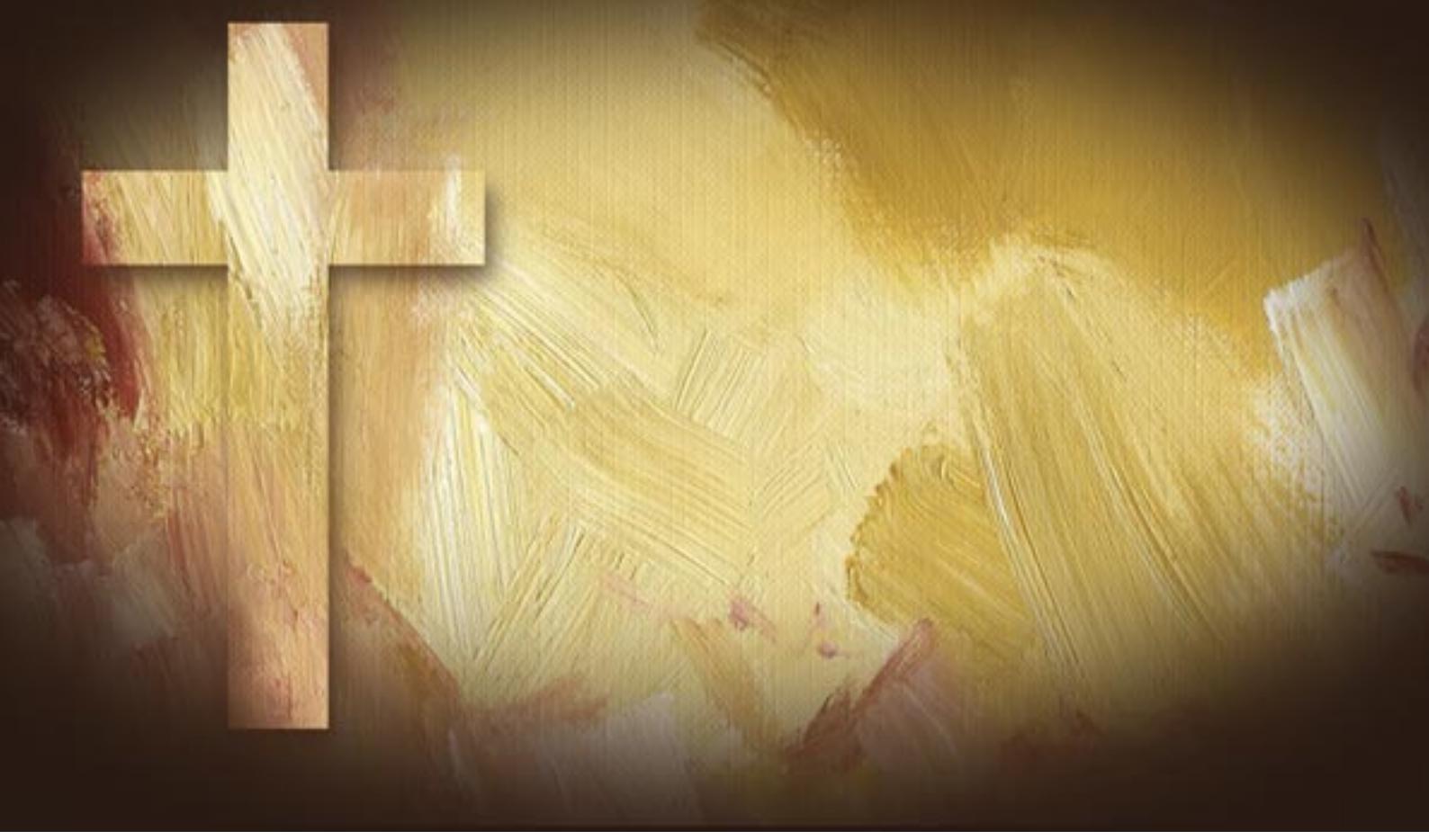
Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross...

To do

If you have a Trócaire box, ask each one in the house to contribute something for those who are less well off – place the box in the sacred space. Watch a Holy Week film for example Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (not for younger viewers); *Jesus of Nazareth, The Greatest Story Ever Told, Risen*.



TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Today we see Jesus at table with his disciples. Jesus is troubled for he knows one of those present is plotting to betray him.

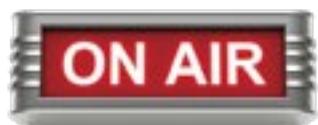
Scripture tells us

'While at supper with his disciples, Jesus was troubled in Spirit and declared, 'I tell you solemnly, one of you will betray me', The disciples looked at one another, wondering who he meant.' (John 13:21-33. 36-38)

Deepening our Participation in Broadcast Celebrations

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a family picture or pictures of loved ones in your sacred space.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- You will find that Mass is celebrated as normal today. In these days, we remember especially those who are **preparing to be baptised** and become new members of the Christian community. This year, as a result of the restrictions in place they will have to wait a little longer for baptism. As they do so let us continue to remember them especially in our prayers.
- The **readings** return to the Prophet Isaiah and to his presentation of the Servant of God as one whose suffering will not go unnoticed or unrewarded. The Psalm expresses sentiments of great trust in God – ‘In you O Lord I seek refuge.’ In the Gospel, the longstanding friendship between Jesus and Judas is being tested and Jesus senses someone is about to betray him.
- At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart, take some time to truly welcome his presence and ask him to bless your family and friends with the gifts of peace and harmony.

A Prayer Ritual at Home

In the prayer space place pictures of people you care about.

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



Opening Prayer

Lord the pain of being betrayed by someone you loved and trusted must have been hard. Was your life not worth more than thirty pieces of silver? Lord help us to appreciate our family and friends – each one unique, each one a gift from you. Help us always to be honest with them in our words and in our actions. Help us to work so that true love, harmony and peace may reign among us. Amen.

Reading

‘While at supper with his disciples, Jesus was troubled in Spirit and declared, ‘I tell you solemnly, one of you will betray me’. The disciples looked at one another, wondering who he meant.’ (From the Gospel of the day, full text John 13:21-33, 36-38)

Reflection

There are growing tensions as the passion and crucifixion nears. This time the tension is not from outside – it is closer to home. It is from within the very group of Jesus’ closest friends. Although each one is different, they somehow had felt the call and followed Jesus. They had shared the common experience of being with him these last few years – they had listened to his every word and witnessed things they could only have dreamt of. They had built a bond - a band of brothers. Now right in their midst, distrust and disharmony was festering. One of their own – one of their number was about to betray Jesus. How easily even the best of relationships can break down. How important it is to appreciate those we love and those who

love us – our family and our friends. How we must work to bring peace to petty quarrels and unity to divisions so that love and harmony and peace may reign between us.

Ritual Action

Pause in silence to pray for harmony among our family and friends - for those whose pictures have been placed in the sacred space.

Lord, help us always to get along. Help us never to betray each other in word or action. Help us to grow in love for each other. As a sign of our commitment to this let us offer each other a sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace as appropriate and safe to do so.

Intercessions *Light the candle*

As we light this candle we pray especially for harmony and peace among family and friends, among nations and peoples. (*Pause*) We pray for our needs and the needs of the whole world. We remember in our prayer ... (*Bring your intentions to God*) **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Prayer of St Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy. Amen

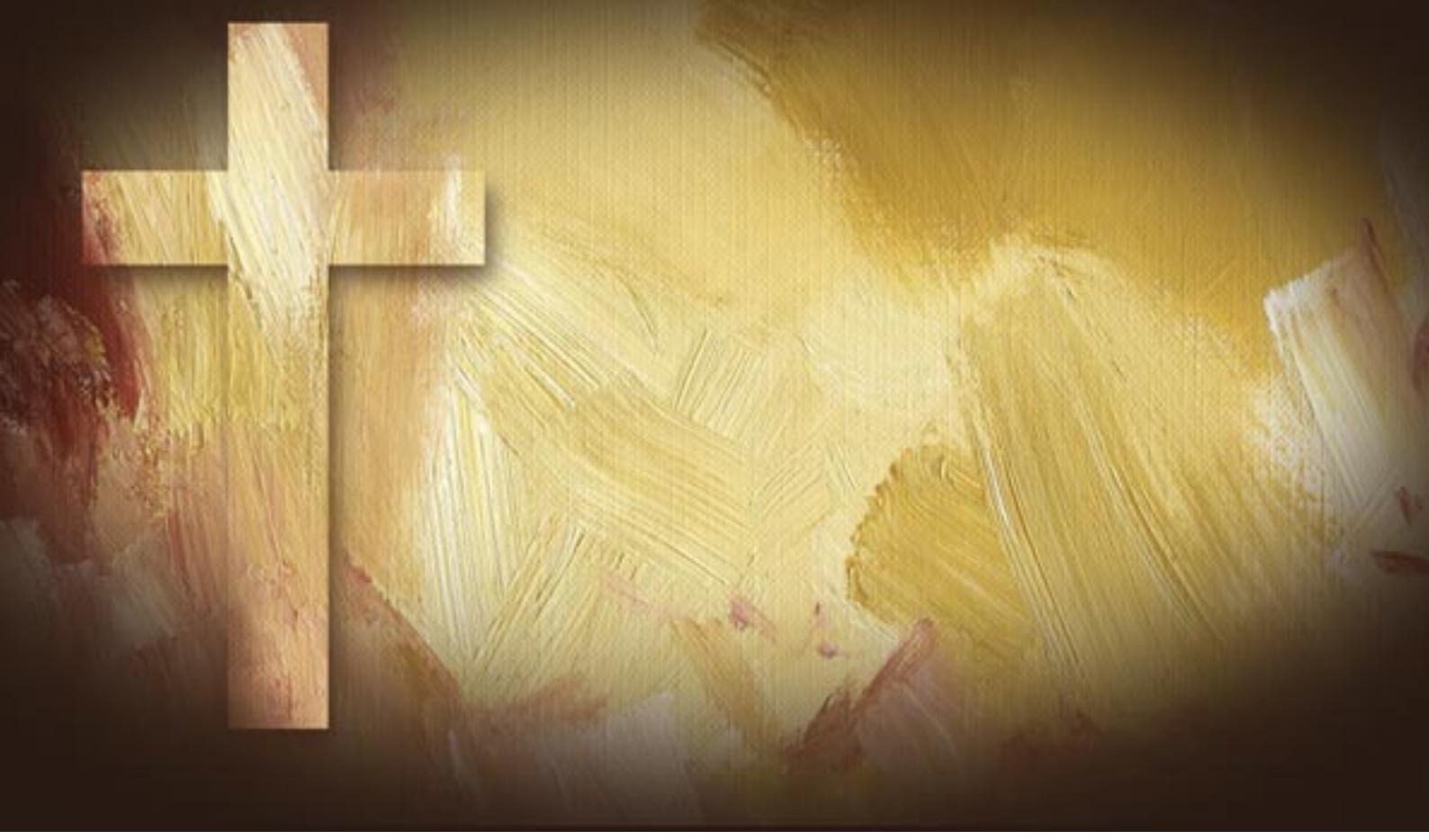
Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross ...

To do

Before the sun sets, make peace with everyone in the house. Take time to tell each one in your family that you care for them. Call those who are absent and tell them too. Pray for areas for the world that suffer from war or violence. Look up on the internet Christian communities that are suffering persecution at this time.



WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK (SPY WEDNESDAY)

Today we see Judas plot Jesus' betrayal. He sold his friendship with him for thirty pieces of silver. We might shake our head in disapproval. However, we too, can let our own selfish thoughts and actions disrupt our relationship with God and with each other.

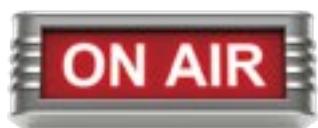
Scripture tells us

'One of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?' They paid him thirty silver pieces, and from that moment he looked for an opportunity to betray him.' (Matthew 26:14-25)

Deepening our Participation in the Broadcast Celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place in your sacred space some silver coins and/or a picture of the prodigal son – that perfect image of God's loving forgiveness.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- Mass is celebrated as normal today. In some churches a **service of prayer and reconciliation** may be broadcast. Although we might betray God's trust in us, the God Jesus showed us is a forgiving God. There is nothing, no matter how bad, that his love cannot forgive and heal. In these days we are encouraged to **seek forgiveness for our failings** – to be reconciled with God and to be reconciled with each other. In the present circumstances where it may be impossible to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation you might consider celebrating the prayer ritual below.
- In the **Readings** the Prophet Isaiah continues to enlighten us to the sufferings to come. The Psalm takes up the idea of betrayal, isolation and suffering. In the Gospel we see Judas plot with the chief priests against Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
- At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart, take some time to truly welcome his presence, bring to him the areas of your life where you need forgiveness and healing – the people you need to be reconciled with.

A Prayer Ritual at Home: Reconciling with God and with one another

In your sacred space, place some pieces of silver and a picture of the Prodigal Son – that perfect image of God's living forgiveness (see page 15). This ritual should be celebrated quietly and slowly giving time to reflect on one's life and to open your heart to the forgiving and healing love of God.



Pope Francis' Advice

Recently Pope Francis spoke about what we can do when we cannot go to confession because of the current restrictions. He advised: 'It is very clear: If you cannot find a priest to confess to, speak directly with God, your Father, and tell him the truth. Say, "Lord, I did this, this, this. Forgive me," and ask for pardon with all your heart.' Make an act of contrition, the pope said, and promise God, 'I will go to confession afterward, but forgive me now.' And immediately you will return to a state of grace with God.' (Pope Francis, 20 March 2020)

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

Examination of Conscience

Let us pause, deep down in the silence of our heart, to examine our conscience
(Pause – and take your time)

How have I failed to love God, failed to do what is right, failed to love others?

Confession of Sin

Using your own words, in the silence of your heart, speak directly to God about your sins.
(Pause – and take your time)

'Lord, I did this ..., this ..., this ... Forgive me!' and ask for pardon with all your heart.

Act of Contrition

Then say: O my God, I thank you for loving me, I am sorry for all my sins, help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Commitment to Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Dear Lord, I firmly amend, once I can, to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but good Lord forgive me now. Amen.

Blessing

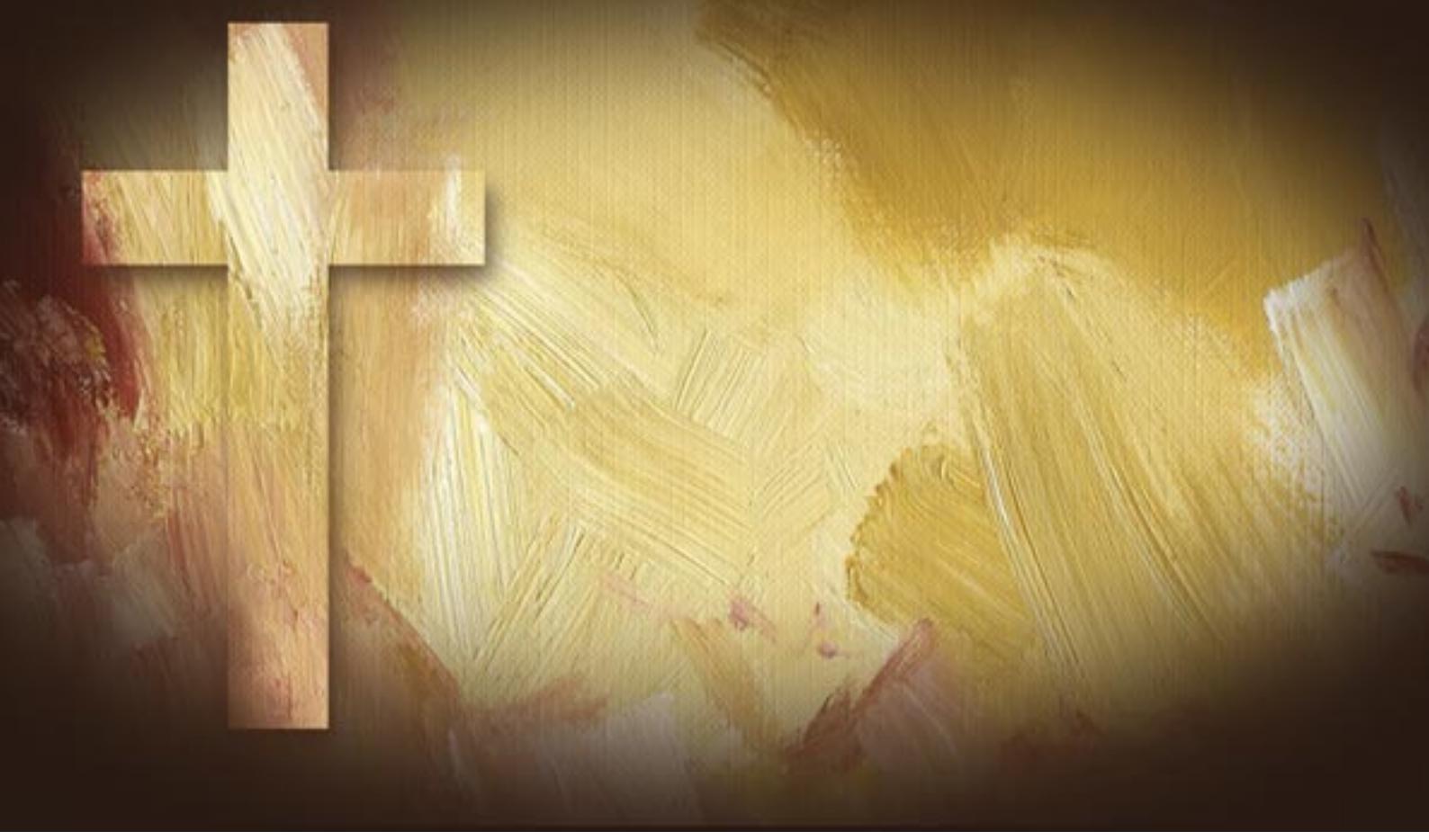
The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross...

To do

Think of three good things in your life and thank God for them. Make a random act of kindness for someone in your house or elsewhere. Pray an online Stations of the Cross. Practice reconciliation where there are disagreements. Read the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) or view it told in a YouTube clip. Access one of the Gospels and read the account of Jesus' death on the cross.





THE TRIDUUM

The Great Triduum of the Church Begins

'Triduum' comes from the Latin word for 'three days'. The Easter Triduum begins with Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, reaches its peak moment in the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night and concludes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. These three days represent the highpoint of our entire year as Christians. The Easter Triduum is to the year what Sunday is to the week.

The Triduum can be viewed as one moment of celebration that unfolds over the course of three days. Here we meet the deepest mysteries of our faith in some of the most unique rituals of the Church. In these liturgies we celebrate and re-insert ourselves into the Paschal Mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. This is our faith, poured out before us and within us.

Each day has its own particular focus which helps us to draw closer to Christ and share in his passage from death to life.



HOLY THURSDAY

There are only two Masses allowed on Holy Thursday, the Chrism Mass and the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. At the Chrism Mass the bishop blesses the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens and consecrates the Oil of Chrism. These oils are used in the diocese throughout the following year. This year many dioceses have had to defer this Mass to a time when we can gather once more as a diocesan family. After the evening Mass on Holy Thursday no other Mass is celebrated until the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night.

Mass of the Lord's Supper

At the heart of Holy Thursday is Jesus' command to serve others, modelled by Jesus in the washing of feet and the gift of himself in the Eucharist. 'Do this in memory' is a call to us as members of the Christian community to be a Eucharistic people. This means not only receiving the precious gift of Christ in the Eucharist but living Eucharist in our daily actions of care and service to one another.

Scripture tells us

'Do you understand' he said 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'
(John 13:12-15)



Deepening our Participation in the Broadcast Celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a jug of water, a bowl and towel on a (kitchen) table or in the sacred space, together with an unlit candle.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- The **Gloria**, with its joyful tones, returns now that our Lenten fast has concluded. During the Gloria the church bells ring and then fall silent until the Easter Vigil. If you have a small bell, you might like to ring it during the refrain of the Gloria.
- The **Readings** of today place before us the gift of the Eucharist and the self-giving of Christ for our redemption. As Christ has done for us, so we are called to do. How do we follow the example of Christ in our own lives? In these challenging days, where are we witnessing people living this example of loving service for the sake of others?
- The **washing of feet** has been called a homily in action. While it cannot take place this year, you are invited at this point of the liturgy to pour water from the jug into the bowl in grateful remembrance of all those in our very midst living this call of Christ to 'Do this in memory of me'. Light your candle at this point to remember and pray for all those who are making Christ present in our world in these days through their loving service.
- As you make your **Act of Spiritual Communion** take some time to truly welcome the presence of Christ into your very being and to give thanks to God for the gift of the Eucharist and the life to which it calls you.

A Prayer Ritual for the home

Gather with other members of your household, if you can. Place a jug of warm water, a bowl and a towel on your kitchen table or in your sacred space, if you have one. Beside it place an unlit candle. Include a bible, if you have one, opened on John 13:1-15.

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



Opening Prayer

Loving God,
in the gift of your Eucharist you have shown the depth of your love for us.
In the washing of feet, you call us to share this love in our service of others.
Help us to welcome your saving presence into our lives.
Grant us the courage to bring your love to those with whom we share our lives and to all
those in need. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading

Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garment and, taking a towel, wrapped it around his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing. 'Do you understand?' he said 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'

(From the Gospel of the day – see John 13:1-15 for full text)

Reflection

'I have given you an example so that you may do what I have done for you'. The love of Jesus is being poured out into our world in so many extraordinary ways in these days. This love demonstrates to us that we are not isolated individuals, even if we are in isolation from one another. Divine love unites each one of us. Pope Francis, during the special blessing he gave on March 27th, spoke of how 'our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary, often forgotten people; doctors, nurses, supermarket employees, cleaners, caregivers, providers of transport, law and order forces, volunteers, priests, religious men and women and so many others who have understood that no one reaches salvation by themselves.' Today the washing of feet goes on, the love of God endures. Take a moment to reflect on the many ways you witness and give witness to 'the washing of feet' in your life.

Ritual Action

While particular safety advice may mean this is not possible, if it is possible and a number of the household are present, people are invited to follow the example of Jesus and to take it in turn to wash and dry the feet of another. As those gathered do so, be aware of how it feels personally to both receive and do this sacred action. If praying by yourself, or if unable to have your foot washed, at this time pour the water into the bowl and unfold the towel at this time.

Intercessions *Light the candle.*

As we light this candle we take a moment to remember and pray for all those many people who are living the example of Jesus in these very days. (*Pause*)

We pray for our needs and the needs of the world this day. We remember in our prayer...
(Bring your intentions to God) **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Prayer

God of mercy and compassion,
may we be sustained by your abiding presence with us
as we continue our journey through Holy Week.
May the example of your son call us to the service of others,
knowing that we have the strength to do your will
through the gift and nourishment of your Eucharist. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

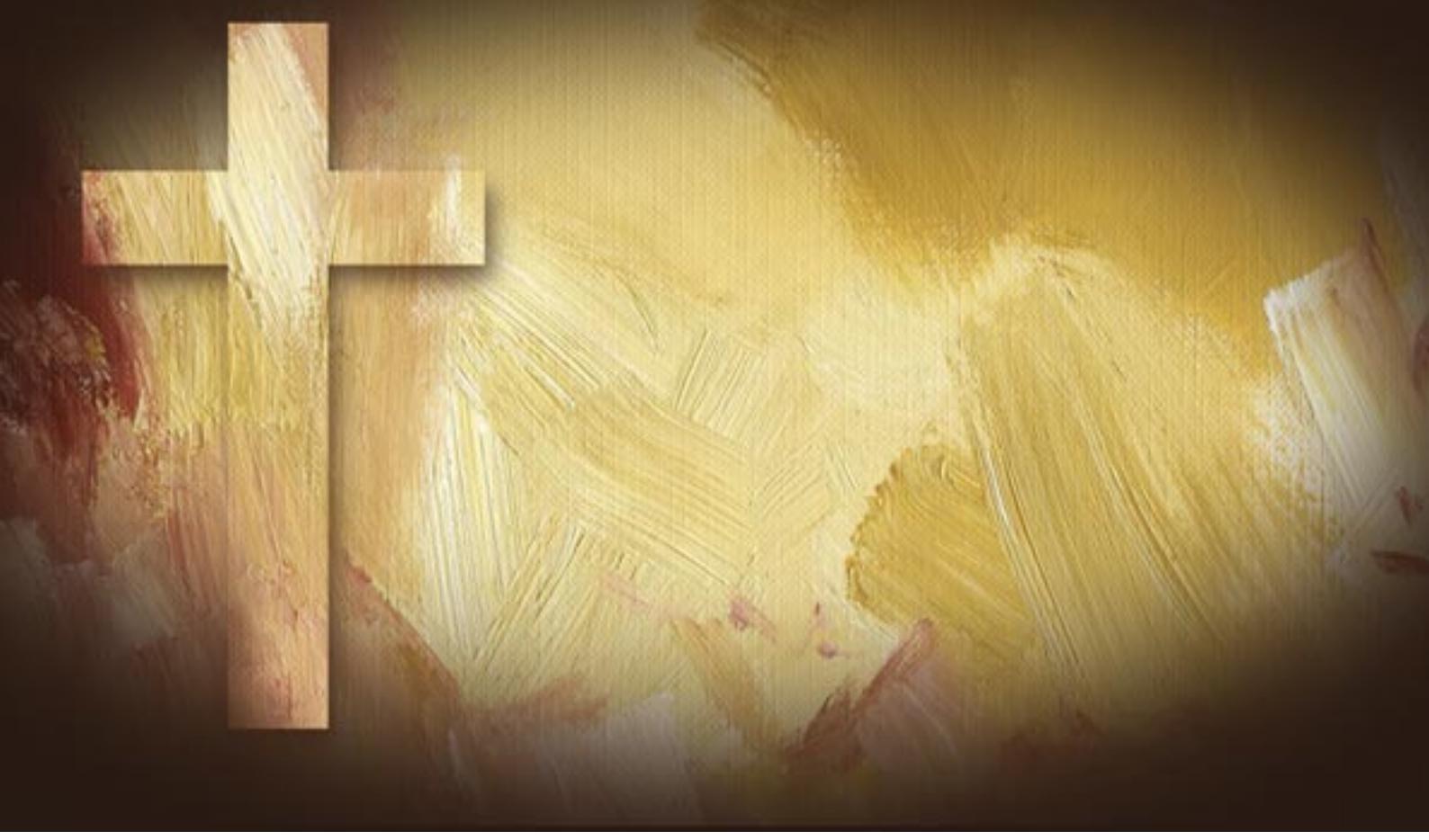
Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross ...

To do

Try to make a special effort to share a family meal today or if you are not with family to give them a call. Say a grace before and after your meal. Share a favourite recipe on social media or elsewhere. Remind yourself of this year's Trócaire Lenten campaign (see trocaire.org and your Trócaire box) and think about how you can support their work.



GOOD FRIDAY

THE PASSION OF THE LORD

On this Good Friday day of fast and abstinence, the Church gathers in silence as we take up our prayer from the liturgy of Holy Thursday. The silence echoes more profoundly this year, perhaps, than in any other year in our living memory. Yet in that silence sits our deepest truth. In the Passion, Christ has taken upon himself the sufferings and the sins of our world. And Christ, and Christ's love, has prevailed. The liturgy of the day has three key elements: the proclamation of the Passion, the Solemn Intercessions and the Adoration of the Cross.

Scripture tells us

Then they took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull, or, as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle ... Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said: 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, 'It is accomplished.' And bowing his head he gave up the spirit. (John 19:17-30)



Deepening our Participation in the Broadcast Celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a cross on a table or in a sacred space, if you have one in the home, together with an unlit candle. If you don't have a cross, you may be able to make a simple cross with something from the garden.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- The liturgy begins in **silence** with the minister prostrating before the altar. During this prostration, you may wish to kneel or bow your head in prayerful reverence.
- The **Readings** of the day present us with stark and profound images, from the suffering servant of Isaiah to the account of Jesus' passion. St Paul reminds us in the Second Reading that Jesus willingly undertook his suffering for our salvation. '*Ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried. What are the sufferings and sorrows you wish to bring to him as you listen to God speaking to you in these readings?*'
- The broadness of the **Solemn Intercessions** are a powerful reminder that God's merciful love has no borders or limits. Nothing and no one is beyond the love of God. Unique to this year's prayers is a particular one in light of Covid-19 Pandemic.
- 'Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the salvation of the world; come let us adore'. This refrain during the **Adoration of the Cross** invites us to contemplate and adore Christ. The cross points to the Risen Lord. As you share in a broadcast liturgy, you and household members are invited to make a gesture of adoration towards the cross in

the home. This might be a bow or a genuflection or other form of adoration. You may wish to hold the cross for a moment of contemplation. After you make your gesture of adoration, light the candle as a reminder that the risen Lord is with us and with our world in this time of trial.

- As you make your **Act of Spiritual Communion** take some time to welcome Christ's sacrificial love to enter into your life and into our world at this present time, bringing God's healing and peace.

A Prayer Ritual for the Home

Gather with other members of your household, if you can. Place a cross on a table or in a sacred space, if you have one in the home, together with an unlit candle. If you don't have a cross, you may be able to make a simple cross with something from the garden. Include a bible, if you have one, opened on John 18:1-19: 42. (You may wish to use a children's bible if young children are present)



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

Opening Prayer

God of all life, we turn to you in prayer on this Good Friday,
bringing the sickness and pain of our lives and of our world to the foot of the cross.
On this day may your cross stand as a sign of hope for us in the midst of our time of trial,
bringing courage and peace to each of our hearts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading

Then they took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull, or, as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle... At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried. Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was near at hand, they laid Jesus there.
(From the Gospel of the day – see John 18:1-19:42 for full text)

If time allows you, the following link provides an audio version of today's Gospel reading
http://ccc.usccb.org/cccradio/NABPodcasts/2020/20_04_10.mp3 Go to 7 mins 7 seconds

Reflection

Jesus has taken on our suffering and born our pain on the cross. Even in this time of great trial and suffering across the world, we can trust in the Lord who embraces us with his saving love. As Pope Francis reminded us during his special blessing on 27 March, 'The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved.'

We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love'.

Ritual action

Each person in the household is invited to take up the cross in turn.

As you look upon the cross, welcome into your heart the truth that by his cross, we have been saved, we have been redeemed, we have a hope. In quiet prayer, bring to God what needs healing in your life. When you are ready, conclude with the acclamation 'We adore your cross, O Lord. Have mercy on us' before passing the cross to another.

Intercessions *Light the candle.*

As we light this candle we take a moment to remember and pray for all who are suffering and enduring the hardships of this present time. As people of hope, we place their pain at the Cross, confident of God's comforting and healing embrace.

We pray for our needs and the needs of the world this day. We remember in our prayer ...
(Bring your intentions to God) Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Our Father ...

Prayer

God of our hope, source of our consolation, we embrace your cross and recognise you as our courage and strength. Take root in our hearts as we make our journey through Holy Week that we may hold firm onto your love that saves us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

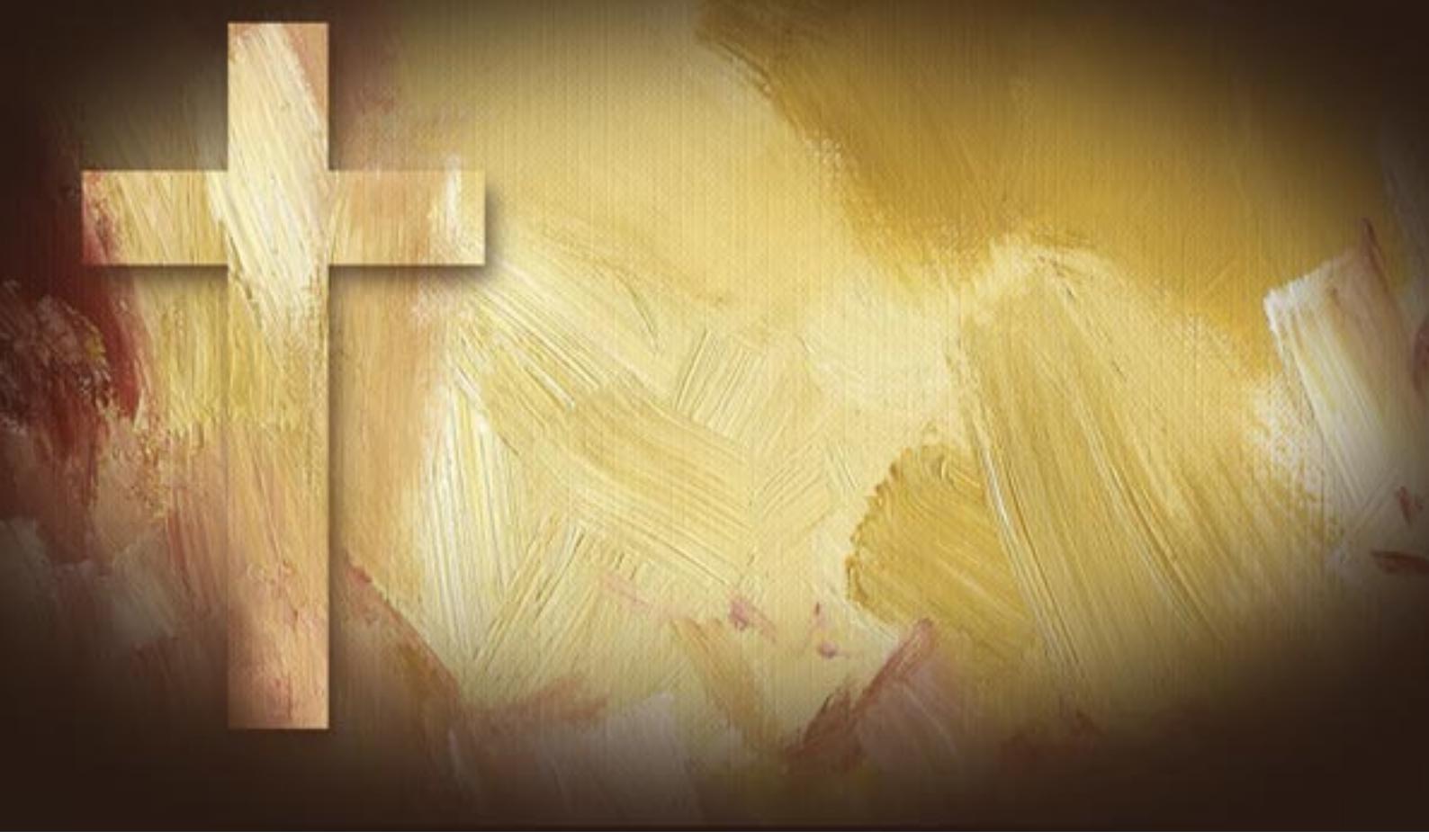
Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross ...

To do

Take a quiet moment today in the garden or by a window and look out at the trees, thinking about what Jesus' sacrifice of love on the cross means for you. If there is someone to whom you need to say sorry, do so today by whatever means you have, in person, phone, text...



HOLY SATURDAY

Holy Saturday is a day of patient waiting when we, as Church, prayerfully reflect on the passion and death of Christ and await his resurrection. It is a day of fast as we ready ourselves for the feast of Easter.

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

The Easter Vigil is rich in symbol and ritual action. While we will not experience it in quite the same way this year, it typically unfolds as follows, in four parts. The celebration begins around the light of the Easter fire. The fire is blessed, the Easter Candle is lit and this light is shared before we sing our great proclamation of Easter, the Exsultet. In the second part of the night we vigil with the stories of our salvation, the great stories from the Old Testament proclaimed in the light of our Easter faith and culminating in the proclamation of the resurrection in the Gospel reading. Now in the third part we are ready to do what our whole Lenten journey has been about – to welcome new members in baptism and to renew our own baptism before we complete our celebration of the vigil with the Liturgy of the Eucharist in which we receive the nourishment and grace of the Body of Christ to sustain us in the Christian journey.

On this greatest of nights in the life of the Church we keep vigil with the Lord. Although this year's Vigil cannot be celebrated in all its richness, in the darkness of these days we can dare to rejoice. Because, through the resurrection, the risen Lord has conquered all darkness and overcome the power of death.

Scripture tells us

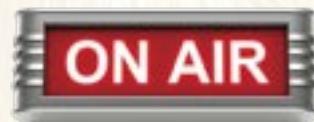
The angel spoke; and he said to the women, ‘There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would.’ (Matthew 28:5-6)



Deepening our participation in the broadcast celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- On a table or in the sacred space, place an unlit candle in the centre with an individual candle beside it for each person who has gathered. People might like to use their own baptism candle if they have it. Include a bible, if you have one, open on Genesis 1 and a bowl of water and a small branch of greenery. If there are flowers in the garden you might have some in a vase close by.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- This year's vigil will likely start with the **lighting of the Easter candle** and the three fold acclamation: *The Light of Christ*. When this is completed light your centre candle and invite people to take up their (baptism) candle, light it and hold it for the Exsultet, the Easter proclamation.
- Listen closely to the words of the **Exsultet**. Having moved from darkness to light, its words and music are used to praise and thank God for what the light represents: God's saving activity throughout human history, culminating in Christ's defeat of death and resurrection from the dead.
- As the **Readings** begin, place your candles on the table beside the bible. In these readings you will hear of God's care for us in the acts of creation as well as the saving

events of the Exodus and throughout the history of God's people, culminating in the resurrection account. St Paul reminds us that we share in Christ's death and resurrection through our baptism.

- Look out for the singing of the **Gloria** (like on Holy Thursday, during it you can ring bells if you have them) and, especially, the return of the **Alleluia** which hopefully we will all join in singing on this night, wherever we are. During the singing of the Alleluia you may wish to place flowers beside the bible and turn the bible to the Gospel reading, Matthew 28:1-10.
- While at this year's vigil we sadly cannot celebrate baptisms, we can still **renew our baptismal promises**. As these promises are led by the priest, take up your candle and renew the promises made for you in baptism – this is our faith, the faith of the Church and we are proud to profess it.
- After you renew these promises you may wish to take the bowl of water and make a sign of the cross upon yourself with the water or, using a small branch of greenery, sprinkle those gathered with water as **a reminder of our baptism**.
- As we pray the **Prayer of the Faithful** may we do so in a spirit of Easter confidence in the Lord who has conquered all evil.
- As you make your **Act of Spiritual Communion** take time to thank God for the gift of your baptism and for the gift of hope your baptism brings to your life.
- At the end of this celebration, take your main candle and place it safely in the window of your home as a beacon of **Easter hope** to the world.
- And remember to continue the **feast!** Be kind to yourself and treat yourself to something special in honour of this great night.

A night-time Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather with other members of your household, if you can.

Prepare a table or a sacred space, with an unlit candle in the centre with an individual candle beside it for each person who has gathered. People might like to use their own baptism candle if they have it. Include a bible, if you have one, open on Genesis 1, as well as a jug of water, a small branch of greenery and an empty bowl.



Lighting of the Candle

At the beginning of this prayer ritual, people may wish, if they can, to go out to their garden and into the darkness of the night.

One person lights the main candle and says the following:

May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds, and bring us hope, peace and newness of life.

Then lighting each household member's candle in turn, says: The light of Christ with the response as each candle is lit: Thanks be to God.

Quiet reflection

Take a moment to look upon the flame of your candle and consider what it means for you to welcome Christ as the light of your life on this night.

Opening Prayer

On this blessed night we give you thanks, Lord God,
that your light has come into our world to overcome the darkness.
May its flame burn ever bright in our hearts
that we may be filled everyday with the joy of our Easter faith.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The lit candles can now be placed beside the bible.

Reading

Before the Gospel reading is proclaimed those gathered may wish to welcome it once more with a familiar sung Alleluia.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

After the sabbath, and toward dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre ... But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him.' Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Reflection

'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would.' These words bring us to the deepest truth of our faith. In Jesus' passage from death to life, we are redeemed, we are saved, we are given the promise of fullness of life in God. Through our baptism and our belief in the resurrection, our fears, our doubts, our lives are transformed. Easter faith invites us to welcome the gift of this transformation into the core of our being. On this night we can begin again. Yet we can only do this by welcoming the risen Lord, Christ who is our guiding light, into our lives. As Pope Francis reminds us 'We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars'. (Words from special blessing on 27 March) On this night we proclaim Christ as our morning star who never sets, our light and our way who guides us along the true path.

Ritual Action

A remembrance of baptism

On this night we remember the gift of our baptism in which we come to share in Christ's

journey from death to new life. Through the words of Pope Francis may we begin to touch the depth of the meaning of baptism in our lives.

Some water is poured from the jug into the bowl each time a quote from Pope Francis has been shared:

- Baptism is the best gift we have received. Through it we belong to God and we possess the joy of salvation. As *water is poured we respond*: **Blessed be God for ever.**
- We are called to live our baptism every day, as new creatures, clothed in Christ. *As water is poured we respond*: **Blessed be God for ever.**
- With the grace of baptism and eucharistic communion, I can become an instrument of God's mercy, of that beautiful mercy of God. As *water is poured we respond*: **Blessed be God for ever.**
- All of the baptised must announce Jesus with our life, with our witness, and with our words. As *water is poured we respond*: **Blessed be God for ever.**
- In the end, every Christian man and woman, by virtue of baptism has received a mission. Each one of us has to respond, as best we can, to the Lord's call to build up his Body, the Church. As *water is poured we respond*: **Blessed be God for ever.**

Each person is invited to take the bowl of water and make a sign of the cross upon themselves with the water or, if more appropriate or safer to do so using a small branch of greenery, those gathered can be sprinkled with water.

Intercessions

We take a moment to unite in prayer with the Church across the world on this night, remembering especially those preparing for Easter baptism who must wait a while longer this year. We pray for our needs and the needs of the world this day. We remember in our prayer...
(Bring your intentions to God) **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Final acclamation

Together we acclaim: Jesus Christ is risen. Alleluia, alleluia!

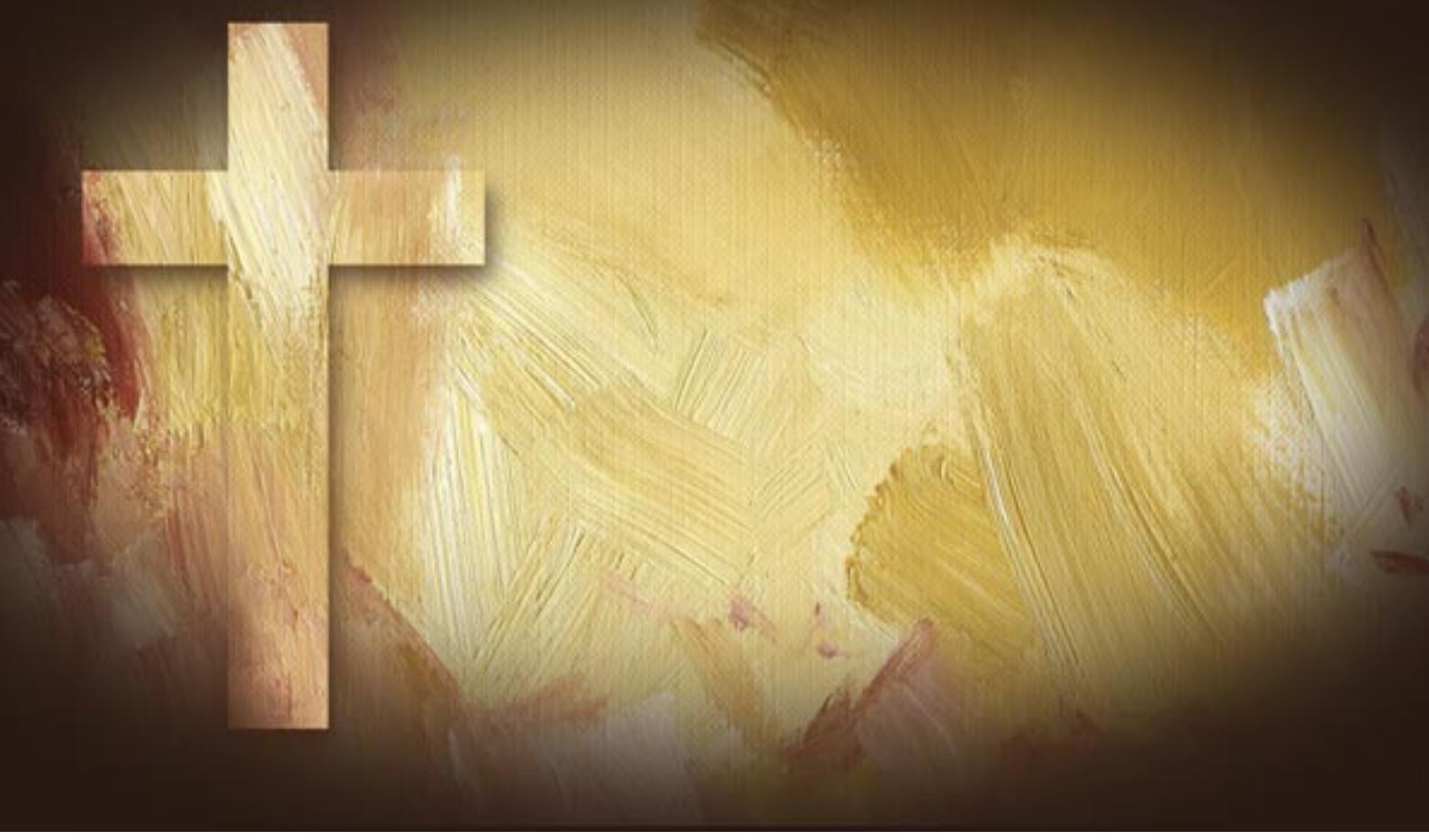
Sign of the Cross ...

Light in the window

At the end of this prayer take your main candle and place it safely in the window of your home as a beacon of Easter hope to the world.

To do

Set aside 20 minutes to declutter some space and do a mini spring clean – it might be that sock drawer or kitchen drawer you've been meaning to do; listen to some reflective music; do some family baking to prepare some treats for Easter Sunday; make an Easter card for someone you are missing so you can send them a picture of it tomorrow.



EASTER SUNDAY

As we awake this Easter morn we know the joy of those who came to the tomb on that first day of the week, that first Sunday. The Lord is truly risen, Alleluia. Having set out on the journey of the Easter Triduum we arise this morning and welcome the light of life.

Scriptures tell us

'It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb...Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of Scripture, that he must raise from the dead'. (John 20:1-9)



Deepening our participation in the broadcast celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a lighted candle on a table or in a sacred space. A (baptism) candle can be included for each person, as well as flowers and a bible, open on John 20:1-9. The family Easter eggs (a sign of new life and of our Easter feast) can also find a place on the table.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- The **Gloria** has returned and we pray it once more on this Easter Morning.
- The **readings** begin with a reading from the Acts of the Apostles. We will hear from this account of the early church throughout the Easter Season and how they came to understand the events of Holy Week and become witnesses for Christ, something we spend our lifetime and especially the Easter season doing. The joyful tone of this day is very much conveyed in the psalm.
- Many of today's celebrations of Mass will include the **sequence** before the Gospel acclamation, a text proclaiming the good news that Christ, our hope, has risen.
- Even if you do not normally sing, why not join in singing the **Alleluia** after its Lenten absence!
- After the homily people will be led in a **renewal of baptismal promises** or pray the **creed**. Whichever is done, you might like to light your individual (baptism) candle and hold it at this point of the Mass.
- As you make your **Act of Spiritual Communion**, welcoming the dawning of a new day, a new beginning full of hope and potential, take a moment to think of what you have to be thankful for in your life and give thanks to God.
- **After the celebration** you may wish to place your candle on your dining table.

A Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather with other members of your household, if you can.

On a table or in a sacred space, safely place a lighted candle in the centre. You might include some of the following items on the table: an unlit individual (baptism) candle; any photos of family baptisms; a bowl of water and a green branch, a bible, open on John 20:1-9; your Easter egg, if it isn't eaten already! If there are flowers in the garden why not head out and pick some for the space before you start your prayer together.



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

An Easter Litany

This is the day the Lord has made. R **Alleluia, alleluia!**

God's love has no end. R. **Alleluia, alleluia!**

God has raised us up. R. **Alleluia, alleluia!**

And given us the gift of new life. R. **Alleluia, alleluia!**

Reading

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb ... Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of Scripture, that he must raise from the dead. (From the Gospel of the day, full text John 20:1-9)

Reflection

In his Easter Sunday greeting in 2019, Pope Francis addressed these words to every Christian: 'Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world. Everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life ... Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive! He is in you, he is with you and he never abandons you.' On this Easter morning take a moment to recognise and appreciate all the signs of hope and new life around us: light ... water ... flowers ... eggs ... baptism memories and photos ... one another!

Ritual action

Light your candle from the main candle as a reminder of the light of Christ within you. Then take some time to enjoy the signs of life around you. This might include blessing yourself with the water/taking a flower and smelling it/taking a taste of your Easter egg/looking at your photos while remembering and sharing your memories of family baptisms, choosing names and godparents ...

Intercessions

On this Easter day, as we look upon our burning candle we take a moment to remember and pray for all those who need to hear the good news of resurrection this day, and for all those bringing life to others in so many ways in these very days.

We pray for our needs and the needs of the world this day.

We remember in our prayer ... (*bring your intentions to God*)

Lord, who raises us up from our graves and calls us to new life, in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Our Father ...

Prayer

Lord of all life, we have journeyed to Easter
and in the most difficult of trials we proclaim still the joy of your resurrection,
we embrace with gladness the new life to which you call each one of us.

Bless us, our families and all the world, with your constant presence
that we may give you thanks every day
and share the good news of our faith with all we meet.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Acclamation

Christ is risen. Alleluia, alleluia!

Sign of the Cross...

To do

Place a (baptism) candle and flowers on your dinner table; send a greeting in some way to your parents and godparents; say a prayer for your parents and godparents; watch a family movie; listen/play some music together; eat chocolate!!!



A Mhaighdean Chnoc Mhuire, Banríon na hÉireann,
thug tú dóchas dod' mhuintir in am an ghátaír
agus thug tú sólás dóibh in am a ndobróin.