

Holy Week @ Home

FOR ADULTS

This liturgy, based on the practise of lectio divina, is written for adults of all ages who are interested in a contemplative style of prayer and reflection. It lends itself to be used individually, as well as by couples or larger households.

You might like to set up a small prayer space in a comfortable location (for instance, at the dining room table or in the lounge room at a coffee table between two chairs). Add some symbols that may help to create a sense of sacredness and reflection. (You might like to add or change these symbols as the week unfolds to enter more deeply into each event. For instance, you could include a small bowl of water and a towel for Holy Thursday or a glass of wine and some bread.)

You will need:

- a quiet, comfortable space
- a prayer table, ideally with a red cloth for Passion Sunday
- garden scissors or secateurs
- a crucifix, candle and/or other appropriate symbols
- a smartphone, laptop or tablet to play music.

PREPARE

- If it is possible and safe to do so, go for a short, mindful walk in your garden or local neighborhood, considering the importance of this day in your own faith life. Along the way, collect a small branch (ideally from a palm or olive tree, but any branch will do; a local native tree or bush would also be ideal).
- Upon return, place the branch in your prayer space and get ready to begin.
- Think ahead about what part you might like to read along with in the passion narrative in today's gospel (narrator, Jesus, other speaker, crowd or more than one speaker) so that you are prepared when the time comes.
- Check your mobile phone is turned to silent and try to eliminate any distractions.

GETTING STARTED

Take a moment of silence, light the candle and make the sign of the cross:

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

Invite the Holy Spirit to be present with you:

*Come, Holy Spirit,
Fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And you shall renew the faith of the earth. Amen.*

GOSPEL

Read along with the accompanying [recorded version](#) of the Passion, or simply read aloud to yourself or other members of your household. Note that the gospel should be read slowly and meditatively with pauses between sentences or whenever the sense requires it. The aim is not to tell the text to God, who knows it already, but to let God tell it to us. For this, there have to be silences so that what God is telling us can be heard.

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Read [Matthew 26: 14–27:66 \(longer version\)](#), or Matthew 27:11–54 (shorter version).

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECT

Take a moment of silence before continuing. (Or you might like to listen to some peaceful sacred music, such as [this](#).)

Reflect on the following questions:

- What is the Gospel saying to me?
- What has drawn my attention? Why?
- Was it a person, a word, a situation, a gesture?
- What therefore is God saying to me through these words here and now, today?

Share your thoughts and reflections with others if you wish, or just hold and treasure them.

RESPOND

God has spoken to me. How might I reply?

- Enter into a time of silent prayer. (If you are sharing this time with others, one person might take responsibility for setting an agreed time frame here and bringing the prayer time to a close, so that no one is left worrying about when it is finished.)
- Call to mind now the names of those in your life you would most hope to influence by your prayers, your service and your witness. You might like to write down their names or bring their photo to the prayer space now, saying, 'Help me to love them as you do Lord'.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer:
Our Father ...
- Conclude with the blessing from today's Mass:
Look, we pray O Lord, on this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be delivered into the hands of the wicked and submit to the cross. Who lives and reigns, for ever and ever. Amen
May almighty God bless me/us, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- Sing along to this well-loved hymn of praise from the Taizé community in France: '[Adoramus te, O Christe](#)' ('We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ').