

## **MEALTIME PRAYER IN HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE EASTER SEASON**

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### ***The Second to Fourth Sundays of Easter 2020***

*One of the understandings of which many of us have lost sight in recent years is the notion of the household as 'Domestic Church.' From the earliest days of Christianity, families and other households were a primary setting for worship and discipleship formation. The church placed great emphasis on encouraging and supporting the domestic church. Likewise, in recent decades, though we may refer to Sunday as "The Lord's Day," so many demands and distractions we encounter often mean we end up treating Sunday observance as "The Lord's Hour."*

*This rite has been provided so households may dedicate one meal on each of the Sundays during the 50-Day Season of Easter as a time for worship, prayer, devotion, and the sharing of faith. While helpful in a time of pandemic when we cannot gather with our congregations, it is also hoped that this kind of practice will become an ongoing tradition in our households, even when we no longer must practice social distancing, so we might better nurture the domestic church and devote more of Sunday as the high feast day of the week.*

*Two options are provided for The Gathering in this service. You will want to review them ahead of time and decide which one you will use.*

*As you use this resource, you are encouraged to provide for the breakfast/brunch or the dinner it accompanies the same kind of sumptuous fare you would put out on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Easter.*

*Much of this rite is based on the Home Prayers found in The Book of Alternative Services 1985 (BAS) of The Anglican Church of Canada, and on the Gathering Rites for the Paschal Cycle approved by The General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada in 2019. (Available at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Gathering-Rites-for-the-Paschal-Cycle.pdf>)*

## *+ Preparation +*

*You will need a candle or a number of candles for your table, and a bowl or basin of water (and a pitcher of water if you are using Gathering Option #1).*

*You will also need a Bible. If a Bible is not available, a copy of the readings for each Sunday is provided below.*

*You may also wish to use a copy of The Book of Alternative Services (BAS), if you have one in your home.*

*If desired, copies of this rite may be printed for everyone. However, the service is designed so the parts voiced by participants are those already known or easily memorized. So printed copies for all are not necessary.*

*The meal is prepared. Before the table is set and the food is served, the following rite for washing hands may take place. The Leader or another person says,*

*As we prepare to serve our meal, let us begin by washing, cleansing our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of baptism. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we are commanded to love. So we cleanse our hands as an expression of love for the vulnerable people Jesus loved. May we be instruments of God's care. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.*

*All present then wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water. Once washed, each person should help with setting the table as they are able.*

*This handwashing rite is provided by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA. Used and adapted with permission*

## + *The Gathering (Option 1)* +

*The candle or candles on the table or in the worship area are lit. The Leader or the one who lights the candle(s) says the following:*

Let your light so shine before others  
that they may see your good works  
and glorify your Father in heaven.

*Then the leader continues,*

*Leader:* May the light of Christ in glory rising scatter the darkness of heart and mind. Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*Others:* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

### **Thanksgiving for Baptism**

*Someone pours the water into the basin or bowl.*

*Leader:* Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are born from above as members of a new creation. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Then the Leader gives thanks, saying,*

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water.  
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.  
Through water you led the children of Israel  
out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise.  
In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John  
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,  
to lead us, through his death and resurrection,  
from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.  
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.  
By it we share in his resurrection.  
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son,  
we celebrate our fellowship in him in faith.  
We pray that all who have passed through the water of baptism  
may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be all honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Participants are encouraged to dip their hand in the water and trace the sign of the cross on their forehead or over their body as a remembrance of their baptism. Members of households may choose to trace the cross on the forehead of each other, saying, "Remember your baptism."*

## **Song**

*A favourite song, refrain, or hymn for Easter, or extoling Christ as our light, or encouraging us to let our light shine before others may be sung. As another option, an "Alleluia" that you know from the worship life of your church may be sung.*

## **Table Prayer**

*Leader:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*Others:* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Table Prayer at Breakfast or Brunch (based on John 21.1-14):*

*Leader:* Blessed are you, O God. On the beach of Lake Galilee, the disciples recognized the risen Jesus when he prepared a charcoal fire and cooked them bread and fish for breakfast. We give you thanks that Jesus is with us at the beginning of our day. Help us to show our thankfulness by seeing him in everyone we meet. We ask this in his name. **Amen.**

*Table Prayer at Supper (based on Luke 24.13-35):*

*Leader:* Blessed are you, O God. The Lord Jesus made himself known to the disciples of Emmaus in the breaking of the bread. May our meal together this evening reveal his presence among us so, like them, we can tell others that Jesus is risen. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

## + *The Gathering (Option 2)* +

*The candle or candles on the table or in the worship area are lit. The Leader or the one who lights the candle(s) says the following:*

Let your light so shine before others  
that they may see your good works  
and glorify your Father in heaven.

*Then the leader continues,*

*Leader:* May the light of Christ in glory rising scatter the darkness of heart and mind. Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*Others:* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

*Leader:* O God, the source of light and life,  
by the resurrection of your only Son  
you have led us out of darkness into your marvelous light,  
from death into life,  
from slavery into freedom.  
Bring the light of your new creation to us and to our world,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*Others:* **Amen.**

### **Song**

*A favourite song, refrain, or hymn for Easter, or extolling Christ as our light, or encouraging us to let our light shine before others may be sung. As another option, an "Alleluia" that you know from the worship life of your church may be sung.*

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*Table Prayer at Supper (based on Luke 24.13-35):*

*Leader:* Blessed are you, O God. The Lord Jesus made himself known to the disciples of Emmaus in the breaking of the bread. May our meal together this evening reveal his presence among us so, like them, we can tell others that Jesus is risen. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

*Other prayers for Grace at Meals can be found in The Book of Alternative Services (1985), pp.694-695.*

*The Table Prayers are adapted from texts prepared for the 'Lift Up Your Hearts' initiative of the Diocese of Algoma, 2015.*

## *+ The Meal +*

*The meal is now eaten. If several are gathered, they first serve one another, then dine.*

## *+ Praise +*

*Here may follow a psalm, hymn, song, or instrumental music.*

## *+ The Word and the Prayers +*

*At the end of the meal, someone reads one of the following Bible passages:*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter (April 19): John 20.19-31*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter (April 26): Luke 24.13-35  
(or at breakfast/brunch, you may choose John 21.1-14)*

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (May 3): John 10.1-10*

*This scripture passage may be read from your Bible or using the copy of the passage provided as the first appendix to this service.*

## **Reflection**

*After a period of silent reflection, the Leader begins the time of shared reflection. The following questions may be used.*

1. What word, image, or phrase stands out to you from the story?
2. What does this story tell you about how the risen Jesus comes to us, speaks to us, or reveals himself to us in our lives?
3. What does this story tell you about how we can live the risen life of Jesus or be the presence of Jesus for others?

## Prayers of the People

*You may use a form of the Prayers of the People provided in Appendix #2, or you may simply choose to do the following:*

*Presider:* I invite each and all of you to name those people and places for whom we should pray and remember this day.

*Time is allowed for people to do so.*

*The Prayers of the People conclude with the Collect of the Day – Easter 2 (BAS, p. 336); Easter 3 (BAS, p. 338); Easter 4 (BAS, p. 339) – or with the following prayer.*

*Leader:* God of glory, you raised Jesus from death to life.  
As we are joined with him in death through baptism,  
so unite us with him in resurrection,  
that, as part of your new creation,  
we may walk in newness of life  
and shine your light in all the world.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ the Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

*If Gathering Option #1 was not used, the following may precede the Lord's Prayer.*

*Leader:* Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are born from above as members of a new creation. Let us remember the gift of baptism.

*Participants are encouraged to dip their hand in the water and trace the sign of the cross on their forehead or over their body as a remembrance of their baptism. Members of households may choose to trace the cross on the forehead of each other, saying, "Remember your baptism."*

## Conclusion

*Leader:* Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia!

*All:* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**



## **Appendix #1 - Readings**

**Second Sunday of Easter** (April 19)

*John 20.19-31*

*Contemporary English Version*

*Context:* This follows on the Easter Day story of Mary Magdalene's meeting with the risen Jesus, and tells how his disciples also met him. It was written for our benefit who would only come to know of the resurrection through their witness to it.

*Reading:*

<sup>19</sup> The disciples were afraid of the leaders of the people, and on the evening of that same Sunday they locked themselves in a room. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group. He greeted them <sup>20</sup> and showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they became very happy.

<sup>21</sup> After Jesus had greeted them again, he said, "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me." <sup>22</sup> Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, they will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven."

<sup>24</sup> Although Thomas the Twin was one of the twelve disciples, he wasn't with the others when Jesus appeared to them. <sup>25</sup> So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But Thomas said, "First, I must see the nail scars in his hands and touch them with my finger. I must put my hand where the spear went into his side. I won't believe unless I do this!"

<sup>26</sup> A week later the disciples were together again. This time, Thomas was with them. Jesus came in while the doors were still locked and stood in the middle of the group. He greeted his disciples <sup>27</sup> and said to Thomas,

“Put your finger here and look at my hands! Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and have faith!”

<sup>28</sup> Thomas replied, “You are my Lord and my God!”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said, “Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!”

<sup>30</sup> Jesus worked many other miracles for his disciples, and not all of them are written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you will put your faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. If you have faith in him, you will have true life.

**Third Sunday of Easter (April 26)**

*Luke 24.13-35*

*New Revised Standard Version*

Context: Every year on the third Sunday of Easter, we hear a story of the Risen Christ sharing a meal with his disciples. In her book *Gospel Medicine*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes, “I do not know why so many of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances have something to do with food, but they do...Maybe it is because eating is so necessary for life, and so is he. Or maybe it is because sharing food is what makes us human. Most other species forage alone, so feeding is a solitary business, but human beings seem to love eating together. Even when we are stuck alone with a frozen dinner, most of us will open a magazine or turn on the television just for company. It is, at any rate, one of the clues to his presence. There is always a chance, when we are eating together, that we will discover the risen Lord in our midst.”

Reading:

<sup>13</sup> Now on that same day, the first day of the week, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

<sup>17</sup> He said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” <sup>19</sup> He asked them, “What things?”

They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. <sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, <sup>23</sup> and when they did not find his

body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.”

<sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” <sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

<sup>32</sup> They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” <sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

**Third Sunday of Easter (alternate)**

*John 21.1-14*  
*The Message*

Context: Every year on the third Sunday of Easter, we hear a story of the Risen Christ sharing a meal with his disciples. In her book *Gospel Medicine*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes, “I do not know why so many of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances have something to do with food, but they do...Maybe it is because eating is so necessary for life, and so is he. Or maybe it is because sharing food is what makes us human. Most other species forage alone, so feeding is a solitary business, but human beings seem to love eating together. Even when we are stuck alone with a frozen dinner, most of us will open a magazine or turn on the television just for company. It is, at any rate, one of the clues to his presence. There is always a chance, when we are eating together, that we will discover the risen Lord in our midst.”

Reading:

<sup>1-3</sup> After this, Jesus appeared again to the disciples, this time at the Tiberias Sea (the Sea of Galilee). This is how he did it: Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed “Twin”), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the brothers Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter announced, “I’m going fishing.”

<sup>3-4</sup> The rest of them replied, “We’re going with you.” They went out and got in the boat. They caught nothing that night. When the sun came up, Jesus was standing on the beach, but they didn’t recognize him.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus spoke to them: “Good morning! Did you catch anything for breakfast?”

They answered, “No.”

<sup>6</sup> He said, “Throw the net off the right side of the boat and see what happens.”

They did what he said. All of a sudden there were so many fish in it, they weren’t strong enough to pull it in.

<sup>7-9</sup> Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Master!”

When Simon Peter realized that it was the Master, he threw on some clothes, for he was stripped for work, and dove into the sea. The other disciples came in by boat for they weren’t far from land, a hundred yards or so, pulling along the net full of fish. When they got out of the boat, they saw a fire laid, with fish and bread cooking on it.

<sup>10-11</sup> Jesus said, “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught.” Simon Peter joined them and pulled the net to shore—153 big fish! And even with all those fish, the net didn’t rip.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus said, “Breakfast is ready.” Not one of the disciples dared ask, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Master.

<sup>13-14</sup> Jesus then took the bread and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus had shown himself alive to the disciples since being raised from the dead.

**Fourth Sunday of Easter (May 3)**

*John 10.1-10*

*Contemporary English Version*

Context: Every year on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, the Gospel reading presents us with an image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. The image of God caring for God's people like a shepherd for his flock is a very old one, dating many years before Jesus walked the earth. We see it in the Hebrew Scriptures (also called the Old Testament). Psalm 23 is a favourite of many people: "The Lord is my Shepherd." Early Christian art often depicted Jesus as a shepherd, except instead of carrying an ordinary crook, he was carrying a cross.

Reading:

Jesus said:

I tell you for certain that only thieves and robbers climb over the fence instead of going in through the gate to the sheep pen. <sup>2-3</sup> But the gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and he goes in through it. The sheep know their shepherd's voice. He calls each of them by name and leads them out.

<sup>4</sup> When he has led out all of his sheep, he walks in front of them, and they follow, because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> The sheep will not follow strangers. They don't recognize a stranger's voice, and they run away.

<sup>6</sup> Jesus told the people this story. But they did not understand what he was talking about.

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said:

I tell you for certain that I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> Everyone who came before me was a thief or a robber, and the sheep did not listen to any of them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate. All who come in through me will be saved. Through me they will come and go and find pasture.

<sup>10</sup> A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest.

## **Appendix #2 – Prayers of the People**

### ***Second Sunday of Easter (April 19)***

*If more than one person is praying this service in a household, one or two other participants may lead the following prayers, all participants responding with the text in bold print.*

The risen Christ stands in our midst, gifting us with his peace.  
Therefore, with great joy and confidence,  
let us lift our hearts to God in prayer as we say, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

We pray for the church,  
the people sent by Christ as he was sent by the Father.  
We pray for our companion Diocese of Tarime (*Tah-ree-may*)  
in Tanzania, Africa.  
With people across this Diocese of Algoma,  
we pray for our Archbishop, Anne,  
and for people of St. Thomas’ Church, Thunder Bay,  
and The Rev. Jonathan Blanchard, their Incumbent.

*{allow a time of silent prayer}*

That amid the doubts and fears troubling the community of faith,  
Christ’s peace may be known and shared,  
let us lift our hearts to God:  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for our parish, and our clergy, *N.*

*{allow a time of silent prayer}*

That by the testimony of our words and deeds,  
people who have not yet seen may come to believe,  
let us lift our hearts to God:  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**



We pray for all nations, tongues, and tribes  
plagued by warfare, terrorism, or other forms of violence, *especially N.*

*{allow a time of silent prayer}*

That all awaiting deliverance may look with hope  
for the glorious coming of the One who was pierced,  
let us lift our hearts to God:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray that the wounded hands of the healing Christ  
will touch the sick and those who suffer any need, *especially N.*

*{allow a time of silent prayer}*

That they may be delivered from their infirmities  
and give thanks to the One who breathes his peace upon them,  
let us lift our hearts to God:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

We remember those who have died, *especially N.*

*{allow a time of silent prayer}*

And we pray that, even in the face of suffering and death,  
we may trust the One  
in whose presence is fullness of joy for evermore,  
let us lift our hearts to God:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

### ***Third Sunday of Easter (April 26)***

*If more than one person is praying this service in a household, one or two other participants may lead the following prayers, all participants responding with the text in bold print.*

Through Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, we have come to trust in God, who raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory.  
With our faith and hope set on God, let us pray to the Lord as we say,  
“Lord, hear our prayer.”

For this household;  
that we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst,  
let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our congregation of *N. Church*,  
and for all the parishes of this Diocese,  
particularly the people of Emmaus Church in Sault Ste. Marie,  
and their Interim Incumbent, The Rev. Canon Bob Elkin;  
that all who know the Lord Jesus in the Breaking of the Bread  
may love one another deeply from the heart,  
let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For this world: for all nations and peoples, *especially N.*,  
that violence and injustice will come to a swift end,  
and a spirit of genuine service and concord will be given to all,  
especially to those who lead,  
let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who suffer sickness or need, *especially N.*,  
that they may know God's healing embrace  
through the compassion of many companions,  
let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We remember those who have died, *especially N.*,  
and that we may walk with our God for eternity in the land of the living,  
let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

***Fourth Sunday of Easter (May 3)***

That we may serve God in the world with glad and generous hearts,  
let us pray to the Lord as we say: "O God, hear our prayer."

Let us pray for the church of Christ around the globe,  
and in this Diocese of Algoma.

That our devotion to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
the breaking of the bread and prayer  
may make us a compelling people in our witness to the risen Christ,  
we pray to the Lord: **O God, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those who shepherd the People of God,  
especially Anne, our Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ontario,  
Mark, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop,  
Linda, Primate of Canada,  
Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury,  
and the pastor(s) of our parish, *N.*

That they may be for us icons of hope,  
signs of grace,  
and examples of gospel service,  
we pray to the Lord: **O God, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for the nations and peoples of the earth, *especially N.*  
That those who suffer unjustly may be strengthened to live justly,  
and that we will stand with them as advocates and companions,  
we pray to the Lord: **O God, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those afflicted by illness, fear, or other infirmity,  
*particularly N.*

That, through Christ the Good Shepherd, they may have life,  
and have it in its fullest,  
we pray to the Lord: **O God, hear our prayer.**

Let us remember the dead, *(especially N.)*.

And that we may live with confidence in the One  
who shepherds us beyond our wants and fears  
from death into life, we pray to the Lord: **O God, hear our prayer.**