

## **Guide to Your Domestic Church – the Little Church of the Home**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us: “The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the ‘domestic church’ where God’s children learn to pray ‘as the Church’ and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church’s living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.”

– Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2685

During these challenging days of the Coronavirus pandemic – as we return to family life in a concerted and an intense way – the Holy Spirit is reawakening the “domestic church” and renewing the little church of the home!

As we enter into this most Holy Week of our Christian Faith, please participate in the liturgies from the Cathedral by livestream at home (or other liturgies on television). You can find the Masses and liturgies of Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday) at [www.Facebook.com/CathedralOLPH.org](http://www.Facebook.com/CathedralOLPH.org) or at [www.CathedralOLPH.org](http://www.CathedralOLPH.org).

### **How can we set up our home for prayer and worship?**

Let’s try to make our homes a place of prayer and worship. Here are a few ideas:

1. Set up a small table – a family altar – by the television/computer/tablet with a Crucifix, a Bible, and candles on it for those times when you are watching Mass or other services.
2. Dress up to attend Mass while at home, as you would if you were actually going to the church.
3. Encourage some quiet time as you wait for the Mass to start.
4. Engage in the postures that you would while celebrating Mass in church and pray the responses aloud.

### **Holy Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**

1. Have the head of the house wash the feet of the other family members either before or after Mass. Husbands and wives can do this for each other.
2. After Mass, in commemoration of Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, maintain an hour of silence in the house, TV and other devices off. Simply be quiet and pray.
3. Cover over statues that you have in your home with a purple or other colored cloth.

### **Good Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>**

1. Place a cross or crucifix near your television/computer/tablet, with some candles lit. Cover it with a cloth, purple if you have it.
2. Unveil the cross when that happens in the Good Friday Service you are watching remotely.
3. During the time of Veneration of the Cross, members of your household can do the same with the cross.
4. Have each family member hold the cross for a few moments and say their own quiet prayer.
5. Pray the Stations of the Cross with everyone in the family.

6. Watch the movie *The Passion of the Christ* if you have or can obtain a copy.
7. Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3:00 PM or if the service you are watching is aired at that time, chose another time.
8. In addition to the Good Friday fast (between meals and from meat), as a family agree to some sort of fasting from something that keeps you separated from God or one another.

### **Holy Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>**

1. Make this a quiet day, conducting only the business of the family that is necessary.
  - a. Find quiet activities for the children to do, coloring of sacred images, drawing pictures, reading, for a period of time, pray the rosary, read through all the vigil readings for start to finish, reflecting on each one and God's plan of salvation. Apart from the televised vigil, do not look at any electronic media.
  - b. Make this a day of fasting from all the news and other activities of life.
  - c. Color Easter eggs and share with the children the meaning of the Easter egg as a symbol of Christ resurrecting from the tomb.
2. Begin the Easter Vigil with the lights off in your home. Light the candles for the beginning of the Mass. Be attentive to the beautiful Exultat that open our Vigil celebration.
3. Light candles – each person in the family – during the renewal of Baptismal Promises at the Easter Vigil. Have a small bowl of holy water by the TV/Computer/Tablet and pass it around and each person make the Sign of the Cross on themselves as a reminder of our baptism.

### **Easter Sunday**

1. Watch Mass remotely on television or on [www.Facebook.com/CathedralOLPH.org/](http://www.Facebook.com/CathedralOLPH.org/) or at [www.CathedralOLPH.org](http://www.CathedralOLPH.org).
2. Make this a joyful day. Take walk outside together. Play games as a family or couple. Individuals who will be alone, do something that bring joy to you, a hobby, craft, good book, etc.
3. Make your favorite dessert and celebrate Jesus' Resurrection.
4. Take some time and have each one share one blessing of this past week.
5. Make a wonderful meal and rejoice in the love that God has poured into our hearts through the death and resurrection of his Son.
6. Look at baptismal pictures from the family photo album or boxes of pictures. Parents or spouses tell the story of those moments in the lives of your children. Reflect on what your baptism means for you today.
7. Call family and friends and visit. Tell them you are calling to share the joy of Easter with them.

Above all, pray for those who move through this Holy Week with no faith, for those who are celebrating Easter without loved ones because of social distancing or because of death in the recent past months. Pray to for those who will spend this week in hospitals and care facilities attending to those who are ill with this virus and other disease.

Pray that this will be a time of spiritual renewal for all people and a revival of the "Domestic Church" of the family! Come Holy Spirit! Praised be Jesus Christ!