

Office for the New Evangelisation

LENT / EASTER

2025



Reflection Booklet

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under the Catholic Foundation.



Inaugurated in September 2013, the Office for the New Evangelisation (ONE) is an office in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore working to realise the Archdiocese's vision of being a vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church.

As a catalyst for the New Evangelisation, ONE's mission is to facilitate processes and initiatives to move baptised Catholics into becoming missionary disciples.



Contents

003

Introduction

- 003** Lent to Easter Message
- 005** The Purpose of this Booklet
- 005** How to Use this Booklet
- 007** Facilitating Group Reflection

009

Lent

- 010** Sundays of Lent (Year C)
- 011** 1st Sunday of Lent
- 017** 2nd Sunday of Lent
- 023** 3rd Sunday of Lent
- 029** 4th Sunday of Lent
- 035** 5th Sunday of Lent
- 041** Palm Sunday

035

Easter

- 048** Sundays of Easter (Year C)
- 049** Easter Sunday
- 055** 2nd Sunday of Easter
- 061** 3rd Sunday of Easter
- 067** 4th Sunday of Easter
- 073** 5th Sunday of Easter
- 079** 6th Sunday of Easter
- 085** 7th Sunday of Easter
- 091** Pentecost Sunday

071

Conclusion

- 097** Appendix - Activities
- 106** Acknowledgements



Lent *to* Easter
MESSAGE

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The witness of the early Christians inspired others to wonder about Jesus Christ. Those outside of the community wondered what held them together. This year, “the time has come for a new Jubilee, when once more the Holy Door will be flung open to invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God” (*Spes non confundit*, 6). The intense experience is only possible with the open doors of our hearts, even as we are unable to go through the ‘Holy Doors’ in Rome.

This year, after the reflections are carried out in your communities, inspire one another as a community or as individuals to carry out works of charity or mercy as part of the Jubilee year. The Jubilee year invites us to celebrate the liberation that was given to us through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Traditionally, Catholics spend much time and effort in preparing for Easter through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Let these Lenten practices lead us to continue reflecting during the Easter season, the reason for our preparation. Celebrations in the form of greater fellowship in the community and through the Word will lead us to being stronger in the faith and in witnessing to the faith.

May the Lord bless you with graces as you begin this Lenten and Easter reflection with sincerity and perseverance.

Rev. Fr. Terence Pereira

Episcopal Vicar for the New Evangelisation

The Purpose of this Booklet

This resource is intended for families, RCIA groups, parish organisations, ministries, small Christian communities and neighbourhood Christian communities. It may also be used for individual reflection.

To promote the Christian community in the neighbourhood as a place where we can hear the Word of God and put it into practice.

To give participants an experience of community and a sense of their mission by reaching out to neighbours and those in need.

To gather parish organisations / ministries to pray together as one and put Christ back in the centre.

To increase communication between family members. Love should be the main message in all communication, so the sessions are aimed at families sharing stories, doing meaningful activities together, sharing faith and being reconciled with one another.

How to Use this Booklet

These reflections may be used either (1) before participating in Sunday's liturgy, as a way of preparation to receive God's Word at Mass, or (2) after participating in the liturgy as a continuation of 'breaking open the Word of God' in our lives.

In the spirit of generosity, group members volunteer beforehand to read Scriptures and other parts of the text.

A different group facilitator can take the responsibility in each session to foster good interaction and to keep time.

Someone should record the discussion in general terms and then email it to the members who are absent.

The duration of each session is about two hours.

The time and place for the next meeting should be announced at the end of each session.

Session Format

1 Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

2 Readings

The three scripture texts should be read at least twice, allowing some time for a silent listening to the Word.

Then the passages are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given write up. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior the meeting.

3 Reflections

Someone reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

4 Sharing Questions

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharings. The latter is meant to prompt sharings based on the specific context i.e., Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and also time for everyone to respond.

5 Doing your bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

6 Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

7 Appendix: Activities

The appendix section contains activities that further enrich our spiritual journey with our fellow sisters and brothers in Christ.

Facilitating Group Reflection

**For where two or three
meet in my name,
I am there with them
- Matthew 18:20**

Be mindful of Christ's presence. Adopt a humble and reverent manner when speaking or acting within the group. Read the text meditatively and give your best attention to the words of the Scripture readings.

**May they all be one,
just as, Father, you are
in me and I am in you
- John 17:21**

Help everyone to feel at home and take special care to welcome newcomers. Treat each person as a beloved member of the community and invite one another to participate in the session by taking turns to read the text. Use a language that everyone can understand so that no one feels left out.

**...and their great men
make their authority
felt. Among you this is
not to happen
- Mark 10:42-43**

Avoid being authoritative or domineering by acting aggressively, flaunting knowledge or telling others what to do. If there is advice to be given, do so after the reflection is done. Choose words that are easily understood by all when speaking. Avoid giving lengthy and verbose sharing that consume other people's opportunities to offer their sharing.

**If anyone wants to be a
follower of mine, let him
renounce himself and
take up his cross every
day and follow me -
Luke 9:23**

At the core of these reflections is the Word of God, the teachings of the Church and the invitation for our conversion towards Christ. If the group wanders away from this during the session, gently invite one another to re-focus.

**Because when the time
comes, the Holy Spirit
will teach you what you
should say - Luke 12:12**

There is no need to prepare sharing in advance or to appoint people to share. Wait patiently for God's Spirit to inspire generosity and remember to give thanks after someone volunteers to contribute their own faith experience.

**...your light must shine
in people's sight, so that,
on seeing your good
works, they may give
praise to your Father in
heaven - Matthew 5:16**

These reflections challenge us to do the will of God - to reflect the love of Christ to others we meet. Spend some time at the start of the next group session sharing with one another how each one has tried to do this over the past week.

CATHOLICSG RADIO

brings you the audio version of the
2025 Lent to Easter Reflection Booklet.

Join our presenters as they take you through the reflections,
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HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU BETTER?

THANK YOU FOR USING THIS BOOKLET!

We hope that these reflections will help you and your community to grow in faith. As you journey through it, we'd love to hear your thoughts.

Does this booklet meet your expectations?
What else would you like to see in future booklets?
Your feedback is important to us.

Let us know how we can improve!



one.org.sg/feedback

(Year C)
Sundays of Lent

Week	Readings
1st Sunday of Lent	Deuteronomy 26:4-10; Romans 10:8-13; Luke 4:1-13
2nd Sunday of Lent	Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 9:28-36
3rd Sunday of Lent	Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15; 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12; Luke 13:1-9
4th Sunday of Lent	Joshua 5:9-12; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32
5th Sunday of Lent	Isaiah 43:16-21; Philippians 3:8-14; John 8:1-11
Passion/Palm Sunday	Luke 19:28-40 Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Luke 22:14-23:56



1st Sunday *of* LENT

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Lord God,

the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, and He was tested.

Jesus showed us that it is possible to resist the temptations of the evil one. May our Lenten journey give You glory as we follow the footsteps of Jesus our Saviour.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

In Deuteronomy, Moses instructs the Israelites on what to do upon entering the Promised Land, even though he himself is barred from entering. Israel is to offer the first fruits of the land to God our Father as a sign of gratitude, accompanied by a recitation of their history. This ritual recalls their beginnings as a small household, grew into a large nation, and rescued from oppression in Egypt by God our Father who gave them the land. This serves as a constant reminder for all generations that their prosperity depends on God.

2nd Reading:

Romans 10:8-13

Paul paraphrases Deuteronomy 30:14 and Isaiah 28:16. He wants

to emphasise that salvation requires sincere faith. It must be in our hearts and minds, not just in words. Paul asserts that God our Father is the God of all, both Jews and Greeks. When viewed in context, Paul's message becomes clear: he is grappling with the fact that many Jews have not accepted Christ. As a Jew himself, this reality causes him profound grief. Despite this, Paul affirms that God our Father desires to save everyone, including unbelieving Jews. He shows no favouritism in His plan for salvation.

Gospel:

Luke 4:1-13

The temptation of Christ is a recurring Gospel reading for Lent for good reasons. This period of intense prayer, fasting, and almsgiving for 40 days imitates Jesus' fasting for 40 days. Although fasting made Jesus hungry, it did not make Him weak. He was able to frustrate the devil's temptations of basic human desires: food, power, and security. Likewise, our Lenten practices aim to strengthen us spiritually and encourage solidarity with the poor. The first verse also reminds us that Jesus' fasting followed His Baptism and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Thus, our Lenten

observances should be entered into with a Spirit-led disposition.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

The story of how Israel was freed from oppression and entered the Promised Land after 40 years of wandering was full of drama and action. Ancient Christian interpreters would have seen this as foreshadowing of the Church's journey from death into life made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, it was not smooth sailing for the Israelites from then on; we know from the Scriptures that the Israelites faced challenge after challenge.

Likewise, our journey does not end after confessing with our mouths and believing in our hearts that Jesus is our God who rose from the dead. There are always temptations and distractions to turn us away from God our Father. For example, the Gospel reading speaks of the desires for food security, power or control, and safety. These are basic human needs. Problems arise when these desires become

disordered and obsessive, distracting us from our mission of evangelisation.

Therefore, Moses was wise to instruct Israel to make offerings to God our Father and recall what He had done for them. Through these rituals, they are constantly reminded of God our Father's goodness and providence. So let us listen to Moses; let us try to remember. Every now and then, we may forget God our Father and the mission given to us in the hustle and bustle of daily life. But this Lent, let us add one more thing into the trinity of fasting, praying, and almsgiving: let us constantly recall what the Lord has done for us and the Church.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- What are the constant temptations in my life?
- Do my temptation fall under self-satisfaction, power, or taking God our Father for granted?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- Do I believe that I truly need a conversion in my life?
- In what areas do I need to begin my conversion process?

FOR MINISTRY

- What temptations and distractions are compromising our ministry's attempt to grow in holiness?
- What is the spiritual conversion that we need as a ministry?

FOR FAMILY

- Has our family become a group of people living in one household?
- What areas of our family life needs conversion?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

“Repent and believe in the Good News.” Start with asking those that you know, especially family members, on what areas of your life can better reflect the Gospel values of love, compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, hope, service and justice.

Decide which value you want to focus on and come up with a plan to change your life.

Choose someone to journey with during this season of Lent.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Lord God,

as we leave this time of reflection, may we carry these words of Scripture with us to nourish us. Your Word enables us to resist the temptations in our daily lives, especially those that make us forget Your love or the plight of our poor brothers and sisters. Your Word reminds us of Your eternal love for us. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



2nd Sunday *of* LENT

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

we gather in this Lenten season as pilgrims of hope, seeking Your presence with open hearts. We want to walk through Lent with humility and repentance, to grow deeper trust in Your unfailing love. We know that Your grace transforms us and we find strength in Your promises. For we know that our pilgrimage is leading us ever closer to You and the hope of eternal life. For this we want to praise You, Lord.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

Abram expresses doubt over God our Father's promise, his and his wife's lack of offspring and advanced age. Abram questions God's promise of a great nation (Gen 15:2). In response, God reassures him by showing the stars. He said, "*So shall your descendants be*", symbolising the countless descendants that would come. In a profound act, God passed between the sacrificial offerings. This symbolised that should God not fulfil His promise, He too will suffer death. This act prefigures Christ's ultimate sacrifice, reminding us that God's faithfulness transcends our present doubts and secures a future beyond our understanding.

2nd Reading:

Philippians 3:17-4:1

St. Paul addresses the early Christians in Philippi as "us," fellow travellers on the path of transformation through Christ. In contrast, Paul refers to those who focus on worldly desires as "them". This distinction demonstrates Paul's solidarity and encouragement for the community amidst adversity. The first reading recalls the covenant of God's sacrificial love. So, when read together, the message is clearer: God our Father always assures and encourages us. This understanding should strengthen and unite us in our faith as we journey together toward the promise of eternal life through Christ.

Gospel:

Luke 9:28-36

The Transfiguration reveals Jesus' divine glory and echoes the Abrahamic covenant in our 1st Reading. God our Father confirmed His promises to Abraham with a dramatic sign: He walked between the offerings. He now reveals Jesus as their fulfilment in a similarly dramatic fashion. Moses and Elijah,

representing the Law and the Prophets respectively, allude to Jesus as the culmination of God's covenantal faithfulness. The voice from the cloud declares, "*This is my Son, the Chosen one,*" affirming that Jesus is the promised one through whom salvation comes. In Christ, God's covenant with man reaches its ultimate fulfilment, offering us hope and redemption.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

This week's theme centres on God our Father's faithfulness and the transformative power of His promises. The covenant with Abram connects us to a promise that transcends time. God's promise to Abram, shown through the stars and the act of passing between the sacrificial offerings, reassures us of His unwavering love. It gives us hope for a future beyond what we can see.

The Transfiguration reveals the divine glory of Christ. Moses and Elijah's appearance with Jesus shows He fulfils the Law and the Prophets. This confirms that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection

are the ultimate fulfilment of the promises made to Abram. Jesus lives on in our Church, especially the sacraments. Thus, God our Father's is still fulfilling His promises today, not confined to a specific time in the past. They are realised through Christ in our daily lives. Our Lenten journey is an opportunity to recognise the areas in our lives where God's saving love is present and for us to align ourselves to Christ. We are part of an ongoing story of divine love and salvation.

Finally, St. Paul's message to the Philippians reminds us that the call for the early Christians is to be united and focus on what truly matters. Let us be encouraged (and encourage each other) to live out our heavenly citizenship. We should be connected to communities that help us to embody the message of the Gospel and to trust in God's promises amid life's challenges. May this Lenten season inspire us to remain focused on our spiritual journey. We are not called to a private journey, but one that embraces hope and renewal in Christ through communion in Him in our community.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Reflect on a time when you felt deeply connected to God our Father's promises or experienced His transformative love in a tangible way. How did this experience impact your faith journey?
- How can you open yourself to God our Father's encouragement this Lent, in light of His promise to Abram and His presence affirmed in the Transfiguration?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How can we, as a community, support one another in living out our Father's promise?
- What obstacles must we remove in order to see our Father's promise fulfilled in our communities?

FOR MINISTRY

- Are we as a ministry truly united in our focus to embody the message of the Gospel?
- Do we work for the holiness of each member of our ministry?

FOR FAMILY

- How can we be signs of our Father's presence in our family?
- How can our family grow in faith, love, and unity to reflect the presence of the Holy Trinity in our home?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

How has your work of conversion been so far? Share your challenges to conversion with your loved ones or those whom you have chosen to take along on your journey.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for the apostles to experience the transfiguration of Your Son. We get a glimpse of Your glory, which You want to share with us. We are totally humbled by this revelation of Your presence and Your covenantal love in Jesus Christ for us. This passage of scripture assures us of Your love in our lives. Inspire us to share Your love and hope with those around us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



3rd Sunday *of* LENT

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Lord God,

as we prepare for the joy of Easter in this Lenten season, wash our sins and blot out our transgressions. As we listen to warnings and exhortations in Your Holy Scriptures, open our heart to the Spirit's prompting so that we may repent and stay away from evil.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15

This story of divine encounter is a “call narrative,” marking the start of Moses’ prophetic mission. He meets the God of his ancestors, who calls him to lead the Israelites out of slavery into the Promised Land. Like many called by God our Father, Moses is reluctant, questioning his worthiness and even God’s name. In response, God declares: “I am who am,” “I am,” and “Yhwh.” This profound moment reveals the God who hears Israel’s suffering and acts to redeem them, fulfilling His covenant with Abraham and leading His people towards liberation and the life He has promised them.

2nd Reading:

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

In his exhortation, Paul interprets the Israelites’ crossing of the Red Sea as baptism and the rock providing water as Christ. His point is that both Israel and Christians have been baptised and nourished by Christ. Yet, as Numbers recounts, many Israelites died due to disobedience. Paul warns his audience that baptism is no guarantee of salvation if they fall into sin. Christians, like the Israelites, must remain vigilant and avoid wickedness. While Paul is writing to the Corinthians concerning idolatry, his warning extends to participation in evil and sin more broadly, urging believers to persevere in faith and holiness.

Gospel:

Luke 13:1-9

The gospel passage is easier to understand when divided into two parts. First, Jesus was told Pilate killed Galilean Jews while they worshipped. He explained that their horrifying deaths, like those in the Siloam accident, were not due to greater sinfulness. We are all sinners, and repentance is necessary to avoid

spiritual death. The second part is a parable of a barren fig tree about to be cut down. This image echoes Luke 3:9, where John the Baptist warned of judgement and urged generosity and fairness. Together, these passages warn against complacency and call for repentance and spiritual fruitfulness.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

Whenever we read about Jesus's call for repentance, especially during Lent, we often think about being sorry for our personal sins. However, the Greek word for "repent," *metanoeo*, encompasses a broader meaning—it signifies a change of mind or transformation of our inner life. Thus, the call to repent and avoid spiritual death should be understood as a call to the conversion of our entire being so that we bear good fruit. How can this transformation occur?

In Luke 3:9, John the Baptist anticipated Jesus' parable by warning his audience to care for the poor and to act justly in economic matters, lest they be

"cut down." The gospel reading emphasises justice and concern for the poor because it reflects God's character. In the first reading, God our Father, moved by the cries of the enslaved Israelites, intervenes. Rather than ignoring their suffering, He calls Moses, reveals His name, and empowers Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. This reveals a God who is deeply concerned for the poor and oppressed.

Every person is made in the image of God our Father, and God our Father desires to care for all, especially the poorest and weakest. As Christians, we are called to carry out God's will, paying special attention to those who suffer. We must remain vigilant, as our choices, including inaction, can lead to cooperating with evil and increasing injustice.

As baptised Christians nourished by the body and blood of Christ, Paul warns us in the second reading not to become complacent. We must avoid wickedness and strive to be a fruitful fig tree. We know we are bearing fruit when we see the world becoming more like the Kingdom of God. "Your Kingdom come."

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- What are the areas of complacency in my life that need metanoia?
- How have I shown my concern for those who are suffering and marginalised?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- What aspects of our community life have we neglected, preventing growth and positive change over the years?
- How can we change our mindset to better promote justice and show love to our poorest neighbours?

FOR MINISTRY

- Has our ministry stagnated over the years, merely repeating the same work over and over again?
- How can our ministry reach out to bring justice and mercy for our marginalised neighbours?

FOR FAMILY

- What are the areas in our family life need a change of mind or transformation of our inner life to truly live as a family of our Father?
- How can we strive to bring about justice and love for our most vulnerable neighbours?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

As you notice personal growth and change in your own journey, take the time to encourage and support others who are also on their path of conversion.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Lord God,

You offer salvation to all, leaving no one outside Your mercy. We only perish when we refuse to take Your hand of friendship by failing to forgive ourselves and others.

Though the Jews drank from the rock, many perished because they did not recognise the Giver of the water or follow the ways of the Giver of life. May Your love for Your suffering children fill us with zeal to make Your kingdom come on earth. For we are all pilgrims of hope, journeying together towards the joy of eternal life.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



4th Sunday *of* LENT

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

on this 4th Sunday of Lent, we come before You with joyful hearts, remembering and celebrating Your immense love for us. As we gather to hear Your Word, we open our minds and hearts to receive Your truth and wisdom. Speak to us, Lord, and guide us in learning from You and from each other.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Joshua 5:9-12

In the first reading, we hear that God our Father had taken away the “shame of Egypt” from the Israelites. The slavery under the Egyptians symbolises our slavery to sin. Moses, whom Joshua succeeded, symbolises Jesus Christ. Moses led the Israelites out of slavery through the Red Sea, which symbolises the Sacrament of Baptism. All these foreshadowed Jesus freeing us from the slavery of Original Sin through Baptism.

Now, finally in the promised land which points to heaven, the Israelites eat bread made from land’s grain. This “bread from heaven” points to the Eucharist which we celebrate and partake of each week.

2nd Reading:

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

What a joy and grace it is! How thankful we should be to know that God our Father does not hold our faults against us. Even more, He sent His Son, Jesus, to reconcile us with Himself. In doing so, we no longer remain as who we were. As St. Paul writes, we become a new creation. By God’s grace, we leave behind our sinful lives and take on a new reality: holiness. Our role, then, is to be “ambassadors for Christ” inviting others to know and reconcile with God. In a word, we must evangelise.

Gospel:

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

The Parable of the Prodigal Son reveals the heart of God our Father, showing that He is love itself (1 John 4:16). The younger son asks for his inheritance, wishing his father dead. After wasting his wealth, he returns home not out of remorse, but because he is hungry, showing insincere repentance. Despite this, the father welcomes him back with unconditional love and joy. The parable teaches that God respects our freedom, even to sin, but is always ready to welcome us

when we repent, regardless of our reasons. God our Father does not stop loving us; He IS love.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

The 4th Sunday of Lent is also known as Laetare Sunday. Laetare is Latin for “rejoice.” It, along with Gaudete Sunday (the 3rd Sunday of Advent), is one of only two times the liturgical colour is pink (officially, rose). For some of us, it may seem strange to have a joyful celebration amid Lent, a season of penance and fasting. However, it is on this Sunday where Mother Church offers us a glimpse of the joy that awaits us at Easter, before we enter the sombre days of Holy Week.

Why then, should we rejoice? We rejoice because God our Father is love (1 John 4:16). God our Father does not fall in or out of love with us; He IS love. In His love, He freed the Israelites from their slavery, and in the same way, He frees us from the bondage of sin. Through His love, He gave us new life in Him. And in His love, He is always eager to welcome us back with

open arms, no matter how far we have strayed.

Therefore, it is right and just that we celebrate! Due to the actions of Adam and Eve, our first parents, we were separated from God our Father. As finite beings, we are unable to bridge the gap between us and the infinite God. So, out of His love, God our Father sent His Son, Jesus (God Himself), to restore the intimacy He always intended for us. Jesus accomplished this by dying on the Cross, which we will soon commemorate. For all this, let us rejoice!

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- What has ordinarily been the source of your joy?
- What changes in your life have brought you joy?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- As a community, what are we to be joyful about during this season of Lent?
- Has the memory of the community's wrongdoings brought about conversion, and has that conversion brought about joy?

FOR MINISTRY

- How has the ministry been a source of joy for her members?
- What conversion(s) has the community gone through during this Lenten season to bring joy to her members?

FOR FAMILY

- At this stage of the Lenten season, has our family embraced new ways of living according to God our Father's ways and sharing our faith with others?
- How has the conversion of each member of the family brought joy to you?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Gather those who have started their journey of conversion and share with one another about your journey of repentance and conversion, celebrating small gains.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for this time of prayer, reflection, and sharing. We thank You for the graces and promises that we have gained today. In this coming week, may we be Your ambassadors to all we meet so that they too may know Your ways. May we help others to come to know Your love, especially those who are in times of struggle and difficulty. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



5th Sunday *of* LENT

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

O Father of all goodness,

as we come together to hear Your Word, may it be a light to our path, guiding us through the darkness and inspiring us to walk more closely with You. Stir in us the hope for heaven and for You, so that we may do all things pleasing to You.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Isaiah 43:16-21

The text invites readers to recall the Exodus and recognise God as a deliverer. During the Babylonian Exile, Isaiah evokes this powerful event to remind the Israelites of God's enduring providence. Isaiah then exhorts: God the Father will not leave the chosen people alone; He is working for their deliverance constantly! When we dwell only in the past, we may miss what Father God is doing today. We are invited to constantly encounter Him anew.

In seemingly hopeless situations, do not lose heart. Instead, hope in God the Almighty Father.

2nd Reading:

Philippians 3:8-14

Paul, zealous in his devotion to God our Father, once persecuted the followers of the Way (Christianity). He sought righteousness through strict adherence to the law. After encountering Christ, he realised this righteousness was self-made and insufficient. Instead, true righteousness comes from faith in Jesus and sharing in His passion, death, and resurrection. The Philippians were doing well in their life in Christ (Phil 1:3-11), and Paul shared his experiences to urge them to continue strengthening their love for Christ. By straining towards the love of God and placing our faith in Jesus, one can attain "*the goal of resurrection*": Christian perfection.

Gospel:

John 8:1-11

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus, intending to trap Him. Supporting Mosaic Law, which endorsed stoning, would violate Roman law. But, opposing it would undermine Moses' teachings and His Messianic role.

Jesus eluded the trap entirely,

saying, “*Let the one among you who is guiltless be the first to throw a stone at her*”. This forced the religious leaders to confront their own guilt and withdraw. Jesus did not dismiss the woman’s sin but showed mercy, saying, “*Go, and from this moment sin no more.*” Jesus exemplified true justice and compassion. He called both the accusers and the woman to deeper reflection.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

In today’s competitive society, we often face obstacles and may feel tempted to retaliate against those who may be stumbling blocks to our success. This was the mindset of the scribes and Pharisees in the Gospel, who used the adulterous woman to trap Jesus. They believed they were doing good by judging publicly her with the added benefit of furthering their agenda against Jesus. Instead, they were using her to achieve a selfish goal. We, too, may find ourselves doing seemingly “righteous” acts driven by selfish desires.

Jesus, however, challenges us to look beyond actions to intentions. While the woman acted wrongly, the religious leaders’ motives were impure. They felt righteous for seeking to discredit Jesus, who threatened their authority. This approach contradicts God our Father’s essence and character, who sees each person as a precious, beloved child. He points out our sins but is equally concerned with our dignity and restoring our relationship with Him. John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son*”, expresses the essence of God’s judgment: not condemnation but love that restores and dignifies. We are called to do the same. We must acknowledge wrongdoing while also extend forgiveness and empathy. We must recognise that we too receive God our Father’s gratuitous love.

St. Paul wrote of this righteousness in his letter to the Philippians. He emphasised that true righteousness comes through faith in Jesus. Like Paul, we struggle with self-righteousness and judgments. However, with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, we can attain this perfection God our Father calls us to. This Lent, let us

go beyond our wrongdoings and self-righteousness. Let's examine our intentions and choose God our Father in all situations. We ask

for the grace to glimpse "the new thing" God our Father is doing in our lives (Is 43:19), guiding us closer to Christian perfection.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Are there actions that you undertake, seemingly "righteous" acts, driven by selfish desires?
- Do you use others for your own purposes?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- Does the community use others for its own gain and purposes?
- True righteousness comes through faith in Jesus, acted out in our community. Does our community act with integrity?

FOR MINISTRY

- Do we shame the person who is wrong, or do we highlight the wrong that needs to be corrected?
- Does our ministry need to undergo a conversion in the way we deal with people?

FOR FAMILY

- Does our family need to correct lovingly as a family and inspire one another to grow in holiness?
- Are there stumbling blocks in our family culture that do not bring about unity in the family?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Send encouraging Scripture verses to those you've been journeying with, as well as to others, to support them on their journey of conversion.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Lord,

may we never trap You with our desires and wants. May we never bargain with You as if we have something to offer in return for Your graces or intervention in our lives. Let us see what You see and touch what You touch, that we may be Your body here on earth, embodying justice and forgiveness. Give us the courage to face our shortcomings and allow You to purify and change us, so that we may glorify You with our lives.

Amen.



Palm SUNDAY

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

God our Father,

we thank You for the grace of this gathering and for Your constant love for us in Your Son Jesus. You are never the source of our suffering.

However, as Your disciples in this imperfect world, there is a cost, especially where Your Gospel is unwelcome. We want to follow the way of Jesus and be true to the mission of Your Church, especially when it becomes challenging to be Christian. May our fidelity to Your will reflect that of Jesus, who gave Himself freely for sinners.

Amen.

Readings

The Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

Procession:

Luke 19:28-40

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is a striking declaration of His mission and identity as the Messiah. Riding on a colt, He embodies humility and peace, distinguishing Himself from earthly rulers who rely on power and dominance. The crowd's joyful acclamations, proclaiming Jesus as the King who comes in the name of the Lord, highlight His divine authority and the hope He brings. This moment sets the stage for the events of Holy Week, pointing to the deeper reality of Jesus' kingship—a reign marked not by conquest but by self-giving love and the fulfilment of God's salvific plan.

1st Reading:

Isaiah 50:4-7

The prophet Isaiah portrays the Holy One of God as a “suffering servant” who was diligent to the duty entrusted by God our Father. He was unfailingly committed to speaking God's comforting Word to the downtrodden and stayed on the path of God's mission even under the pain of unjust persecution. Those who identify with Isaiah's suffering servant face trials and tribulations serenely. They have unshakable trust that God will be their ultimate vindication. We will find in Jesus' own journey to the Cross the perfect example of the suffering servant of God.

2nd Reading:

Philippians 2:6-11

Scripture scholars identify this passage as a hymn sung by early Christians. They sang it to celebrate the wonderful humility of Jesus Christ, who set aside His own glory to fulfil God our Father's salvific plan. The mystery of Christ's kenosis (self-emptying) was a central theme to the worship of the first believers and subsequent generations of Christians. This ancient song to Christ draws us to contemplate

the Paschal miracle of the Word made flesh. He suffered and died with us, and in His obedience to God is exalted as Lord.

Gospel:

Luke 22:14-23:56

We cannot miss the connection between the Last Supper and the necessity of Christ's sacrifice in Luke's account of the passion. It is ironic that the disciples, even at that stage, failed to grasp Jesus' purpose as they argued over who is the greatest. Another moment of failure occurs when they mistook the need to defend Jesus with violence against those seeking to capture Him. A final moment of failure arrived as Peter and the disciples abandoned Jesus. The disciples' failures clarify why we receive the Eucharist: only with God our Father's nourishment can we follow the humble way of Jesus and become ourselves bread broken for others.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

We raise palm fronds during this Sunday's liturgy. It reminds us that the Christian understanding of

kingship has little in common with earthly royalty. Worldly kings seek glamour and domination (to be the greatest). Some even resort to exploitation of others and abandon their own humanity for the sake of conquest. Jesus entered Jerusalem as a very different kind of king, with no military might, riding on the back of a donkey.

In this week's readings, Jesus invoked for us the image of Isaiah's suffering servant. Despite having spent all His energy conveying the truth of the Kingdom of God, He remained committed to the Father's mission even when confronted with the "cup of suffering". Now Jesus was ready to face the final consequence of preaching the Gospel in Israel. He went into the city, faithful to His self-emptying spirituality. He first served His disciples by washing their feet at the Last Supper. Then, He offered Himself in His passion and death as the perfect sacrifice for our salvation.

Christians who are baptised into the life of Christ are called to imitate the humble Lord Jesus. He entered earthly life in a wooden manger and left it on a wooden cross. The Holy Spirit inspires us to participate in Christ's Paschal mystery; to be like Jesus, broken

and poured out for those who seek God our Father's healing Word. Followers of Jesus witness to Him when they do not seek self-preservation or take offence when

persecuted for their faith. Perhaps the world needs to hear the Gospel preached again. Not by warriors but by pilgrims, just as Jesus did, in the serene language of humility.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Jesus did not run away from His passion. Do I face the difficulties in my life with the same courage and resolve?
- In what areas of my life can I be more humble?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How have we witnessed moments when members felt upset or excluded due to being left out of an invitation or event, and how can we better support them?
- What experiences or challenges have led members to stray from their Catholic faith, and how can we help them stay true to their beliefs?

FOR MINISTRY

- In the work of ministry, when do we forget to exemplify the humility of Jesus? What can we do to bring the Gospel values back into our work?

FOR FAMILY

- When we choose not to obey the just instructions of family members, we take up a position of power through rebellious actions. How do we respond to moments when we feel challenged by authority within our family?
- How can we approach and address difficult situations within the family with openness and understanding?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Gather the group you have been journeying with and share with others the difficulties you have faced in your journey of conversion, as well as the current challenges you are facing.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Father,

Jesus entered Jerusalem, His city, riding on a donkey, the symbol of peace. We know, Father, through Jesus, You are offering us peace despite our waywardness. Jesus, our Lord, did not give up, despite spending all His energy conveying the truth of Your Kingdom. This is His final step in self-emptying for our salvation. As we reflect on this, may our conversion give glory and honour to You.

Amen.

Christ, our passover,
has been sacrificed:



let us celebrate
the feast then,
in the Lord.

(Year C)
Sundays of Easter

Week	Readings
Easter Sunday	Acts of the Apostles 10:34, 37-43; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-9
2nd Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16; Revelations 1:9-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40-41; Revelations 5:11-14; John 21:1-19
4th Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 13:14, 43-52; Revelations 7:9, 14-17; John 10:27-30
5th Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 14:21-27; Revelations 21:1-5; John 13:31-35
6th Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 15:1-2, 22-29; Revelations 21:10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29
7th Sunday of Easter	Acts of the Apostles 7:55-60; Revelations 22:12-14, 16-17, 20; John 17:20-26
Pentecost Sunday	Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11 Romans 8:8-17 John 14:15-16, 23-26



Easter SUNDAY

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

God our Father,

in Your power, the Lord Jesus has broken the shackles of death and is freed from the emptiness of the tomb. We, Your children, marvel at the wonderful mystery of Your saving plan. As we rejoice in the Risen One at this Easter time, we live in hope that our earthly struggle with fear and death will one day also give way to the victory of resurrection. May You be blessed, God Almighty, name above all names. Alleluia!

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43

Jesus and His message are at the heart of the Christian faith. However, the God-fearing Cornelius, whom Peter was addressing in the reading, had never experienced Jesus in the flesh. All Cornelius knew about Jesus of Nazareth was fragmented hearsay from various sources. Finally, he had an authentic eyewitness, an Apostle, who could express the Jesus story from the very beginning that made sense and awakened faith. Through this brilliant testimony, Peter put the pieces together and opened the way for Cornelius to come to know Jesus and believe in His teaching.

2nd Reading:

Colossians 3:1-4

People in the time of Paul considered immortality as being remembered well by the generations to come. Preservation of one's memory by descendants was important to the cultural idea of leaving an enduring legacy. Paul argued instead that to live forever in Christ, one does not rely on progeny or earthly memorials but on the power of God. Thus, Christians were called to turn their attention to where true eternity resides, on "*heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth.*" Paul's preaching on spiritual immortality opened the way for newly baptised Christians to adopt a different understanding of eternal life.

Gospel:

John 20:1-9

While there was a lot of excitement and running going on, the sight of the empty tomb did not immediately make the disciples realise that Jesus had risen. Mary Magdalene thought at first the most probable explanation was grave robbery. However, as the disciples observed the scene more closely, memories of Jesus triggered in

them a new understanding. Their personal experience of Jesus opened the way for the disciples to believe, against all odds, that He had truly resurrected from the dead, just as He said. This event changed everything they remembered from before about what Jesus had said and done.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

Singaporeans can be the hardest people to impress. They have high expectations, are well travelled, and have experienced many things. They have seen it all. However, on rare occasions, jaded Singaporeans can still be surprised by something new! What about Christians who have become disillusioned? What newness can Easter bring? Perhaps we neglected our faith, and our relationship with God our Father has turned cold; or a church scandal has hardened our hearts and caused us to distance ourselves. Maybe our high expectations of God our Father have been disappointed, and it feels like God our Father has left us.

The disciples of Jesus probably felt likewise in the moments following the Crucifixion. They had journeyed with Jesus and witnessed His marvellous words and deeds. However, Jesus went against their advice of avoiding Jerusalem. He let Himself be captured, tried, and to their horror, killed. It seemed so pointless, if only He had listened! Their dream of a future with Jesus had died along with Him, leaving only bitter memories. However, Mary Magdalene returned with startling news: the tomb is empty. Gradually, Peter and the other disciples realised what that meant. God our Father had opened a new way beyond death.

Jesus rose from the dead so that we can resist seeing death as the final chapter of our story. Easter is resurrection in action: God our Father breaking through both physical and spiritual death. This Jubilee Year proclaims that God our Father always opens new ways to all peoples at every time. Whenever we witness mercy, hope, love, and forgiveness that overcome spiritual death, that is Easter! God our Father is rewriting the story. Let us not overestimate our darkness and keep faith in God, who is always greater. May

we allow God our Father to open our hearts to a new way so we can depart our own “empty tombs”

and embrace the love we thought we had lost.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Do I see “new life” in myself because of my Lenten observances?
- Which areas of my life have experienced the resurrection and Easter joy?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- What is the newness of our Christian community?
- In what ways does our Christian community offer Easter hope and joy to those around?

FOR MINISTRY

- How has the ministry’s Lenten observance brought about new life in the ministry?
- Can the new life of Easter and Easter hope be felt in the ministry?

FOR FAMILY

- Which tomb in the family has been opened to usher in the new life of Easter?
- Are the family members bearers of Easter joy and hope?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Gather with those you have been journeying with and celebrate the new life you have with the Risen Lord. At the end of the celebration, share how you are going to bring this Good News to others.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Father,

Jesus' resurrection has opened a new way for us to renew our faith and hope. May the excitement of the resurrection be felt in our hearts today as we listen to the sharings of one another. May we bring Your promise of new life to our struggling brothers and sisters. Let them hope in the Kingdom of God, where every tear will be wiped away and death will be no more.

Amen.



2nd Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

We come together as Your people, grateful for the gift of our Easter joy and the victory of Christ over death. As we reflect on Your Word today, we remember how You revealed Your mercy to the disciples in their time of doubt and fear. You enable us to encounter the Risen Christ more deeply and grow in faith, hope, and love as you open our hearts and minds to the scriptures.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16

Our first reading picks up after the sobering account of Ananias and Sapphira, whose deceit led to their deaths. Despite the early Church's struggles, the Christian community continued to grow steadily. Many were drawn to Christ though the miraculous works of St. Peter and the Apostles, which demonstrated the strength of their witness and faith. Today, the Church is still imperfect. Yet, it continues to radiate Christ's healing power and mission, reminding us that He is still present and active among us.

2nd Reading:

Revelations 1:9-13, 17-19

John wrote to the seven churches in Asia Minor (modern-day

Turkey), which were facing significant challenges. In this passage, he receives a vision of Christ standing among seven lampstands, symbolising Christ's divine authority over the churches. Jesus describes Himself as the "First and Last" to assure us of His victory over sin and death. He has authority over all things and is the eternal King of the Universe. John's vision encourages us to trust in Christ's constant presence and providence and gives us hope as we celebrate Easter.

Gospel:

John 20:19-31

This passage from John's Gospel is the first account of Christ appearing to His disciples after His resurrection. Jesus breathes onto them, which reminds us of God our Father breathing life into Adam in Genesis 2:7. In this moment, Jesus gives the disciples new life. His words emphasise the importance of showing mercy to others. He gives us the Holy Spirit, which empowers us to extend forgiveness to one another. St. Thomas, who initially doubts, reflects our human tendency to question faith during difficult times. A personal encounter with the Risen Lord helped him believe. As Easter people, we are blessed

to believe without having seen!

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

Our duty as Christians is to go on mission to evangelise and minister to others. We see this in the 1st Reading: The Apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, performed miracles and healed the sick. Their actions drew many to believe in Christ. This shows us that our Christian mission is not just about personal faith; we are called to be channels of Christ's love and healing in the world. The Holy Spirit empowers us to serve others, offer compassion, and work towards justice. We trust that God our Father will use our actions to draw others to Him.

Our 2nd Reading further enriches our understanding of Christ's role in our mission. John's vision of Christ should give us hope and encouragement, strengthening our resolve to live out our faith with confidence. Christ, the "First and Last," has already conquered sin and death and reigns eternally as King. This vision encourages us to live our faith boldly, knowing

we have Christ's power behind us. Therefore, let us boldly evangelise and encourage our fellow Catholics to do the same.

As we ponder St. Thomas' own doubts and subsequent belief, we are invited to confront our own struggles in our spiritual journey. We must trust that Jesus meets us with compassion. He meets us in our doubts and strengthens our belief. Tradition holds that Thomas went on to spread the Gospel as far as India, a powerful example of how an encounter with the Risen Lord can inspire mission. Similarly, encountering the Risen Christ should inspire us to bring the Gospel to those who do not know Him.

In this Easter season, let us pray to God our Father to fill us with courage and compassion. May He send us out as missionaries after the example of St. Thomas!

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- How have you overcome doubts in your faith?
- Jesus cleared Thomas' doubt. When you have doubts about your faith, whom do you go to for clarity?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How do the challenges faced by your community lead to feelings of doubt, and how can you bring the hope of Easter to those moments?

FOR MINISTRY

- How does your ministry help you to confront the struggles in your spiritual journey?
- How does the sharing within your community resemble Jesus assuring Thomas in his doubts?

FOR FAMILY

- How can we, as a family, create a space to share our faith struggles and support one another through prayer and understanding?
- Do we encourage family members to go forth after their doubts have been clarified, to proclaim the Good News?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Discuss with your community or friends how you can grow in the faith of the resurrection of the Lord. Draw up concrete actions you can take as an individual and as a community.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

thank You for giving us the opportunity to discover how You continue to work in our lives. As we end this reflection, the joy and hope of Easter fill our hearts. As we have shared here, may we also share with those not present for Your glory. We want to spread Your love through simple, yet meaningful acts of kindness. May the faith You have given us be guided by the Holy Spirit, so we may live out our Christian mission boldly.

Amen.



3rd Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

thank You for the wonderful gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who gave us new life through His passion, death, and resurrection. Through Him, we come to know the immensity of Your love for us. As we pray with the readings for the 3rd Sunday of Easter, reveal the personal message that You have for each of us. Open our minds and hearts to Your presence.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40-41

The Sanhedrin were the Jewish high court in those days and wielded the authority to pass legal judgement in most cases. They were furious at the Apostles for accusing them of being responsible for Jesus' death. The Apostles had also ignored the Sanhedrin's demand that they stop preaching in Jesus' name. As St. Peter said, "*Obedience to God comes before obedience to men*". The Apostles' bravery in the face of persecution is an example and reminder of Jesus' words: "*In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33).

2nd Reading:

Revelation 5:11-14

John wrote the Book of the Apocalypse to provide encouragement to the Christians facing persecution. The word "apocalypse" is the English phonetic translation of the Greek word *apokalypsis*, meaning "unveiling". In his visions, John has the metaphorical veil lifted. He sees the saints in heaven and all created beings worshipping the God the Father, who sits on the throne, alongside the sacrificed Lamb, Jesus. We, too, inevitably face persecution in our lives. This reading again reminds us that despite our suffering, He and His followers are ultimate victors at the end of time.

Gospel:

John 21:1-19

Biblical scholars have differing theories on the meaning of the number "153", but the consensus is that the multitude of fishes and the unbroken net represent the Catholic Church. It is a diverse group of members, yet one Church united in the Lord. The Apostles with Jesus, were to carry out their mandate as "fishers of men" (Mark 1:17) and bring all people into the Church. Today,

this mandate is ours. We must cooperate with Jesus in building up the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth and assist Him in feeding His sheep. Jesus prophesied the persecution and death that St. Peter would experience. In following His command, we too will face great struggles. However, we must have faith in our Lord, who asks us to follow Him.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

This Sunday's readings emphasise the theme of persecution of Christians. The 1st Reading recounts the persecution which the Apostles faced from the Jewish leaders, the second offers St. John's encouragement to Christians suffering for their faith, while Jesus prophesied St. Peter's eventual martyrdom for spreading the Gospel. This may seem out of place in the Easter season, a time for celebration, but it reflects the reality that persecution is an ongoing part of Christian life. Jesus did not promise a life without suffering; instead, He warned that we might lose our lives for

following Him (Matt 16:24-26).

Thankfully, we live in a country where being Christian does not mean that our lives are in danger, but we still face "micro-persecution". Perhaps a co-worker makes a snide remark when you mention being Catholic, or a friend shames you for prioritising parish events over Friday-night drinks. To fit into your peer group, you may feel pressured to conform to the world's views on societal issues such as abortion or LGBTQ rights, which are contrary to the teachings of the Gospel. Whatever micro-persecution you experience, it can lead to a great deal of stress, anxiety, and confusion.

We must turn to our Lord Jesus for the strength to endure. We are called to be "bloodless martyrs" standing firm in our faith despite the backlash that may come our way. Ironically, these are the things that contribute to the growth of the Church. While your words and actions may not change the mind of your interlocutor, though we certainly pray for their conversion, others witness (Greek: *mártyras*, from which we get "*martyr*") your faith and be intrigued. Like the Apostles, may we also "*be glad to have the honour of suffering humiliation for the sake of the name.*"

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Are you being persecuted for proclaiming your faith?
- What is holding you back from proclaiming the faith and joining the ranks of the early Christians and apostles?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How can we better support each other in our daily witnessing of our faith?
- To what extent are you willing to proclaim the Good News of Jesus' resurrection?

FOR MINISTRY

- As we serve through our ministry, have we proclaimed the Good News of Jesus' resurrection?
- In what ways has the ministry encouraged and supported this mission of evangelisation?

FOR FAMILY

- Share about the moments when you faced rejection or abuse for proclaiming the Good News of Jesus' resurrection.
- Does your family support you in your work of evangelisation? In what other ways could they support this mission?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Pray for those you know who have lapsed in their Catholic faith. Consider buying or creating inspirational cards or stickers with Bible verses for these individuals you are praying for. Invite the community you are journeying with to pray for them as well.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for the gift of the holy men and women who have gone before us. They have shown us what it truly means to be witnesses and martyrs of our faith. Their courage, wisdom, and perseverance provide us with an inspiring example to follow. We thank You for these faithful servants who endured suffering and humiliation for the sake of Your name.

Amen.



4th Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

we gather today with hearts open to receive Your Word. Fill us with the courage of Paul and Barnabas, willing to share Your love and hope, even in the face of difficulty. The voice of our Good Shepherd guides us to faithfully follow the mission of bringing Your Gospel to all people.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 13:14,43-52

The first reading describes the response to Paul and Barnabas' preaching in Antioch. Initially, many Jews and devout converts are eager to hear more about the Gospel. However, almost the entire city gathers to listen on the following Sabbath, which caused jealousy amongst the Jewish leaders. They begin to contradict and insult Paul. This led Paul and Barnabas to boldly declare that they will now turn to the gentiles, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy that the Gospel would reach the ends of the earth (Isaiah 42:1-9). This passage highlights the tension between the early Christians and Jewish authorities. It also notes the broadening of the Gospel's reach to all nations.

2nd Reading:

Revelation 7:9, 14-17

Our second reading presents a vivid vision of a vast, diverse multitude standing before God's throne, clothed in white robes and holding palm branches. This multitude represents all nations, tribes, peoples, and languages, symbolising the universality of salvation through Christ. Their white robes signify purity and victory, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The reading emphasises God's promise of eternal protection. These people, who endured great tribulation, are now sheltered by God's presence. They will no longer suffer hunger, thirst, or pain, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. This highlights the hope of eternal comfort and peace.

Gospel:

John 10:27-30

The Gospel passage emphasises the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers. They are like sheep who recognise His voice and follow Him. Jesus assures that those who belong to Him are given eternal life and will never be lost or taken away. This passage assures us salvation, rooted in the power and faithfulness of Jesus

and the Father, who are one. It underscores the divine protection over believers, and no one can snatch them from God our Father's hand. This unity between Jesus and the Father reflects the strong, unbreakable bond that believers share with God our Father.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

Together, these readings paint a picture of Jesus as the shepherd who leads His flock with love and care. Paul and Barnabas' experience at Antioch reminds us that we will encounter opposition when sharing God our Father's word. Therefore, we must trust in His guidance, especially in such times of difficulty, and recognise His love that reaches to all people. Indeed, we must not allow our own perceptions and prejudices to limit to whom and where we evangelise. All are called to be part of God our Father's flock.

Furthermore, we do not know how many sheep the Lord will bring through us into His sheepfold. What we do know that if we do not bring His word to anyone, that

number will be zero. The image of the Good Shepherd calls us to listen to Jesus' voice, follow Him, and carry out our mission with confidence. We know that He leads all to eternal life and that nothing can separate us from His love.

This Easter, as we celebrate Christ's resurrection and the new life He offers, we are reminded of our call to bring this hope to those who do not yet know Him. Like Paul and Barnabas, we must continue proclaiming the Gospel despite opposition and share God our Father's love in our everyday encounters. Easter tells us that Christ's love is limitless and knows no bounds. Therefore, we must share His message beyond familiar circles. We know that the Good Shepherd leads us. Let us then move forward in confidence and bring the joy of the resurrection to all who will listen.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Whose voice do you follow on your life's pilgrimage?
- Do you resist the ways of the world and turn to the Gospel for guidance in your life?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- We are reminded of our call to bring the new life of Easter to those who do not yet know Him, just as Paul and Barnabas did. How deeply convicted are we in spreading this message of Easter?
- Does the community take time to listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and faithfully carry out His will?

FOR MINISTRY

- In light of God's protection over believers, does the ministry actively encourage and equip its members to proclaim the Good News of salvation?
- As we celebrate Christ's resurrection and the new life He offers, we are reminded of our call to bring this hope to those who do not yet know Him. What plans does the ministry have to further the work of evangelisation?

FOR FAMILY

- Is there anyone in my immediate family who needs to hear the Good News?
- How is the family preparing to share the Good News with unbelievers?
- In what ways is the family equipping its members to become evangelisers?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Meet with these lapsed Catholics and give them the cards you have bought or made. Share with them about Easter and remind them that no one is left as an outsider.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for reminding us of Your boundless love and never-ending care for us. Your promise of eternal life strengthens our hearts to go forth and share the joy of the resurrection with those around us. As we bring others into Your fold, may we be pleasing in Your sight.

Amen.



5th Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Good and gracious Father,

thank You for Easter. Thank You for all that You have done and are doing through Your Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Your will be done, as Jesus showed us through His death. In our lives, may we offer You obedience that brings forth new life in us all. We pray in Jesus' most precious name.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 14:21-27

This reading describes the end of St. Paul's first missionary journey around the Mediterranean. Paul and Barnabas ministered to the Christians where they visited, strengthening their faith and teaching them that salvation requires suffering and persecution in this earthly life. They also appointed priests; the Greek word for "elders" is presbyteroi, the basis for the word "priest". These priests would help guide and support the local Christian communities. Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and told the church community everything God our Father had accomplished through their journey. They shared how God worked through them to bring the faith to the gentiles (non-Jews).

2nd Reading:

Revelations 21:1-5

John's vision of a new heaven and a new earth signifies God our Father's complete transformation and restoration of creation.

John describes this as a bride beautifully prepared to meet her groom. This echoes prophetic imagery from the Old Testament such as Isaiah's vision of the restoration of Jerusalem. It also reinforces the wedding symbolism in the New Testament, where the Church is the bride and Christ, the groom. This new creation is not just a physical space, but God's intimate presence among His people. In John's vision, God's covenant is fulfilled: there will be no more tears and suffering as all things are made new.

Gospel:

John 13:31-35

Jesus calls His disciples "little children", describing their unpreparedness for His departure. To follow Him, they must embrace His new commandment: to love one another as He has loved them. While love is not a new concept, Jesus calls for a radical expression of it. He teaches His disciples, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life

for one's friends" (John 15:13), and embodies it by dying on the cross for us. It is by such selfless love that the disciples of Jesus will be recognised, rather than the external markers like dressing, diet, or rituals.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

We humans have an instinct for goodness, a sense of justice, a yearning for peace. These come from God our Father alone and thus was the experience of many when they encountered Jesus. They sensed that God our Father was among them and wondered if Jesus was the Messiah foretold in scripture. Jesus came to establish the "new heaven and new earth". By dwelling in our midst, He came to fulfil the longing in all humankind to be in the presence of God our Father. As St. Augustine wrote in *Confessions*: "You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."

The "new heaven and new earth" was described by Jesus as the Kingdom of God. However, this

Kingdom is not in its fullness yet on earth. Jesus commands His followers to continue working and serving the Kingdom. How? Through their radical, sacrificial love for each other after His example. This commandment to live and act with love is not only the mark of being Jesus' disciples. It is also the way to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to build God's Kingdom, where all relationships are made right.

This love is not just for a selected few, but for the whole of humanity. This impulse led to Paul and Barnabas spreading the Good News throughout the Roman world. Their message to the churches was sobering but true: persecution as Christians is unavoidable, but it is through enduring persecution that we may draw closer to Jesus Christ to die and rise with Him. Let us always remember that we are Easter people. Jesus suffered death for us and rose to show His love for us. Let this Easter season be a time for renewed hope in us to continue living a life of love, guided always by the Holy Spirit.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- Do you believe and accept that the love of the Lord is personally for you?
- How is our Father inviting you to proclaim the reign of His Kingdom?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- The love of the Lord is not just for a selected few, but for all of humanity. How has our community shown this and shared it with those around us?
- This Easter season is a time of renewed hope for us to continue living a life of love. How is the community making this a reality?

FOR MINISTRY

- Are ministry members willing to lay down their lives for one another so that others may come to know Jesus more deeply?
- How evident is love within the ministry? How clearly is the love between members visible to others?

FOR FAMILY

- How has the family lived the Easter life since Easter Sunday?
- What is the Easter hope that is sensed in the family?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Find out where a Pentecostal rally is taking place. Continue reaching out to the lapsed Catholics and introduce them to people who are positive about their faith and actively involved in the Church.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Lord,

for Christians to suffer in spreading Your love is inevitable. We know that through this endurance, we are purified and come to see You more clearly in our lives. As an Easter people with hope beyond death, we will strive to make Your love known to all, like St. Paul and St. Barnabas. May this effort to spread Your love transform our relationships with You, with others, and with all of creation.

Amen.



6th Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Father,

Jesus prepared His disciples for His departure by promising them the Holy Spirit. We are the ones who have benefited from His promise, even after so many years. The Holy Spirit was sent to teach us and remind us of all that Your Son, our Lord, did to glorify You. Your ongoing guidance fills us with hope and peace. We thank You for such great blessings, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 15:1-2, 22-29

The disciples faced quite a big issue in the Council of Jerusalem, depicted in this reading. They debated whether Christianity was meant for both gentiles and Jews. Questions about diversity and inclusion are always touchy issues. Thus, the disciples very wisely decided not to rely on human means but instead allowed the Holy Spirit to lead their discernment. They were docile to the movement of the Spirit, open to the experience of God, and willing to listen to each other. This meant that it was God's will and not their own will that shone through.

2nd Reading:

Revelations 21:10-14, 22-23

Even a heavenly city requires strong foundations. The reading describes the heavenly Jerusalem, the final place where all will dwell in the intimate presence of the Lord. The radiance of God's glory is evident, but the foundations hold equal importance: they remind us that our Church is built on the Apostles. Apostolic Succession ensures that our faith has been carefully handed on from the Twelve and provides us with a solid base upon which to ground our belief. It is through rooting ourselves in this faith that we become able to show God our Father's glory to the world.

Gospel:

John 14:23-29

Jesus prepares His disciples for His departure by promising the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will be a consoling presence that brings peace and comfort to them. That the Spirit "teaches" and "reminds" reflects Jesus' understanding that we need ongoing guidance to live our faith in the world. This deepening of faith allows us to connect our real-life experiences to God's grace, making us more aware of

His presence. It is an awareness that gives us profound peace that the world cannot give. It is a peace rooted in God's abiding presence with us, offering comfort and strength in all circumstances.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

Imagine a windmill in the strong wind. Its blades turn as they catch the gusts while standing firm in the tempest. This is a very apt image for this Sunday's readings. The wind represents the Spirit, the *ruach* (Hebrew for Spirit, which also means "wind") who is a constant presence in our lives. The windmill's blades represent our receptivity to the Spirit; how well we turn depends on our openness to the Spirit working in our lives. The windmill itself represents our faith and how it needs a strong foundation to stand firm amidst the difficulties of life.

We often hear the word "discernment" used in the context of our faith lives, and we learn this concept best through practice. In the 1st Reading, the disciples' receptivity to the Spirit helped

turn the blades of the windmill, leading them to embrace non-Jews into the Church. The Spirit also teaches us about God our Father, often through our daily lives and the examples (both good and bad) of others. Living a life of discernment thus requires an openness of mind and heart to allow the Spirit to work in us. We must also always be firmly rooted in the Word of God and Sacraments, as a strong windmill is built on strong foundations. Only then will our receptivity to the Spirit bear fruit in how we seek to transform the world.

Assured by God our Father's constant presence, let us seek a depth of faith through the study of Scripture and the reception of Sacraments. At the same time, we must strive to always seek the grace of openness to the Spirit in our daily lives and to see God our Father's hand in all things. This is how we participate in the building of the Kingdom of God.

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- The disciples wisely chose not to rely on human means but instead allowed the Holy Spirit to guide their discernment. How often do you pause and allow the Holy Spirit to direct you?
- Whom do you turn to for discernment when you face important decisions?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How have we listened to the Holy Spirit as a community in the past, and how can we become more open to the Spirit together? (Feel free to share examples.)
- How often do we refer to the Easter event when discerning together as a community on how to carry out our Father's work?

FOR MINISTRY

- In the busyness of ministry, we can sometimes forget to listen and discern. How can we, as a ministry, be more docile to the Holy Spirit and collaborate more fully with God our Father?

- Discernment does not happen when we want it in this moment or another moment. For discernment to happen, the ministry must constantly bring all its plans and thoughts to the Lord. How will the ministry move towards this way of life?

FOR FAMILY

- Listening to the Holy Spirit also means listening to each other. What are the things we can do as a family to grow to listen more to one another?
- What significance does Easter hold in the life of the family throughout the year?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Pray for the lapsed Catholic before inviting them to the Pentecost Rally. Ask the Lord to bless them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit as you extend the invitation.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Father,

when the early Christian Community showed us that they relied on the Holy Spirit, it is a reminder for us to do the same. We thank You, Father, once again for another example to follow. We thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit and not leaving us as orphans in our journey through this world. May recognise the presence of the Holy Spirit in all our sharing through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



7th Sunday *of* EASTER

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

we come before You with gratitude for the courage and forgiveness shown by St. Stephen. He is a true witness to Christ, demonstrating His love even in the most challenging moments. This is a powerful example for us to follow. We also thank You, Father, for Jesus, the ultimate example of obedience, and for His followers who remind us that we, too, can live in obedience to Your ways. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 7:55-60

This passage recounts the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazes into heaven and sees Jesus at the right hand of God. Jesus is seen standing, which indicates divine solidarity and support for Stephen in the face of persecution. His vision affirms that Jesus is with all who suffer for their faith. Despite the violent opposition of the crowd, Stephen echoes Jesus' words from the cross, asking forgiveness for his persecutors. This moment powerfully demonstrates the call to witness boldly, even unto death, and to respond to hatred with mercy.

2nd Reading:

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20

In this climactic passage from Revelation, Christ declares His imminent return. The imagery of the Alpha and Omega highlights Christ's eternal authority. He will bring judgment and reward based on each person's deeds. Jesus invites the churches to drink the "water of life", which is God's free offer of salvation to all. His words are a call to readiness, urging believers to live in anticipation of His return, when He will bring both accountability and fulfilment of divine promises. The final plea, "Come, Lord Jesus!" expresses our longing for Christ's second coming and hope of eternal communion with God.

Gospel:

John 17:20-26

Jesus prayed not only for His disciples but also for all future believers, asking that they may be united as He and the Father are one. This unity among believers is a powerful witness to the world of God's love and truth. Jesus' prayer emphasises the transformative power of divine love, which draws humanity into the intimate relationship shared between the Father and the Son. His prayer

ends with a desire for believers to experience the fullness of God's glory. This reveals Jesus' deep love and desire for eternal fellowship with His followers.

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

The readings this Sunday emphasise unity, witness, and hope. As we prepare for Pentecost, we must reflect on the Church's mission and the promise of eternal life.

In the 1st Reading, St. Stephen's vision of Christ at God our Father's right hand gives him the strength to forgive his persecutors. Stephen's faithfulness, even in the face of death, highlights the call to witness to Christ with courage and love. His prayer for his enemies echoes Jesus' prayer on the cross. It shows the power of forgiveness and the transformative grace that flows from a heart aligned with God our Father's will. Stephen challenges us to live as witnesses to Christ, even in persecution, and to offer forgiveness generously.

Our 2nd Reading strengthens

our hope by reminding us of Jesus' promise to return, bringing both judgment and reward. This passage reminds us of the urgency of living faithfully, as we do not know the hour of His return. It offers a message of hope: those who "wash their robes" (live faithfully) will have the right to the "tree of life" (eternal life). The invitation to drink from the "water of life" speaks of the free and abundant gift of salvation for those who seek God our Father.

Indeed, this unity is what Jesus prays for as we read in the Gospel. His followers can only achieve unity through shared unity with the Trinitarian God. The Holy Spirit is the outpouring of love that Jesus and the Father have for each other. This same Spirit is the source of unity in the Church. This unity is more than just harmony, is a testimony to the world of God our Father's love. As we embody this love within our community, we become a living witness to Christ's presence among us. Through this unity, the world comes to know Christ. As we celebrate Pentecost this week, let us pray to echo Jesus' prayer to be one!

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- How does the new life of Easter inspire you to forgive those who have hurt you deeply?
- What might be holding you back from experiencing freedom through forgiveness?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- What can we do as a community to foster greater process of helping one another to forgive when a quarrel begins?
- Jesus prayed that we be united. How have we worked towards this in our community?

FOR MINISTRY

- When someone looks at our ministry, do they see unity and love?
- Do you feel that love and unity are priorities for the members of the ministry?

FOR FAMILY

- In our daily interactions within the family, what guides our engagement?
- Most family members desire love and unity, but this doesn't happen simply because we wish for it. What more can be done to foster greater unity and love in the family?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Learn more about the Holy Spirit and share what you learn with your community, if you have one. Then, think of all the questions you may have about the Holy Spirit and seek answers from those who have attended the CTIS courses or from a priest you know.

Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Heavenly Father,

just as You revealed Your presence to St. Stephen in his time of need, we are confident that You will come to us when we are doing Your work. We trust that You will hear the prayers of Your Son on our behalf as we make our pilgrim journey to You. May our unity reveal to all Your love for us.

Amen.



Pentecost SUNDAY

Opening Prayer

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing an opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to us to be our Advocate. Thank You for His constant guidance and counsel in the Church and our lives. As we reflect on the readings for Pentecost Sunday, may we be docile to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. May He reveal Your truth to us.

Amen.

Readings

The three Scriptures readings and their accompanying commentaries must be read out loud, allowing some time for a silent reflection.

Next, the readings are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given commentaries. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior to the meeting.

Commentaries for:

1st Reading:

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

This passage recounts the first Pentecost. The Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and inspired to preach about Jesus Christ to the people of Jerusalem. These people came from all corners of the known world, and they gathered to hear about the Gospel in their own languages; a sign of unity through the Holy Spirit. Cardinal William Goh reminds us of “communion in mission, and mission in communion”. Our mission as Church must be carried out in communion. This mission is to bring all humanity into communion with Christ and living out the unity that the Holy Spirit inspires in us.

2nd Reading:

Romans 8:8-17

The Hebrew word for “spirit” is “*ruach*”. This word is also used for “life” or “breath”. St. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit gives us life, not physical life, but life free from sin. The Spirit rescues us from sin and empowers us to live lives of virtue. This makes us children and heirs of God our Father. The Spirit brings us into communion with the Trinitarian God, which is the goal of Christianity, and indeed life itself.

Gospel:

John 14:15-16, 23-26

The Holy Spirit, as the Advocate, acts as the Church’s defender, counsellor, and guide for the Church. Jesus taught His disciples that loving Him means obeying His commandments. The Holy Spirit continues to teach and remind the Church of these truths. Jesus gave the Apostles the authority to declare doctrines. Today, bishops, as the successors of the Apostles, carry on this authority, continuing to be led by the Holy Spirit. We show our love for Jesus by keeping the Church’s commandments, trusting in Jesus’ promise that the gates of hell will not be able to stand against it (Matt 16:18).

Reflections

Another person reads this section, which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

The Holy Spirit is the agent of unity in diversity within the Church. The Spirit empowered the Apostles to preach to all nations and draw them into communion. This unity is the fruit of evangelisation, for Christ desires that we make Him known to all peoples. Through evangelisation, we strive to bring humanity into right union with God our Father through His Church. Thus, it is crucial for our Church to be united in a world often marked by division.

The Holy Spirit sustains this unity by bringing believers together through both the complementarity of our unique gifts and the common faith we share. The Holy Spirit gives diverse gifts to foster interdependence among Christians. We rely on each other to fulfil the Church's mission. United under the Spirit's guidance, diverse gifts draw believers into a deep communion as they work together to proclaim Christ.

The Holy Spirit also establishes unity of faith through the bishops, who safeguard the Deposit of Faith handed down by the Apostles. As Jesus warns in the Gospel reading, those who do not love Him do not keep His word. Therefore, by staying faithful to the deposit of faith, we stay united in our belief and celebrate the same Sacraments with Catholics worldwide.

Finally, it is through the Sacraments that we receive the grace to fulfil St. Paul's words in the 2nd Reading. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we become children of God and coheirs with Christ. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are freed from sin. Most importantly, it is through the Sacrament of the Eucharist that we receive Jesus's as our spiritual food for our earthly journey. The Holy Spirit works actively in all the Sacraments. He empowers us to share Jesus' sufferings and ultimately, His glory.

In communion with the Spirit, we build a Church that is a sign of unity to the world, fulfilling our calling to draw all people to God our Father. Therefore, let us pray, "Come, Holy Spirit!"

Sharing Questions:

This section is divided into Personal and Group Contextual sharing. The latter is meant to prompt sharing based on the specific context, i.e. Small Christian Communities, Ministry or Family. Allow time to reflect on these questions and time for everyone to respond.

Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

Everyone to reflect silently on the below question(s). Then, you may wish to share your reflections if you are in a group.

We talk about what struck you in the passages of scripture and how you can share the Word of God with others.

- What experiences have you had with the Holy Spirit?
- What gifts have you received from the Holy Spirit, and how have you used them?

Group Contextual Sharing Questions

You may wish to reflect on one of the following questions according to your context. We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture and how we can share the Word of God as a community / ministry / family.

FOR SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

- How have the diverse gifts within the community been encouraged to blossom?
- In which areas of community life have the gifts of the Holy Spirit been used?

FOR MINISTRY

- How often does the ministry turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance in its work?
- What might prevent us from turning to the Holy Spirit more regularly, and how can we make seeking His guidance a consistent part of our lives?

FOR FAMILY

- What opportunities can we create to help each other speak about the Holy Spirit?
- How often does the family turn to the Holy Spirit in the ordinary moments of our lives?

Doing Your Bit

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

Host a gathering to celebrate the joy of Pentecost with your friends and the lapsed Catholics.

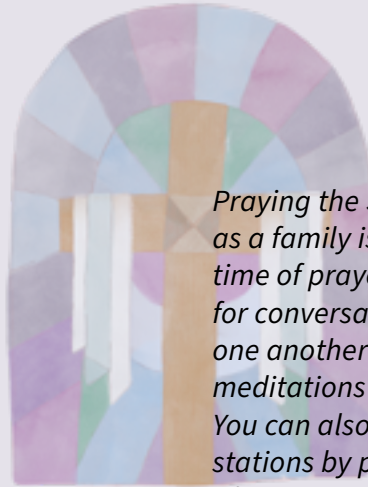
Closing Prayer

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

Father,

thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit. We thank You for bringing life and unity to the Church and community through the Holy Spirit. Thank You for Your constant, gentle promptings and for continuing to empower and guide us. Through the Holy Spirit, we know that You will reveal the charisms in our lives. May we reflect Your light brightly, offering hope to a world in need.

Amen.



Praying the Stations of the Cross as a family is a simple quiet time of prayer or an opportunity for conversation, sharing one another's thoughts and meditations about each station. You can also prepare your own stations by printing out pictures of each station and getting the younger children to colour them.

Stations of THE CROSS *for the Family*

Alternatively, if you have older children, show them paintings based on the different stations – this is an opportunity for them to appreciate liturgical art as well as develop their ability to reflect.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

take me along that holy way you once took to your death. Take my mind, my memory, above all my reluctant heart, and let me see what once you did for love of me and all the world.

Amen.

The First Station

Jesus is Condemned to Death

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Jesus is brought to stand in front of Pontius Pilate, the judge. He is innocent but Pontius Pilate condemns him anyway and sentences him to death.

ALL: Jesus, it is really our bad thoughts, mean words and angry actions that you are being punished for. We are praying the Stations of the Cross to tell you that we are sorry for all our sins.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Second Station

Jesus Takes His Cross

ALL: We adore you, O Christ

and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Jesus has been beaten by the soldiers. He has been laughed at and spat upon. Now he must pick up the heavy cross and carry it while the crowd yells. He is so tired and sad but no one cares.

ALL: We care that you are tired, Jesus. We are sorry that you are sad. We would like to help you carry your cross with our prayers.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Third Station

Jesus Falls The First Time

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: The cross is too

heavy. It is so heavy that Jesus falls down under its weight. The blood from the crown of thorns is running into his eyes and his back aches from the scourging. People are still screaming and throwing things at him. His heart must be as heavy as the cross he carries.

ALL: Jesus, it is our sins that make your cross so heavy. We are sorry. We love you and we try to be good for you with our prayers and with our lives.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fourth Station Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Suddenly, Jesus sees his mother. She is

standing at the side of the road surrounded by the crowd. Her eyes fill with tears when she sees Jesus. She wants to help him but she cannot. Both their hearts ache at the other's pain.

ALL: Jesus, you and your Blessed Mother help us whenever we ask. Our hearts ache too with the pain of the Stations of the Cross. We promise to pray to you every day and we ask Mother Mary to pray for us.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fifth Station Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus Carry the Cross

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: The soldiers are in a hurry. They grab Simon of Cyrene out of the crowd to carry the cross and make

Jesus go faster. Jesus was grateful to Simon for his help.

ALL: Simon did not know he was blessed when he was carrying your cross-- he only felt how heavy it was. Praying the Stations of the Cross will help us to remember that carrying our crosses help you too.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Sixth Station

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Jesus' face is covered with sweat, blood and dust. It is itchy and uncomfortable. In pity, Veronica runs out to the road to wipe the dirt from Jesus' face. This small act of kindness is all she can do to help him.

ALL: Jesus, we want to see and touch your face, shining in glory in Heaven. We know that our small acts of kindness and our prayers help us grow closer to you and your Father in Heaven.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Seventh Station

Jesus Falls the Second Time

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: The road is so long and the cross is so heavy. Exhausted, Jesus falls down again. The soldiers yell at him and whip him to make him get up. Don't they know that they are hurting him more?

ALL: Jesus knows that he is suffering for the sins of the world. He gets up and keeps walking.

Jesus, sometimes we get tired, discouraged and impatient with the world. When we fail and fall into sin, it hurts you more. We are sorry and we ask you to help us be as patient and brave as you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Eighth Station **Jesus Speaks to Women of Jerusalem**

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Next, Jesus meets some of the women he taught. They are crying. They are crying for Jesus, and for their own loss -- what will they do without Jesus? Jesus tells them not to weep for Him, but for all the sinners of the world.

ALL: Jesus, you told the

women of Jerusalem to weep for us. Even in your pain, you remembered us. Thank you. We will pray for sinners too.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Ninth Station **Jesus Falls the Third Time**

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Jesus reaches the last hill before Calvary. He looks up to see how far he has to go. When he sees the hill where he knows he is going to die, his strength leaves him and he falls to the ground. There is still more pain, still more sorrow to endure. But Jesus loves us, so he keeps going.

ALL: Jesus, you kept going even though you were tired,

scared and sad. You loved us then, and you love us now. We offer our prayers to tell you that we love you, and want to comfort you in your great sacrifice.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

bleeding, roughly treated by the guards and mocked by the crowds, you were and are still our King. We ask you to remember us in your Kingdom.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Tenth Station

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: The crowd has followed Jesus and the soldiers to the top of Calvary hill. Now they laugh as the guards pull off his clothes - his robe was stuck to the blood on his back. The guards push and shove Jesus. They do not care who he is, they only see that he is an object of scorn.

ALL: Jesus, even wounded,

The Eleventh Station

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Is this the worst? The feet that carried the message of God's Love and the hands that healed are pierced with nails as Jesus is nailed to the cross. More wounds, more pain and more humiliation for Jesus.

ALL: Jesus, they tried to stop your hands and feet from doing your Father's work by nailing you to a

cross. You endured the pain of it for us, as you gave your whole life for us. We thank you and we love you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

life that your death made possible. Speak lovingly to us when we come before you and make us worthy of that new life in you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Twelfth Station Jesus Dies upon the Cross

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: The sword that Simeon prophesied has pierced Mary's heart. The hopes of the Apostles are crushed. The veil of the Temple, symbol of the old covenant of God's Love, is torn in two as Jesus' death opens a New Covenant with God our Father.

ALL: Jesus, you spoke lovingly to everyone gathered at the foot of your cross. You knew the new

The Thirteenth Station Jesus is taken from the Cross

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Now, all that is left is to take Jesus' body down from the cross. All the gentleness, reverence and love denied through this terrible day is possible now. Mary and the Apostles wonder...is it too late? Is it over?

ALL: Jesus, with our prayers, we join in taking your body down from the cross. We touch you; take

the nails out, wash your wounds, take off the crown of thorns, with love and sorrow. We grieve with Mary, and want to comfort her.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fourteenth Station
**Jesus is Laid
in the Sepulcher**

ALL: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LEADER: Even in this time of sorrow, there is help. Joseph of Arimathea arranges for Jesus to be buried in a nearby tomb. His body is wrapped in clothes and sealed away. Everyone walks away, weeping. Finally, all is quiet, peaceful even.

ALL: Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

LEADER: Three days later, something wonderful happens-Jesus rises from the dead! The Light of the Resurrection cracks open the tomb-Jesus' Light is stronger than death.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

we sometimes think that you are gone, that it is all over, that we will never be happy or good again. Your resurrection shows us that you will never leave us. Help us always to try to follow you in our lives and through our prayers. We make this prayer in your most holy name.

Amen



Celebrating SUNDAYS of Easter

20 APRIL 2025
EASTER SUNDAY

Together with family and friends, let us be ready and watchful as we celebrate Easter as one Body in Christ.

27 APRIL 2025
2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER
DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Gather your family, ministry, or community members and pray the Divine Mercy chaplet. We lift up in this prayer those who are most in need of His mercy.

4 MAY 2025
3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

We celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker on 1 May. We implore his intercession and let us honour the men in our lives. May St. Joseph become our role model in our family life and work.

11 MAY 2025
4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER
GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY
& MOTHER'S DAY

Pray for a priest in the archdiocese for 365 days starting from this Vocation Sunday.

18 MAY 2025
5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Offer a spiritual bouquet to our Blessed Virgin Mary by praying a rosary. We pray especially for mothers and those who are trying to conceive.

25 MAY 2025
6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Begin a nine-day (from 30 May to 7 June 2025) novena prayer to the Holy Spirit on the day after Ascension Thursday.

1 JUNE 2025
7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER
WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL
COMMUNICATIONS

Read the Holy Father Francis' message for the 59th World Communications Day: Share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts

8 JUNE 2025
PENTECOST SUNDAY

Prepare a music playlist for Pentecost and play it in the background as you go about your week. Alternatively, you can listen to CatholicSG Radio. Sing along whenever the Holy Spirit moves you.

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