

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Ever-present God, you make yourself known in the breaking of the bread and in the bonds of community. Reveal yourself to us in the faces of all we meet. Strengthened by your body and blood, let us boldly live out your good news. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

As we know you in the breaking of the bread, we know you in the grains of the field and the flowing waters. Care for the earth you lovingly create. Strengthen those who safeguard threatened land and water. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are the authority to whom we dedicate our lives (like Toyohiko Kagawa, whom we commemorate today). Help us keep the needs of those most vulnerable at the forefront of our community. Move us to care for any who are disregarded or oppressed. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 134. Tuesday (Mark, Evangelist) Mark 1:1-15. Wednesday Exodus 24:1-11. Thursday Psalm 23. Friday 1 Peter 2:13-17. Saturday (commemoration of Catherine of Siena, theologian, died 1380) Ezekiel 34:1-16. Fourth Sunday of Easter Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10.

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Mothering God, you feed and comfort those who hunger. Open the hearts of those who hoard resources and lead them to share your abundance. We pray for anyone hungering for your comforting presence this day (especially). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You pour out your love on those who are oppressed. Support and comfort anyone who is marginalized for their gender or sexuality and those whose stories are not believed. Form this community to listen faithfully and speak honestly in our ministry together. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember with thanksgiving all your beloved saints (especially). As you have raised them to eternal life, abide with us in your promise of resurrection. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.



Celebrate

Third Sunday of Easter April 23, 2023

Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

Prayer of the Day

O God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ.

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]:

³⁶"Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" ³⁸Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ

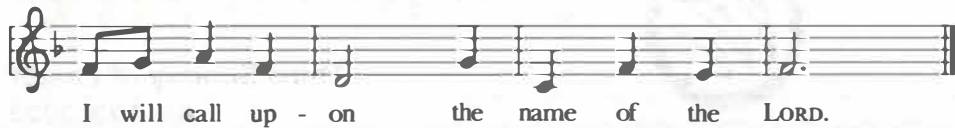
so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." ⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

1 Peter 2:13-23

In a strong word, Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our former faith and hope are no longer on earth things at all.

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverence for during the time of your exile. You know that it was demanded before the foundation you were ransomed from the false way

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I love the LORD, who has¹ heard my voice,
and listened to my¹ supplication,
2for the LORD has given¹ ear to me
whenev-¹er I called.

3The cords of death entangled me;
the anguish of the grave¹ came upon me;
I came to¹ grief and sorrow.

4Then I called upon the name¹ of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray you,¹ save my life.” **R**

12How shall I re-¹pay the LORD
for all the good things God has¹ done for me?

13I will lift the cup¹ of salvation
and call on the name¹ of the LORD.

14I will fulfill my vows¹ to the LORD
in the presence of¹ all God’s people.

15Precious in your¹ sight, O LORD,
is the death¹ of your servants.

16O LORD, truly I¹ am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me¹ from my bonds.

17I will offer you the sacrifice¹ of thanksgiving
and call upon the name¹ of the LORD. **R**

18I will fulfill my vows¹ to the LORD
in the presence of¹ all God’s people,

19in the courts of¹ the LORD’s house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. ¹Hallelujah! **R**

Second Reading

1 Peter 1:17-23

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways

inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation

continued

of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. ²¹Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

²²Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Gospel

Luke 24:13-35

The colorful story of Jesus’ appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

Now on that same day two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” ¹⁹He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as

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

²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.