

ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF EASTER FOOD

Adapted for a Lay Person from the *Book of Blessings*, #1701-1719

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and reply:

ALL: Amen.

Leader: For our sake Christ became obedient, accepting even death, death on a cross. Therefore God raised him on high and gave him the name above all other names. Blessed be God for ever.

ALL: Blessed be God for ever.

Leader: Throughout Lent we have been preparing for the resurrection of the Lord by prayer, almsgiving and fasting. Our Lenten fasting is a reminder of our hunger and thirst for holiness which is satisfied only by Christ who feeds and nourishes us by his word and sacraments. When we gather at our first meal of Easter may this food be a sign for us of that heavenly banquet to which the Lord call us, and as we prepare to celebrate Easter, let us be mindful of all those in our country and throughout the world who are suffering from the coronavirus pandemic.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

One of those present or the leader then reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Reader: Let us listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah: (Isaiah 55:1-11)

Thus says the LORD: All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk! Why spend your money for what is not bread, your wages for what fails to satisfy? Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare. Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life. I will renew with you the everlasting covenant, the benefits assured to David. As I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of nations, so shall you summon a nation you knew not, and nations that knew you not shall run to you, because of the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.

For just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; my word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: The Son of God who invites us to the Paschal feast stands ready to help.
Let us call upon him in our need.

Reader: That Easter may find us cleansed of sin and ready to live anew our Christian faith, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the bread we share may be a reminder of the bread of life we share in the eucharist, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we may be ready to give from our table to those who hunger and thirst, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all those suffering from the coronavirus may be restored to health, and that all those who care for them, especially hospital workers, may be kept safe from the disease, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That quarantines and other preventative measures may help prevent the spread of the coronavirus and that a cure may be found soon, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we may one day enjoy the banquet of the Lord in the heavenly kingdom, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Christ taught us to pray for our daily bread and so we dare to say:

ALL: Our Father...

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Said with hands joined.

Leader: God of glory, the eyes of all turn to you as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. Bless us and this food of our first Easter meal. May we who gather at the Lord's table continue to celebrate the joy of his resurrection and be admitted finally to his heavenly banquet. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the Sign of the Cross saying:

Leader: May Christ nourish us and strengthen us in faith and love now and for ever.

ALL: Amen.