

For our sake Christ was obedient,
accepting even death, death on a cross.
Therefore, God raised him on high
and gave him the name above all other names.

BLESSING OF EASTER FOODS

After the fasting of Lent, and the Easter Fast from Thursday night until the Vigil, the foods of Easter have a special place. The following blessing prayer may be used with the table prayer for Easter before the meal that breaks the Easter Fast.

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.
R. Amen.

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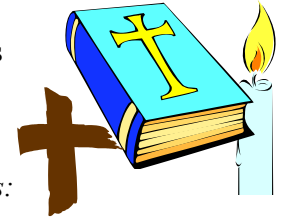


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BLESSING OF THE SEASON AND OF A PLACE OF PRAYER

From Ash Wednesday to Pentecost, a place in the home is set aside for prayer. The family's Bible is placed there with a cross and a candle, which is lighted when all have gathered.



All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins:

The Lord calls us to days of penance and mercy. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All respond:

Now and for ever.

The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing:

Remember that we are but dust and ashes, yet by God's grace we have died in baptism and have put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Each year we keep these Forty days with prayer and penance and the practice of charity so that we may come to the Easter festival ready to renew once more the life-giving commitment of our baptism. Through this Lent we shall gather here to read the Scriptures and ponder them and to intercede with God for the needs of the world.

Then the Scripture is read:

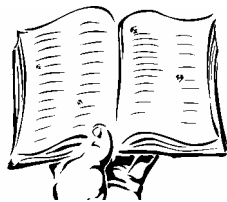
Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Is this the manner of fasting I wish,
of keeping a day of penance:
That a man bow his head like a reed,
and lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Do you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?
This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke;
Setting free the oppressed,
breaking every yoke;
Sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the homeless;
Clothing the naked when you see them,
and not turning your back on your own.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your wound shall quickly be healed;
Your vindication shall go before you,
and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
then you shall call, and the LORD will answer,
you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am!
If you remove from your midst oppression,
false accusation and malicious speech;
If you bestow your bread on the hungry
and satisfy the afflicted;
Then light shall rise for you in the darkness,
and the gloom shall become for you like midday.
Isaiah 58:5-10

*(The family's Bible may be used for an alternate reading such as
Deuteronomy 30:15-20.)*



The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Then the leader prays:

We thank you, O Lord,
who give us this food to eat.
We pray that you may also provide food
for those who are hungry
and gather us all together
at the table of your heavenly kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

AFTER THE MEAL

The leader says:

No one lives on bread alone.

All respond:

But on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

AT TABLE DURING THE EASTER TRIDUUM



From Holy Thursday evening until the great Vigil in the night between Holy Saturday and Easter, the catechumens and the baptized fast and pray and await the celebration of baptism. Any meals are very simple. "Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection with uplifted and welcoming heart" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 110). The same prayer is used before and after meals.

OR:

B Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Wash yourselves clean!
Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes;
cease doing evil; learn to do good.
Make justice your aim: redress the wronged,
hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.

OR:

C Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians:

[God says:]

“In an acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.”

Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. . . . In everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, through much endurance, in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, vigils, fasts. . . . We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians 6:2, 4-5, 8-10

The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

The leader invites:

Lift up your hearts.

All respond.

*After a time of silence, members of the household offer prayers of intercession for the world, the Church and its catechumen, and themselves.
The leader then invites:*

Let us kneel and ask God's blessing on us and on this holy season.

After a short silence, the leader continues.

Merciful God,
you called us forth from the dust of the earth;
you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism.
Look upon us as we enter these Forty Days bearing the mark of ashes,
and bless our journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth.
May our fasting be hunger for justice;
our alms, a making of peace;
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.
all that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus,
for his cross you proclaim your love
for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

Each person then kisses the cross.

All then stand, and the leader concludes:

All through these days let us be quiet and prayerful, pondering the mysteries told in the Scriptures. In the cross, we have been claimed for Christ. In Christ, we make the prayer that fills these days of mercy:

Our Father. . .

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.
Amen.

The leader says:

Let us bless the Lord.

All respond, making the sign of the cross:

Thanks be to God.

*The blessing may conclude with an appropriate song.
The following may be sung to a tune such as "The Old
Hundreth" (Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow)
or "Erhalt Uns Herr" (The Glory of These Forty Days.)*



Again we keep this solemn fast,
A gift of faith from ages past,
This Lent which binds us lovingly
To faith and hope and charity.

More sparing therefore, let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Our sleep, our laughter, ev'ry sense;
Learn peach through holy penitence.
Gregory the Great

**AT TABLE
DURING THE
WEEKDAYS OF
LENT**

*Begin after a short silence.
The leader alternates with the others who are present.*

V. I was hungry.
R. And you gave me food.

V. I was thirsty.
R. And you gave me drink.

V. I was a stranger.
R. And you welcomed me.

V. I was naked.
R. And you clothed me.

V. I was ill.
R. And you comforted me.

V. I was in jail.
R. And you came to see me.

The leader prays:



Lord Jesus Christ,
may our lenten fasting turn us
toward all our brothers and sisters who are in need.
Bless this table, our good food, and ourselves.
Send us through Lent with good cheer,
and bring us to the fullness of your passover.
R. Amen.

Another form of lenten prayer begins with the sign of the cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Someone at the table reads one of the following scriptures
or the text assigned to the liturgy of the day.*

A Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the Romans:

I urge you, therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2