

Palm Sunday ‘Home Procession’

We offer this Blessing of Homes liturgy as a way to prepare yourself and your home for the solemn and joyous celebrations of Holy Week.

The Blessing begins with the preparation of a Sacred Space or Home Altar.

Today, we invite you to create a sacred space at home. We recommend inviting the entire family to participate in choosing the location. Place the following items on a table in the sacred space:

- A cloth. Color doesn't matter, but consider either purple for Lent or red for Holy Week, and then switching to white for the Easter Vigil.
- A candle. This candle can be lit during prayer to remind us of God's abiding presence.
- A cross. If you don't have a physical one, consider printing or coloring a picture of a cross.
- An empty bowl. Water serves as a reminder of our baptism and the bowl can be filled beginning at the Easter Vigil.
- A Bible and/or Book of Common Prayer. If you don't have one, consider printing favorite Scripture passages from the Internet or hand writing them.
- Any other icon or religious art which inspires you.
- Some branches or cuttings from your yard or garden, to symbolize the palms traditionally used in church.
- Other things you may want nearby: a source of music, paper and writing or drawing tools, comfortable seating, a cozy blanket, pictures of your loved ones.
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Once the space has been assembled, light the candle and pray together as a family, using the following rite:

One: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: **The maker of heaven and earth.**

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Let us pray. Almighty God, who sanctifies the places dedicated to your name, pour out your grace on this house of prayer, that all who here call on your name may experience your grace; through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

If you wish, you can then take the branches or cuttings and make a procession through the home, using the following prayers traditional to the celebration and blessing of a home, as adapted from the Book of Occasional Services. Consider rotating among the family who reads the prayers in each area.

At the entrance

Sovereign Lord, you are Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: Send your servants out from this place on many errands, be our constant companion in the way, and welcome us upon our return, so our coming and going they may be sustained by your presence, O Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a study or library

O God of truth, eternal ground of all that is, beyond space and time yet within them, transcending all things yet pervading them: Show yourself to us, for we go about in ignorance; reveal yourself to us, for it is you that we seek, O Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

In a bedroom

O God of life and love, the true rest of your people: Sanctify to your servants their hours of rest and refreshment, their sleeping and their waking; and grant that, strengthened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we may rise to serve you all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a child's room

Heavenly Father, your Son our Savior took young children into his arms and blessed them: Embrace the child whose room this is with your unfailing love, protect him/her from all danger, and bring him/her in safety to each new day, until he/she greets with joy the great day of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a guest room

Loving God, you have taught us to welcome one another as Christ welcomed us: Bless those who from time to time share the hospitality of this home. May your

fatherly care shield them, the love of your dear Son preserve them from all evil, and the guidance of your Holy Spirit keep them in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a bathroom

O holy God, in the incarnation of your Son our Lord you made our flesh the instrument of your self-revelation: Give us a proper respect and reverence for our mortal bodies, keeping them clean and fair, whole and sound; that, glorifying you in them, we may confidently await our being clothed upon with spiritual bodies, when that which is mortal is transformed by life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In an office or workshop

O God, your blessed Son worked with his hands in the carpenter shop in Nazareth: Be present, we pray, with those who work in this place, that, laboring as workers together with you, we may share the joy of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a kitchen

O Lord our God, you supply every need of ours according to your great riches: Bless the hands that work in this place, and give us grateful hearts for daily bread; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a dining room

Blessed are you, O Lord, King of the universe, for you give us food and drink to sustain our lives: Make us grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In a living room or family room

Give your blessing, Lord, to all who share this room, that we may be knit together in fellowship here on earth, and joined with the communion of your saints in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Finally, return to your sacred space and recite this final prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love [to each other and] to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us; and preserve us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and for ever. *Amen.*

We strongly encourage you to use the sacred space for individual and/or family prayer throughout the week. You may use a Book of Common Prayer or the very easy-to-use website https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/daily_prayer.php.

Some portions are adapted from the work of the Rev. Dr. James Farwell and Dr. Lisa Kimball at Virginia Theological Seminary, with permission of the authors.

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