



Communion at Home

**Sharing the Bread and Wine
when we can't meet together**

5th Sunday of Lent

Introduction

These are unusual times. With our church buildings closed and restricted to staying at home we are faced with the questions of how we can still worship 'together' and how we can continue to practice our faith in the way that we have been used to.

Holy Communion is a supremely corporate act, as we recite familiar words together, as we watch bread being broken and wine being poured, and as we approach the communion rail together to share them out. With our ability to do this together suddenly removed we may feel disorientated.

Unsurprisingly, Canon Law didn't anticipate that priests would ever have the need to broadcast a service of Communion from home over the internet, so I'm grateful to Bishop Viv for granting temporary permission to clergy to celebrate communion in this way.

You will need a small piece of bread and a small measure of wine, or similar. We frequently use port or sherry in church as it is fortified and keeps longer once opened, but you could use blackcurrant squash or grape juice or something else. If you usually receive communion in church, please join in. If you don't, perhaps you could eat a grape as a symbol of your participation.

Rev Steve Wilkinson
27th March 2020

Gathering

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Words of introduction

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:
The first commandment is this:
'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'
There is no other commandment greater than these.
On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

God shows his love for us in that,
while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Let us then show our love for him
by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

The president says

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Collect – 5th Sunday of Lent

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings

After each reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Ezekiel 37:1-14, reading from 'The Message'

Breath of Life

37 ¹⁻² GOD grabbed me. GOD's Spirit took me up and set me down in the middle of an open plain strewn with bones. He led me around and among them—a lot of bones! There were bones all over the plain—dry bones, bleached by the sun.

³ He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

I said, “Master GOD, only you know that.”

⁴ He said to me, “Prophecy over these bones: ‘Dry bones, listen to the Message of GOD!’”

⁵⁻⁶ GOD, the Master, told the dry bones, “Watch this: I'm bringing the breath of life to you and you'll come to life. I'll attach sinews to you, put meat on your bones, cover you with skin, and breathe life into you. You'll come alive and you'll realize that I am GOD!”

⁷⁻⁸ I prophesied just as I'd been commanded. As I prophesied, there was a sound and, oh, rustling! The bones moved and came together, bone to bone. I kept watching. Sinews formed, then muscles on the bones, then skin stretched over them. But they had no breath in them.

⁹ He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath. Prophecy, son of man. Tell the breath, ‘GOD, the Master, says, Come from the four winds. Come, breath. Breathe on these slain bodies. Breathe life!’”

¹⁰ So I prophesied, just as he commanded me. The breath entered them and they came alive! They stood up on their feet, a huge army.

¹¹ Then God said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Listen to what they're saying: ‘Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone, there's nothing left of us.’”

¹²⁻¹⁴“Therefore, prophesy. Tell them, ‘GOD, the Master, says: I’ll dig up your graves and bring you out alive—O my people! Then I’ll take you straight to the land of Israel. When I dig up graves and bring you out as my people, you’ll realize that I am GOD. I’ll breathe my life into you and you’ll live. Then I’ll lead you straight back to your land and you’ll realize that I am GOD. I’ve said it and I’ll do it. GOD’s Decree.’”

Gospel:

John 11:1-7, 17-26, 38-45 reading from The Message

The Death of Lazarus

I I ¹⁻³ A man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. This was the same Mary who massaged the Lord’s feet with aromatic oils and then wiped them with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Master, the one you love so very much is sick.”

⁴ When Jesus got the message, he said, “This sickness is not fatal. It will become an occasion to show God’s glory by glorifying God’s Son.”

⁵⁻⁷ Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, but oddly, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed on where he was for two more days. After the two days, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.”

[...]

¹⁷⁻²⁰ When Jesus finally got there, he found Lazarus already four days dead. Bethany was near Jerusalem, only a couple of miles away, and many of the Jews were visiting Martha and Mary, sympathizing with them over their brother. Martha heard Jesus was coming and went out to meet him. Mary remained in the house.

²¹⁻²² Martha said, “Master, if you’d been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. Even now, I know that whatever you ask God he will give you.”

²³ Jesus said, “Your brother will be raised up.”

²⁴ Martha replied, “I know that he will be raised up in the resurrection at the end of time.”

²⁵⁻²⁶ “You don’t have to wait for the End. I am, right now, Resurrection and Life. The one who believes in me, even though he or she dies, will live. And

everyone who lives believing in me does not ultimately die at all. Do you believe this?"

²⁷ "Yes, Master. All along I have believed that you are the Messiah, the Son of God who comes into the world."

[...]

³⁸⁻³⁹ Then Jesus, the anger again welling up within him, arrived at the tomb. It was a simple cave in the hillside with a slab of stone laid against it. Jesus said, "Remove the stone."

The sister of the dead man, Martha, said, "Master, by this time there's a stench. He's been dead four days!"

⁴⁰ Jesus looked her in the eye. "Didn't I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

⁴¹⁻⁴² Then, to the others, "Go ahead, take away the stone."

They removed the stone. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, "Father, I'm grateful that you have listened to me. I know you always do listen, but on account of this crowd standing here I've spoken so that they might believe that you sent me."

⁴³⁻⁴⁴ Then he shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And he came out, a cadaver, wrapped from head to toe, and with a kerchief over his face.

Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him loose."

Reflection

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

This response may be used between the petitions

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

And at the end

Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Peace

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy,
that you may be kept safe and blameless
in spirit, soul and body,
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

[The gifts of the people are gathered and presented]

*The table is prepared. Bread and wine are placed upon it.
The Gifts are presented and the Offertory Prayer is said.*

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you (or)
and also with you.

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
For as the time of his passion and resurrection draws near
the whole world is called to acknowledge his hidden majesty.
The power of the life-giving cross
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world
and the triumph of Christ crucified.
He is the victim who dies no more,
the Lamb once slain, who lives for ever,
our advocate in heaven to plead our cause,
exalting us there to join with angels and archangels,
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,

through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,

we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Giving of Communion

**Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean,**

**our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit
even to eat the crumbs from under your table.
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,
and share your bread with sinners.
So cleanse and feed us
with the precious body and blood of your Son,
that he may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,
may sit and eat in your kingdom.
Amen.**

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

Take your bread and wine and share between those present using the following words:

The body of Christ, broken for you
Amen.

The blood of Christ, shed for you
Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters
we do also for you:
give us the will to be the servant of others
as you were the servant of all,

and gave up your life and died for us,
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

**Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

Christ crucified draw you to himself,
to find in him a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sins forgiven;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

If you have been watching this service live and you are on a smartphone or tablet or you have a webcam on your computer you are invited to join us for Virtual Coffee and Chat via Zoom video conferencing starting at 11.15am or thereabouts

*In an internet browser:
Go to www.zoom.us and click 'Join Meeting'
Meeting ID: 221 716 345
Password: 022345*



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