

Our Household, the Church, on a Path of Unity

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 3rd 2020

WE GATHER AS PRAYER:

Women: Creator (Father) we gather in our (*home, apartment, on the internet, smart-phones,...*) to thank you

Men: and to hear the stories of your love for all people in the past,

Women: and to inform one another of your action within our lives today.

All: God our Creator, and Father,

because you are always good, all the time, we thank you for walking always with us to open our eyes and to light your fire in our hearts.

Men: By the Word of the Gospel, taught to us by Jesus,

All: you have invited people, **Women:** of every language, **Men:** tribe and nation.

Women: You fill the gathering of believers with life by the power of your Spirit.

Men: You are always gathering the whole human race to be one as you are with Jesus and with the Holy Spirit.

All: That is our call and gift in You, to be one people from many places.

Women: Giving us life in families and households

Men: you call us to be hope for one another.

All: You fill us with the hope of being one day with you where you live.

Men: You invite us to be your light and to shine brightly

Women: and to be signs of your faithful presence

All: in our homes and families, in our schools and work, in our parish and neighborhood.

This unity you promised would last for eternity in Christ Jesus our Brother.

WE READ, LISTEN and SHARE:

Read the Gospel reading from your bible, or from an online source such as usccb.org (on the home page, you will see a calendar on the upper right. Simply click on the date and the readings for the day will pop up. The 1st and 2nd readings are there as well if you would like to read and share them as well)

Gospel: John 10:1-10 *After reading the Gospel (and perhaps the other readings, please use the following focus questions to open the Scripture up for your self and others with whom you might be sharing this Agape with.)*

- ✓ *What is your experience of sheep and shepherds? (actual experience, in the movies, from a book, “nothing”)? How can we understand the story if we do not have the experience?*
- ✓ *In what way can you rework the role of “shepherd” in the story to fit your own experience?*
- ✓ *Among the people you know, whose “voice” in your life do you trust the most? What gives you that confidence in the person? Have you ever gone against this person’s advice? What happened?*
- ✓ *Who in your life relies on you to give them good advice, or who seeks you out to help make a decision or confront a doubt? ...to handle a mistake? ...a relationship? Has this person ever decided to go against what you advised? How did that feel? How is it turning out?*
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WE BREAK BREAD IN UNITY AND HOPE:

Men: Jesus, when you walked with the disciples and so many who came to you for hope and acceptance, **Women:** you often sat with them at their tables, picked ears of grain walking through a field, sat at the seashore and on hillsides with big crowds and you ate with them.

All: Come now, Jesus, be our guest. We welcome you to our table as

Women: we light this candle (*light a candle on the table*)

All: because you are the light in our home (*household/family/friends/etc.*).

All: As we have shared your story and our story,

Men: we break this bread with one another,

All: and know that we are one in you, and you in us.

(pass some form of bread with each person breaking off a piece. After everyone has a piece of the bread, pray together [repeating after a leader if there are small children present])

All: We eat this Bread aware of our longing for you. Jesus, nurture us and help us be your life for one another as well as for all who suffer loss and lonely distance from the people they love. (*Then eat the bread together. When finished, then continue the following.*)

Men: We know the story of when you told Moses to give water to the people in the desert.

Women: We know the story of your calming the thirst of the woman at the well.

Pass a pitcher of water, juice, etc. to each person. After everyone has poured their glass/cup, pray together [repeating after a leader if there are small children present]:

All: Heal our thirst for Eucharist as we share this drink.

Heal our thirst for health and community as we are aware of others

- who sacrifice to serve those who are ill
- who sacrifice their livelihood for the sake of all of us
- who are alone and isolated
- (*for whom else to pray?*)

When the petitions are finished, everyone drink from their glass/cup. Pause a moment.

Men: Gentle and Loving Shepherd,

Women: as you open our eyes to (*one another, our family, group of friends, colleagues*)

All: as the church which forms us and heals us.

Allow us to grow in faith together

And to renew our parish community by the light of the Gospel.

Men: Strengthen our commitment

Women: and willingness to be one with the others

All: who form our community.

May God give us Peace!

May we live in Peace!

May we become Peace!