



CELEBRATING THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM IN COMMUNITY

Operational Team InS
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LITURGIES AND DEVOTIONALS

Paschal Triduum 2026



Celebrating the Paschal Triduum in Community

Lent is a period of 40 days that invites us to pause and reflect on the profound meaning of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a time of inner preparation for Easter, the most important celebration of the Christian liturgical year.

Throughout Lent, we are called to live out the love of Jesus with greater intensity and faithfulness. Holy Week, which begins with Palm Sunday and culminates in the Paschal Triduum, represents the most intense moment of this spiritual journey.

The Paschal Triduum stands at the heart of Holy Week and celebrates the three most significant days of the Christian faith: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, culminating in the Easter Vigil. In this Vigil, we celebrate the victory of life over death and the living presence of Christ among us¹. On Easter Sunday, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is celebrated—the event upon which the Christian faith is

¹ Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil. *Celebrating the Paschal Triduum*. Available at:

<https://www.luteranos.com.br/conteudo/celebrando-o-triduo-pascal>.

Accessed on: March 17, 2022.

founded. This resource provides for the celebration of the Easter Vigil on Saturday as the celebration of Christ's resurrection; therefore, no specific liturgy for Easter Sunday is included.

The liturgies proper to this season are rich in signs that seek to engage the whole community in a living experience of the Word of God, celebrated in the Eucharist and expressed through the renewal of our baptismal commitment. Lent leads us to the very heart of the mystery of the Christian faith. For this reason, the Paschal Triduum becomes a special opportunity to renew faith and strengthen communal life.

Since 2020, the InS has been offering a liturgical proposal for the Paschal Triduum, and in 2026 it continues this service by providing resources that help communities celebrate and relive the Easter cycle. This sacred time calls us to a deep re-encounter with new life, hope, and peace offered to us by Christ, strengthening our faith and communion.

The purpose of this material is to accompany and deepen communal spirituality by offering Christian symbols that help us remember life, God's loving presence, hope, and the resurrection. The texts are designed to invite reflection on

the mysteries of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in dialogue with the realities, challenges, and hopes of today's world. Each community may adapt the prayers and elements according to its own context, as well as choose to celebrate only one of the liturgies presented in this booklet. What is essential is to receive the invitation of the Holy Spirit to pause, quiet the heart, enter into dialogue with God, and celebrate the feast of life—because Christ is risen!

The information about the Triduum and the inspirations for the liturgies are based on the book *Tríduo Pascal* by Sissi Geirg, published by the Liturgical Resources Center of Faculdades EST (GEORG, Sissi. *Tríduo Pascal*. 2nd ed. São Leopoldo: Faculdades EST, 2010).

With a deep spirit of communion, we celebrate the Paschal Triduum together. May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen us on this journey of faith, enabling us to live in community the richness of the mystery of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. May God's blessing be present in every community, and may this holy time be a source of grace, renewal, and hope for all!

InS Operational Team

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General Instructions

The celebration of the Paschal Triduum brings together rites that have developed over the centuries and may be understood as one continuous liturgy, beginning on the evening of Maundy Thursday and concluding with the Easter Vigil. For this reason, the celebrations of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday end without a blessing or dismissal, as each day requires its own specific liturgy.

The liturgy includes moments that are to be carried out spontaneously. Everything written in parentheses () should not be read aloud; these are only instructions and guidance for specific moments of the celebration. No hymns are suggested, since each community is encouraged to choose in advance those hymns that best fit its own context. For this reason, we recommend that the liturgy be carefully studied beforehand.

Each liturgy includes specific instructions regarding elements that help shape the worship space, as well as guidance on how to use them. We suggest that these instructions be read attentively. If it is not possible to follow them exactly, communities are encouraged to adapt them according to their own context, making the celebration more

meaningful and familiar. It should also be remembered that during the season of Lent, neither the Gloria nor the Alleluia is sung.

We reiterate that the liturgies may be used separately. If a community is not yet prepared to celebrate the entire Triduum, it may choose to celebrate only one of the services—for example, the foot-washing service or the Easter Vigil—according to its structure and local possibilities.

It is very important to have a liturgical team responsible for preparing the service, assigning tasks, and collaborating in this significant celebration. Music is also an integral part of the liturgy; therefore, it is essential to have a group responsible for leading the hymns and liturgical songs.

Maundy Thursday

Celebration of the Foot Washing and the Last Supper

The liturgical color for Maundy Thursday is white, and the theme of the service is God's service to humanity and all creation in the person of Jesus Christ. Two special moments in the liturgy are the foot-washing rite and the Lord's Supper.

Suggested Materials: Bible, cross, candles, flowers or natural greenery, white liturgical vestments, elements for Holy Communion, basins for foot washing, towels, a pitcher or cup for pouring water on feet, a container with clean water, a bucket for discarding used water, hand sanitizer, and some bitter herbs chopped into small pieces.

Preparing the Worship Space: Arrange the space and designate an area with chairs for the foot-washing rite. The number of chairs will depend on the estimated number of participants in the celebration. We suggest placing the chairs in such a way that a low basin for the foot-washing rite is positioned nearby, along with towels, a supply of clean water, and a bucket for collecting the used water. We also recommend selecting a group responsible specifically for the

foot-washing rite. This group should ensure that towels are changed when necessary, that clean water is replenished in the pitchers or containers, and that the used water is poured into the bucket. The same person who washes the feet may also dry them, while another group may attend to the logistical needs mentioned above. At the conclusion of the rite, it is recommended that those involved sanitize their hands using hand sanitizer or an antibacterial solution.

The foot-washing rite is not mandatory; therefore, it is important to inform the congregation at the beginning of the celebration that participation is voluntary. Those who do not feel comfortable participating are nonetheless fully participating in the Maundy Thursday celebration. The liturgical space should also be properly prepared. The altar table should be adorned with white paraments, the Bible, a candle, a cross, the selected natural plant, and the elements for Holy Communion. After arranging the space, take a moment for silent prayer, asking for illumination, and then begin the celebration.

Liturgical Instructions: While the first hymn is sung, before the confession of sins, distribute a piece of the bitter herb to each

person. Be sure that the herbs are thoroughly cleaned, as they will be consumed. During the prayer of confession, instructions will be given for the moment when the herb is to be eaten.

Opening Liturgy

Welcome and Apostolic Greeting: Greetings to all. We gather in the house of God to worship and praise God's holy name. On this special night, we remember that sacred moment when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples, giving himself in love. We are gathered not by our own merit, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. The Word that guides our celebration proclaims: "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). May this proclamation strengthen our faith and encourage us to live in communion and hope.

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn. While the congregation sings, the bitter herb leaves are distributed to those present.)*

Confession of Sins: *(A brief moment of silence, allowing each person to make a personal confession before God.)* Good and compassionate Father, Creator of heaven and earth, we come before you acknowledging our faults and sins. We know that many times we have turned away from the path you have shown us and have not obeyed your will. In our daily walk, we have allowed anger, bitterness, and resentment to take hold of our hearts, and these have been reflected in our words and actions—like the bitterness of these herbs that we now eat. *(Keep a moment of silence as each person eats their bitter herb leaf.)* Because of these feelings, we have failed to love our neighbor as you teach us. Trusting in your mercy, we ask for your forgiveness. We have not always borne faithful witness to the love of Christ. Forgive us, cleanse us, and renew us, so that we may once again walk in your truth. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Absolution: Sisters and brothers, the Lord is compassionate and merciful, “...slow to anger, abounding in love.” (Psalm 103:8). In Christ, God has taken upon himself our bitterness, our anger, and our sins, and offers us new life. In God’s boundless mercy, we are reconciled people, called to live in

the love we have received. By virtue of the Gospel and by the command of Christ, I proclaim to you the grace and forgiveness of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of the Day: Let us pray: Faithful and gracious God, who speaks to your people in every age, we come before you to listen to your Word. Remove from us whatever hardens the heart, distracts the mind, or extinguishes hope. Open our ears and renew our spirit, so that the Word proclaimed today may enlighten our lives, strengthen our faith, and encourage us to follow Christ with faithfulness and love. Grant that, strengthened by your grace, we may receive your Word in faith and put it into practice, bearing witness to the love of Christ in our daily lives. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word and Foot Washing

♪ Hymn ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Psalm Reading: Let us hear the Psalm appointed for this celebration, Psalm 116:1–2, 12–19.

Old Testament Reading: Let us prepare our hearts to listen to how God, in infinite mercy, freed his people from slavery, establishing the Passover as a lasting sign of his love and of the redemption he promises. The text is found in the book of Exodus 12:1–4, 11–14.

Gospel Reading: As we are in the season of Lent, we as Christians do not sing *Alleluia* to receive the words of Christ. I therefore invite all who are able to stand and hear the words of the Gospel according to Matthew 26:36–56.

Sermon: Dear community of faith, on this holy night, after we have prayed, confessed our sins, and shared at the Lord’s table, the Word leads us to the garden of Gethsemane. There, Jesus enters the darkest hour of his journey. This is not a place far removed from our experience of faith; on the contrary, Gethsemane closely resembles our own lives, marked by fear, weariness, and human frailty.

Jesus prays. He prays with an anguished heart—honest, sincere, deeply human. He says, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to death.” How often do we, too, come before God with weary hearts filled with fear? The Son of God does not appear

as a distant hero, but as one who trembles, who suffers, and who entrusts himself to the Father. In this prayer, we recognize something we have also expressed today: our need for God, our inability to sustain ourselves, and our deep longing for mercy.

While Jesus prays, the disciples sleep. They are unable to keep watch even for one hour. What fears, concerns, or routines keep us today from keeping watch with Christ? Here another truth emerges that runs through our prayers of confession: many times we desire to be faithful, but we fail; we want to love, yet we are overcome by weariness, fear, or indifference. Jesus does not ignore this human weakness. He knows it, names it, and nevertheless continues on his way in love.

“Keep awake and pray, that you may not come into the time of trial,” Jesus tells them. From what temptations do we need to be protected today, as individuals and as a community? These words are not a harsh rebuke, but a gracious invitation. To pray is to remain awake before God, to acknowledge our fragility, and to trust in God’s strength. This night reminds us that faith does not consist in never falling, but in returning again and again to the Father who sustains us.

In Gethsemane we also hear the most difficult prayer: “Not my will, but yours be done.” Here the heart of the Gospel is revealed. Jesus does not flee from suffering, does not respond with violence, does not defend himself with the sword. When Peter attempts to do so, Jesus stops him. The way of the kingdom is not built by force, but by self-giving; not by power, but by love offered to the very end. How often do we seek to resolve conflicts with our own weapons? Are we able to trust the way of love, even when it appears fragile?

This scene is deeply connected to the table we have shared. In the Holy Supper we celebrate a Christ who gives himself freely, who breaks the bread knowing he will be betrayed, who offers the cup even while aware of the unfaithfulness of his own. Communion is not a reward for the strong, but nourishment for the weak; not for those who never doubt, but for those who need to be upheld.

When Jesus is arrested, all abandon him and flee. In what situations in our lives does fear paralyze us and draw us away from the path of discipleship? Yet the love of God does not flee from humanity. On the contrary, on this night we begin to see clearly that God’s faithfulness does not depend on ours. Just as we have prayed and heard in the absolution,

God is faithful and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Dear community, this Maundy Thursday invites us to recognize ourselves in Gethsemane: as fragile, weary people, at times asleep in faith. But it also invites us to look to Christ, who prays for us, who gives himself in love, and who continues to call us to the table of grace.

May this Word strengthen our faith, teach us to keep watch and pray, and encourage us to live from the love we have received. We walk toward the cross, but not alone. We walk sustained by the One who, even on the night of betrayal, chose to love to the end. And as we conclude, we ask ourselves: how do we wish to respond to the love of Christ, who gives himself for us on this holy night? Amen.

Profession of Faith: Standing together, let us confess the faith in which we were baptized: 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 Almighty, from there 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. You may be seated.

Foot Washing Rite: *(The space should already be prepared for this moment. Invite the people to participate voluntarily in the foot-washing rite, in silence and in a spirit of reflection. At the conclusion of the rite, those officiating should sanitize their hands using hand sanitizer. During the rite, instrumental music may be played in the background, the congregation may sing a hymn, or all may remain in silence; this is optional.)*

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Intercessory Prayer: Let us pray. God of love and mercy, we place our local community into your hands. Strengthen those who serve, comfort those who suffer, and renew our commitment to live in love and service. We ask you to sustain us with your love. May we be a space of welcome, service, and witness to the Gospel.

We also pray for your Church throughout the world:

guide it by your Spirit, that it may be a faithful witness to the Gospel and a sign of hope in the midst of humanity. Strengthen it in unity and send it out to proclaim your grace with courage.

We entrust our country to you, with its challenges and hopes. Grant peace, justice, and solidarity. Guide those who make decisions, that they may seek the common good; grant wisdom to those who govern, justice to those who are oppressed, and peace to the whole nation.

Finally, we intercede for the entire world: for nations in conflict, for those who suffer from hunger or violence, and for wounded creation. May your peace and your hope reach all people. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Eucharistic Liturgy

Invitation: God walks with his people and keeps his presence alive among us. In this celebration, this closeness becomes tangible, as God reveals himself in the midst of the gathered community. In communion, we celebrate the gift of life and are nourished by the Word and by the sacred signs of bread and wine. For this reason, we are invited to come forward and

celebrate the Lord's Supper. In this spirit, let us pray:

Eucharistic Prayer: Good and merciful Father, we give you thanks for the gift of salvation that makes us one body in Christ. As we come to this table, we reaffirm our trust in your love and in the promise of eternal life. We thank you for this spiritual nourishment that accompanies us, strengthens us, and sustains us in our daily walk, calling us to become better people. For on the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat, this is My body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." After supper, our Lord Jesus Christ took the cup, and having given thanks, He lifted it and said: "Drink from it, all of you, for this is My blood, the new covenant for the forgiveness of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." Send us, Lord, Your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of our Lord and of His resurrection, so that, by sharing the bread of life and the cup of salvation, we may feel united with our loved ones who have passed away. Guide us to the joyful feast prepared for Your people in Your presence, which we await with joy and faith. Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, to You, Almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy

Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Lord's Prayer: Together, let us pray the prayer that Christ himself taught us: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of Bread: *(Lifting the bread)* The bread we break and share is the communion of Christ's body. *(Lifting the cup)* The cup for which we give thanks is the communion of Christ's blood.

Communion: *(Share the bread and the fruit of the vine according to the custom of the congregation.)*

Post-Communion Prayer: Let us pray. Merciful God, we give you thanks for welcoming us at your table and for the spiritual food we have received. Renew our strength and guide our steps, so that, sustained by your grace, we may walk in faithfulness, serving with love and proclaiming the hope that is born of Christ. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Announcements: *(Community announcements, including the schedule for the Good Friday service.)*

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Final Moment: *(Remember that this celebration does not conclude on this day; therefore, there will be no blessing or dismissal. At this moment, proceed with the removal of the items from the table. To do so, invite previously designated persons to remove, in silence, the flowers, candle, cross, Bible, and white cloth, while the following passage is read:)* After the Last Supper with his community of disciples, Jesus was arrested by the Roman guards, interrogated, flogged, and stripped. Thus, with only minimal garments, he was hung upon the cross. As a sign of this stripping away that Christ endured, we now remove the paraments and ornaments from the table. The table will remain in this state until the service in which we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. At the conclusion of this moment, we will leave the sanctuary in silence. *(There will be no ringing of bells.)*

Good Friday – Service of Darkness

In the Paschal Triduum, Good Friday also requires a specific liturgy, and having a cross is essential. We recommend that the service be held in the evening. The theme of the celebration is the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins, inviting deep reflection on His suffering and abandonment in His final hours. It is important to note that this service does not include a homily or a written interpretation of the Gospel.

Suggested Materials: Bible, cross, candle, black, violet, or red cloth, and a menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum).

Preparation of the Space: Arrange the space to remain dimly lit, encouraging silence and reflection among participants. The altar table should be bare, following the precedent set during the Maundy Thursday service—meaning no white cloths, flowers, or additional elements. Near the altar, place the cross and cover it with a black or red cloth. To facilitate the reading of the liturgy and Scripture, a candle should be available. Additional candles may be placed throughout the space, but

positioned to maintain a solemn and dimly lit atmosphere. Consider ensuring that children present feel safe and not frightened by the darkness. The church bells should not be rung at the beginning or end of the service. As with Maundy Thursday, we suggest selecting a group to assist in reading biblical passages and encouraging them to meet in advance for study and preparation. Before beginning the service, light the seven candles of the menorah, which will be placed on the bare altar table. (If a menorah is not available, a creative alternative may be made by following instructional videos on YouTube, such as:)

[1] Making a menorah/hanukkiyah from PVC
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEQT5nQtgrQ;>

[2] Make Your Own Menorah
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKtfm925LZE>

The liturgy includes spontaneous moments of action. Any text within parentheses () should not be read aloud but serves as guidance on what should be done. Once the space is arranged, take a moment for silent prayer before beginning the service.

Opening Liturgy

Initial Silence

Welcome: *(Briefly greet the congregation and mention the connection of this celebration with the previous night. Take this moment to share the community announcements and invite everyone to the Easter Vigil, informing the time and place, since there will be no announcements at the end of the service. Explain that the character of this celebration is marked by silence and darkness, recalling the terror of Christ's death and inviting reflection on the crucifixion, the death, and the abandonment that Jesus endured. Inform the congregation that this service does not include a sermon; instead, at the conclusion of each reading from the biblical text, there will be a brief moment of silence for individual reflection.)*

Prayer of the Day: Beloved and gracious God, in silence we place our intentions before your cross. *(Pause briefly for individual reflection.)* God of life, on this Good Friday we gather before the cross of Jesus, where your love is revealed amid pain, injustice, and death. In the Crucified One, we recognize all the crucified people of history: the poor, the

forgotten, those who suffer violence, exclusion, abandonment, and those who are despised. Receive the cry of your people, wipe away the tears of those who weep, and strengthen all who struggle to keep hope alive amid inequality, fear, and oppression. Teach us to remain at the foot of the cross, not as spectators, but as a community of solidarity, committed to justice, to the dignity of life, and to mutual care. Grant us humble and attentive hearts to listen to your Word in the silence of this service and to trust in your grace, even when everything seems dark. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who suffered, died, and gave himself in love for all. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 50:4–7 *(After the reading, the first candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

Psalm Reading: Psalm 22 *(After the reading, the second candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

Gospel Reading: *(The reading from Matthew will be divided into several parts with pauses and indications between the readings. The liturgical team should organize in advance which part each person will read.)*

1st Reader: Matthew 27:27–31 *(After the reading, the third candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

2nd Reader: Matthew 27:32–36 *(After the reading, the fourth candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

3rd Reader: Matthew 27:37–40 *(After the reading, the fifth candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

4th Reader: Matthew 27:41–50 *(After the reading, the sixth candle of the menorah is extinguished).*

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read).*

5th Reader: Matthew 27:51–54 (*After the reading, the seventh candle of the menorah is extinguished*).

Moment of Silence: (*A time for the community to reflect silently on the text read*).

Intercessory Prayer: Let us pray. God of love and compassion, before the cross of Jesus we bring to you the pains of the world and the needs of your creation. In the silence of this Good Friday, we entrust to your mercy all that weighs upon our hearts. We intercede for the Church, that, though wounded and limited, it may remain faithful to the gospel of the cross, proclaiming hope where there is despair and being a sign of service, humility, and solidarity. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We intercede for peoples and nations, especially where violence, war, and injustice prevail. We remember the poor, the unemployed, the hungry, and all who are victims of inequality, racism, exclusion, and oppression in our daily reality. May your justice bring dignity and fullness of life. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We intercede for all who suffer: for those who mourn their dead, for those who face illness, loneliness, and fear, and for those who feel abandoned, just as your Son was abandoned on the cross. Be

their comfort, strength, and hope. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We intercede for those who exercise power and responsibility, that they may govern with wisdom, justice, and care for life, and not with violence, corruption, or indifference. Soften hardened hearts and awaken a commitment to the common good. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Finally, we place before you our personal intentions, spoken aloud or held in silence. Receive them through Jesus Christ, our crucified Lord, who lives in your presence and intercedes for us. Amen.

Lord's Prayer: Together, let us pray the prayer Christ Himself 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Veneration of the Cross: *(At this moment, the cross that has been covered with black or red cloth is uncovered and placed on the altar. While someone reads the following words, the congregation contemplates the cross in silence for a few*

minutes.) “Here is the cross that gives life. On it hung the salvation of the world. Let us keep a moment of silence and reflect on the mystery of the crucified Savior, the mystery of salvation.”

The Lamentations of Our Lord: *(After the time of silence during the veneration of the cross, the “Lamentations of Our Lord” are read.)* “What have I done to you, my people? How have I offended you, my chosen ones? Where did I fail you? In what way did I fall short? I brought you out of Egypt and fed you with manna; I gave you a good land, rich in abundance, milk and honey, and you prepared for me, your King, this cross, harsh and cruel. I gave you a beautiful vineyard, fresh water, all that you needed, and you were bitter toward me to the very end. I saved you from your pursuers, drowning them in the Red Sea, and you handed me over without mercy to the religious leaders who had long been watching me. I gave you water and manna from heaven as you journeyed through the wilderness; I received gall and vinegar when, on the cross, I was thirsty. I gave you space and victory over enemy peoples; I received lashes, blows to the face, and a crown of thorns. I gave you prosperity, children, companionship; you gave me

the cross and abandoned me there. Where did I fail you?"

Moment of Silence: *(Allow time for the congregation to reflect silently on the text that has been read.)*

Final Moment: *(Remember that this celebration does not end today; therefore, there will be no blessing or dismissal. As a symbolic gesture to conclude the service, go to the lectern or to where the Bible is placed and, in a visible and audible gesture, close the Bible and say:) "It is finished!" (Then leave in silence, together with those who assisted in the readings and the members of the liturgy team.)*

Holy Saturday

Easter Vigil

Holy Saturday is divided into two moments: before nightfall and after sunset. This celebration also marks the conclusion of the Paschal Triduum. We recommend holding the service after sunset, when natural light is fading, but darkness has not yet fully settled. It is important to note that the complete Easter Vigil celebration with Eucharistic Worship is rich in symbolism. In the full liturgy of the Easter Vigil with the Eucharistic Service, baptism holds a prominent role, as it represents the welcoming of new Christians into the body of Christ at the Paschal feast. This liturgical proposal for Holy Saturday does not include the Eucharistic Liturgy. If your community's celebration includes Holy Communion, conduct the Eucharistic Liturgy according to your community's tradition. When including Holy Communion, consider that in this liturgical proposal, the Lord's Prayer is already included after the Intercessory Prayer. Therefore, ensure that it is recited at the designated moment in this liturgy or during the Eucharistic Liturgy, following your community's tradition, between the "Intercessory Prayer" and the moment called

“Rejoicing”.

Suggested Materials: Bible, cross, candles, Paschal candle, baptismal font with water, white liturgical vestments, elements for Holy Communion (if your community celebrates the Holy Supper).

Preparation of the Space: As on Good Friday, the space should remain dark, with the same candles used similarly to the previous service to maintain dim lighting. However, consideration should be given to the presence of children so they do not feel frightened. The altar table should remain bare, continuing the tradition from Maundy Thursday. It will be adorned with all liturgical elements at a designated moment during the liturgy. To facilitate reading, we suggest having a candle at hand. Additional candles may be placed throughout the space as needed, similar to the previous service. The community should preferably have a Paschal candle (a cross with the Greek letters Alpha and Omega and the current year inscribed). The liturgy contains moments that should be performed spontaneously. Everything written in parentheses () should not be read aloud, as these are instructions and guidance for specific actions. Once the space

is arranged, take a moment for silent prayer, seeking divine illumination, before beginning the celebration.

Opening Liturgy

(This celebration already proclaims the resurrection of Jesus Christ; therefore, the Gospel acclamation includes the singing of "Alleluia." The service begins outside the church, if possible. In communities where this is not feasible, people may enter the sanctuary as usual. The space should remain dimly lit, with a few scattered candles on the floor, creating a solemn atmosphere. Before the service begins, each person should receive an unlit candle. The Paschal candle should also be present but unlit. If the service starts outside, someone should hold the Paschal candle. If it begins inside, the candle should be placed in a visible location near the altar.)

Welcome: *(Welcome the congregation and share the relevant community announcements; then read the following text.)* On this special night of the Easter Vigil, we are invited to immerse ourselves in the history of salvation, contemplating the creation of the world, the liberation of the Hebrew people, and above all, the glorious resurrection of Christ. The silence

and darkness that surround us symbolize waiting, but they also prepare our hearts for the coming of the light that dispels every shadow. Today we celebrate the triumph of life over death and renew our faith in Christ's victory. He has overcome the cross and given us the hope of the resurrection. With joy and gratitude, therefore, throughout this celebration we will often praise God by proclaiming: "Alleluia, Christ is risen!"

Lighting of the Paschal Candle: Jesus Christ said about himself, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12) The Paschal candle represents Christ, the light of the world, who has conquered the darkness of death. *(The Paschal candle is lit in silence, in a way visible to the entire congregation.)* May the light of Christ inspire us to be bearers of his love and peace in a world that desperately needs his presence, illuminating even the darkest corners of our being. With hearts overflowing with gratitude, we sing: "Alleluia, Christ is risen!" *(Allow the congregation to repeat the final phrase)*

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

(If the celebration began outside the church, this is the

moment for the procession. If the celebration began inside the church, proceed directly to the lighting of the candles.)*

Procession of Light: Brothers and sisters, just as the people of God walked through the wilderness, guided by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so we too, guided by the Paschal candle—an image of Christ, the light of the world—will proceed in procession into the church and take our places.

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(During the procession, the congregation may sing a short and well-known hymn, without the need for printed music, such as the hymn “We Are Marching in the Light of God.”)*

***Lighting of the Candles:** As the psalmist says, "The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) As this flame is multiplied as it is shared, so may our witness of faith also be multiplied, carrying this light into the darkest places of the world and kindling hope where there was once only despair. May we be witnesses to the resurrection of Christ, proclaiming the good news to all peoples. *(At this moment, several people chosen beforehand approach the*

Paschal candle and light their candles. They then move among the congregation to light the candles of others. A brief pause is observed until these candles are lit.) Receive the light of the Paschal candle, a symbol of our unity in Christ. With this light in our hands, we will face the challenges of life with courage and confidence. *(Those who already have their candles lit now light the candles of the rest of the congregation. Once all candles are lit—except for the candles on the altar table—the presiding minister invites the congregation to be seated to hear the Exsultet.)* As you are, I invite you to listen to the words of the Exsultet.

Exsultet: Let heaven rejoice and earth be glad. All peoples, praise the Lord. All creation, praise the Lord. He is victorious. He is risen. This is a great reason to give praise before God, for his goodness toward us is very great. Let us rejoice in the brightness of this light that overcomes the darkness. May Mother Church also rejoice, lifting high the candles of this new fire, and hear resounding at once the Alleluia sung by the people. *(At this moment, the people raise their candles.)* Let us say together: “Alleluia, Christ is risen!” *(The lights of the church are turned on.)* You may now extinguish your candles. With

joy, let us sing the hymn.

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Liturgy of the Word

Introduction to the Scripture Readings: The Word of God is now present among us in four moments, uniting the promise of the Old Testament with the fullness of the New. We celebrate the God who walks beside us, light in the darkness and strength in times of affliction. Like a river that never runs dry, God's grace flows through history and reaches us today. Between each reading, we will keep sacred silence, allowing the Word to echo within us. In stillness, let us drink from the hope that strengthens us. Let us listen with our hearts.

First Old Testament Reading: Job 14:1-14

Guiding question for silent reflection: If a tree that has been cut down can sprout again, what signs of resistance and renewal have we seen in the struggles of our community? What 'new shoots' are we planting today so that future generations will not find a devastated ground? Let us reflect in silence.

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the congregation to silently meditate on the reading.)*

Second Old Testament Reading: Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

Guiding question for silent reflection: How can we make God's face shine upon those whom society insists on keeping in the shadows and in forgetfulness? In what ways can our community be the 'mighty rock' that protects those who are abandoned and without shelter? Let us reflect in silence.

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the congregation to silently meditate on the reading.)*

The Altar Table Symbolism and "Glory to God in the Highest":

At this moment, the altar remains bare, reminding us of Jesus' suffering and death. But Christ has conquered death, and we rejoice in the reality of the resurrection! As the white paraments are placed on the altar and the altar candles are lit, let us stand and sing praises to God, who comes to us today through His Word. ♪ Glory to God in the Highest ♪ *(During this hymn, members of the liturgical team place white paraments on the altar and lectern, and light the altar candles from the Paschal candle. After the hymn concludes, the congregation is invited to be seated.)*

New Testament Reading: Let us open our hearts to the reading from 1 Peter 4:1–8. It proclaims the salvation that springs from the cross and is revealed in the resurrection. As we pass through the waters of Baptism, we are plunged into the paschal mystery of Jesus: we leave behind what is passing in order to embrace the eternal life he offers us. Let us listen to what the Spirit is saying to us. *(The reading is proclaimed.)*

Gospel Acclamation: Before hearing the Gospel, which recounts the night Jesus was buried, I invite the congregation to stand as we proclaim the Gospel Acclamation by singing Alleluia.

♪ *Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!* ♪

Gospel Reading: Matthew 27:57-66

Guiding questions for silent reflection: What concrete acts of care and service can we offer to those whom the world has already declared ‘dead’ and without hope? How can our diaconal ministry help remove the stones of hunger, prejudice, and abandonment that suffocate our people? Where are the tombs in our city that need our visit, our care, and our compassionate presence? Let us reflect in silence. You may be seated.

Moment of Silence: *(A time for the congregation to silently meditate on the reading.)*

Prayer: Let us pray. God of life, we give you thanks for your Word that reaches us, challenges us, and renews us. May what we have heard today take root in our hearts and bear fruit in faith, hope, and love. Lead us by your Spirit to live the Gospel faithfully and to bear witness to the new life that comes from you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Baptismal Liturgy

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Remembrance of Baptism: *(The presiding minister moves to the baptismal font.)* Brothers and sisters, Scripture teaches us that “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:4). Before this font, we profess that it was the Father’s mercy that rescued us. May the Holy Spirit, the creative power that descended upon Jesus in the Jordan, pour out His grace upon us. To remember our baptism is to renew

our mission as followers of the Lord. Therefore, united in faith, let us prepare for the blessing of this water, praying that it may be for us a source of purification and a sign of our full communion with the Father.

Blessing of the Water: I invite the community to stand for the blessing of the water. *(Wait for the congregation to rise)* O God of grace and goodness, whose Spirit “hovered over the waters” (Genesis 1:2) at the beginning of creation to bring order to chaos, look upon us. Just as You brought forth life from the waters, make this font a source of new life for Your people. You promised through the prophet: “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean” (Ezekiel 36:25). In this font, we recognize the fulfillment of that promise, through which You have given us a new heart and a steadfast spirit. Grant that Your grace may accompany us in our wilderness, transforming our daily commitment into a song of gratitude. May Your love overflow in our hearts, empowering us to bring the living water to all who thirst for justice and peace. Amen.

Renunciation: United as the community of Christ, let us renew our baptismal promises. If it is your will, let us respond together: “Yes, by the help of God.” Do you promise to

renounce selfishness and indifference, which close us off from God's love and prevent us from recognizing our neighbor as a brother or sister? *(Wait for the congregation's response.)* Do you promise to renounce all forms of prejudice and exclusion, which wound human dignity and deny the value of each person as the image and likeness of the Creator? *(Wait for the congregation's response.)* Do you promise to strive for peace and the integrity of creation, acting responsibly in the care of life and the promotion of justice wherever you are? *(Wait for the congregation's response.)*

Profession of Faith: Standing together, let us confess the faith in which we were baptized: 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 Almighty, from there 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. You may be seated.

♪ **Hymn** ♪: *(Choose a well-known hymn)*

Prayers of Intercession: Let us pray. God of life, on this holy night we entrust to you a world longing for light. Where there is pain, bring forth hope; where there is fear, let your presence shine. Keep your Church on the path of faith and awaken in us a commitment to life, justice, and mutual care. Receive also what we carry in silence, and lead us by your Spirit from darkness into new life. Through the risen Christ. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Together, let us pray the prayer that Christ Himself taught us: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Eucharistic Liturgy

(If the celebration includes Holy Communion, proceed with the Eucharistic Liturgy as usual. If not, continue with the

Proclamation of Joy.)


Proclamation of Joy: Alleluia! Christ is risen! Let us proclaim together: "Alleluia! Christ is risen indeed!"

Sending Liturgy

Blessing and Sending: May the light that shone on this holy night continue to burn in your hearts. May the risen Christ lead you from darkness into life, from fear into hope, from death into fullness. May God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—bless you now and always. Let us proclaim to the world: Christ has conquered death! Christ is risen, the source of eternal life! Go in peace, proclaim hope, and live the resurrection. Alleluia, Christ is risen!



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