

A Form of Spiritual Communion for St John the Baptist, Wimbledon

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist. The Book of Common Prayer – following pre-Reformation tradition almost word for word - instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves [Spiritual Communion & The Coronavirus, The Church of England, March 20th 2020]

You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, an icon, or a special place.

GO before us O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help: That in all our works begun continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Spend some time in recollection:

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace; that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Read the Collect, Reading, Psalm and Gospel of the Day.

We proclaim our faith:

I believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, ✠ and the life of the world to come. Amen.

We make our Intercessions:

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

O God, the creator and preserver of all, we pray for people in every kind of need; make your ways known on earth, your saving health among all nations ...

We pray for the good estate of the Church; guide and govern us by your good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life ...

We commend to your fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body or estate; comfort and relieve them in their need, give them patience in their sufferings, and bring good out of all their afflictions ...

We remember those who have gone before us in the peace of Christ, and we give you praise for all your faithful ones, with whom we rejoice in the communion of saints ...

All this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

We make our Thanksgiving to God:

Spend a few minutes in meditation upon the fact that God so loved you that He sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world for you.

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord.

We then say one or both of these prayers.

Lent - And now we give thee thanks because thou dost give us the spirit of discipline, that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace, as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed.

O ALMIGHTY God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Passiontide - And now we give thee thanks because, for our salvation, he was obedient even to death on the cross. The tree of shame was made the tree of glory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored.

O GOD, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding: Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Easter - But chiefly are we bound to praise thee because thou didst raise him gloriously from the dead. For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has restored to us everlasting life.

We conclude our worship:

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying,

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.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High. ✠ Blessed is He that Cometh in the Name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, ✠ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

We make our Spiritual Communion, saying one or both of these prayers.

You may wish to offer these two final prayers:

IN UNION, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of Thy Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer Thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to Thee my soul and body ✠ with the earnest wish that may always be united to Thee. And since I can not now receive Thee sacramentally, I beseech Thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to Thee, and embrace Thee with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate Thee from me. May I live and die in Thy love. Amen.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that, as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross ✠ and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the souls of the faithful through the mercy ✠ of God, rest in peace. Amen.

GRANT, O Lord Jesus Christ, that as the hem of Thy garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch Thy Body, so the soul of Thy servant may be healed ✠ by like faith in Thee, Whom I cannot now sacramentally receive; through Thy tender mercy, Who livest and reignest with the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost ever one God. Amen.

[This liturgy is inspired by the order for Spiritual Communion for the Anglican Diocese of Melanesia (1916) and the Armed Forces Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (1928).]

Bible readings and Collects

Sun 22 Mar 2020 The Fourth Sunday of Lent

1 Samuel 16.1-13; Ephesians; 5.8-14; Psalm 23
John 9.1-41

O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences, that through thy bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins which by our frailty we have committed; grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Wed 25th March The Annunciation

Isaiah 7.10-14 Ps 40.5-11 / Hebrews 10.4-10
Luke 1.26-38

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that, as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sun 29 Mar 2020 The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Ezekiel 37.1-14; Romans 8.6-11; Psalm 130;
John 11.1-45

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ hast 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 thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 5 Apr 2020 Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11; Psalm 31.9-16;
Matthew 26.14 – 27.66

Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy tender love towards the world hast sent thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *(This collect is repeated until Wednesday)*

Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42.1–9; Psalm 36.5–11 Hebrews 9.11–15 John 12.1–11

Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49.1–7; Psalm 71.1–14; 1 Corinthians 1.18–31;
John 12.20–36

Wednesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 50.4–9a; Psalm 70; Hebrews 12.1–3; John 13.21–32

Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12.1–4[5–10] 11–14; Psalm 116.1,10–17; 1
Corinthians 11.23–26; John 13.1–17,31b–35

God our Father, who hast invited us to share in the supper which thy Son hath given to his Church that it may proclaim his death until he comes: may he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Good Friday

Isaiah 52.13 – 53.12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10.16–25
Or Hebrews 4.14–16; 5.7–9; John 18.1 – 19.42

Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed and given up into the hands of sinners and to suffer death upon the cross; who now liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Holy Saturday

Job 14.1–14 or Lamentations 3.1–9,19–24; Psalm 31.1–4,15,16; 1 Peter 4.1–8; Matthew 27.57–66 or
John 19.38–42

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continually mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits, who died and was buried and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sun 12 Apr 2020 Easter Day

Acts 10.34-43; Colossians 3.1-4; Psalm 118.1-2,14-24;
Matthew 28.1-10

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of thy Son hast overcome the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to thee in Jesus

Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity.

Sun 19 Apr 2020 The Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2.14a,22-32; 1 Peter 1.3-9; Psalm 16; John 20.19-31

Almighty Father, who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins and to rise again for our justification: grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness that we may always serve thee in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 26 Apr 2020 The Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2.14a,36-41; 1 Peter 1.17-23; Psalm 116.1-3,10-17; Luke 24.13-35

Almighty Father, who in thy great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve thee continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 3 May 2020 The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2.42-47; 1 Peter 2.19-25; Psalm 23; John 10.1-10

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 10 May 2020 The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 7.55-60; 1 Peter 2.2-10; Psalm 31.1-5,15-16; John 14.1-14

Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life: we humbly beseech thee that, as by thy grace preceding us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 17 May 2020 The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17.22-31; Psalm 66.7-18; 1 Peter 3.13-22; John 14.15-21

God our redeemer, who hast delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of thy Son: grant, that as by his death he hath recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Thursday 21st May Ascension Day

Acts 1.1-11; Psalm 47 or Psalm 93; Ephesians 1.15-23 or Luke 24.44-53

Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 24 May 2020 Sunday after Ascension Day

Acts 1.6-14; 1 Peter 4.12-14; 5.6-11; Psalm 68.1-10,32-35
John 17.1-11

O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven: we beseech thee, leave us not comfortless, but send to us thine Holy Spirit to comfort us and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sun 31 May 2020 Day of Pentecost

Acts 2.1-21; 1 Corinthians 12.3b-13; Psalm 104.26-36,37b; John 20.19-23

God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
