



“Sharing in the Eucharist is the heart of Sunday, but the duty to keep Sunday holy cannot be reduced to this. In fact, the Lord’s Day is lived well if it is marked from beginning to end by grateful and active remembrance of God’s saving work.”

(DD,52)



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Day of the Church

Gather: Hold this ritual at the meal table. Welcome everyone warmly and join together in a song, or simply an ‘Alleluia’ verse.

Ritual: As you begin to ‘break open’ the meal (e.g. carve the beef, ladle the soup, serve the vegetables, pour the wine or cordial), one person prays:

“Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation, through your goodness we have this (bread/food/wine/cordial/water) to share. Fruit of the earth and work of human hands it is a sign to us of your bounty, generosity and sustaining love.”

All: “Blessed be God forever.”

Table topic:

(Choose one or design your own.)

* Let’s share ways we have ‘fed’ or been ‘fed’ this past week. I.e., who/what has nourished us; to whom have we given sustenance/life? (If there is someone in the family that is being fed literally due to age or disability, note the precious symbol this is in your midst.)

* Discuss a social justice (or other) project that is feeding the hungry, or giving nourishment where most needed.

* Name everyone who has helped to bring this meal to us, and bless each one: the cook, the bread-winner, those who set the table and who will clean up afterwards.

* Verbally put together a “Grateful List” as you chat over the meal. I.e., name all the blessings of your past week, all the things/persons for whom you are grateful.

* Read the Gospel of the day and share your reactions to it. If you have just been to Mass together, discuss the insights of the homily as well.

As the meal concludes: “Let us go forth from this table in peace to love and serve the Lord.” All: “Thanks be to God.”

[Note: this ritual has obvious eucharistic overtones. You may wish to time it so that it flows from or towards Sunday Mass.]



Celebrating SUNDAY

Home-based rituals for Christians

The Story Source
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Day of Light

Gather together at home around a large bowl of water and a long candle (a baptismal candle is ideal). Darkness or silence may help create the right ambience for this ritual.

Candle-lighting prayer:

Leader: "Christ our Light." All: "Thanks be to God."

Read: Lk 24:1-12 "On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, the women went to the tomb..."

R.: "The Word of the Lord." All: "Thanks be to God."

Leader: "In baptism God gave us the new birth of eternal life. Let's pause & share ways we have given/received/witnessed the life of the risen Lord during the past week. (*After all have shared:*) Let us pray*:

Lord God, your gift of water is a symbol of your grace. We remember that at the dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters. In the waters of the great flood your holiness was revealed. Through the waters of the Red Sea you led your people, Israel, out of slavery. In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John. When your Son hung on the cross, water and blood flowed from his side. In the birth of each created human being, water and blood flows from the mother. In water, Lord, your disciples were baptized. In water we, too, were baptized: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (As the each person of the Trinity is named, dip the baptismal candle in the bowl of water, i.e. three times.) Through the grace of that day, Lord, continue to recreate us in your image, cleanse us from sin and fill us with your life. Amen.

Further sharing/action suggestions:

- * Share baptism memories. Renew your baptismal vows.
- * Share thoughts on the Gospel passage.
- * Share favorite 'water' stories.
- * Do you know the story of your birth?
- * Pray especially for expectant parents, co-creators of life.
- * Pray for deceased loved ones; may they enjoy eternal life.

"I would strongly urge everyone to rediscover Sunday. Do not be afraid to give your time to Christ! Yes, let us open our time to Christ..."

"Christ is the light of the world... The day commemorating his resurrection is the enduring reflection of the epiphany of his glory."

- John Paul II's apostolic letter, *On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy (Dies Domini)*, 7, 27)

* The prayers on this page are adaptations of the sacramental initiation rites of the Catholic Church.

Day of Fire

Gather at home around a fireplace or candles.

Candle-lighting prayer: "Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful; Kindle in them the fire of your love."

Read: Acts 2:1-11 "When Pentecost day came round..."

R.: "The Word of the Lord." All: "Thanks be to God."

Leader: In baptism God gave us the new birth of eternal life. In Confirmation we are strengthened with gifts of the Spirit. Let's pause & share: What gift do I especially need at this time? (*After all have shared:*) Let us pray* now as we remember (or look forward to) our anointing in the Holy Spirit:

All powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and Holy Spirit you freed your people from sin and gave them new life. Continue to send your Holy Spirit upon us to be our Helper and Guide. Empower us to live with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Action: With sweet-smelling oil, anoint one another on the forehead or palms of hands.

Further sharing/action suggestions:

- * Share thoughts on the Scripture reading. What did you notice? How did God's word speak to you?
- * Tell stories and share memories of your Confirmation Day. If you have photos, bring them out.
- * Why did you choose your Confirmation name? What is its significance?
- * "I saw the Holy Spirit's action last week when..."
- * Name the gifts of the Spirit you see in one another.
- * Light seven tea lights for each of the gifts of the Spirit.
- * Lay hands on each other and pray for the gift of the Spirit.



"Sunday, the day of light, could also be called the day of 'fire', in reference to the Holy Spirit. The light of Christ is intimately linked to the 'fire' of the Spirit, and the two images reveal the meaning of the Christian Sunday... The 'weekly Easter' thus becomes, in a sense, the 'weekly Pentecost', when Christians relive the Apostles' joyful encounter with the Risen Lord and receive the lifegiving breath of his Spirit."

(DD, 28)