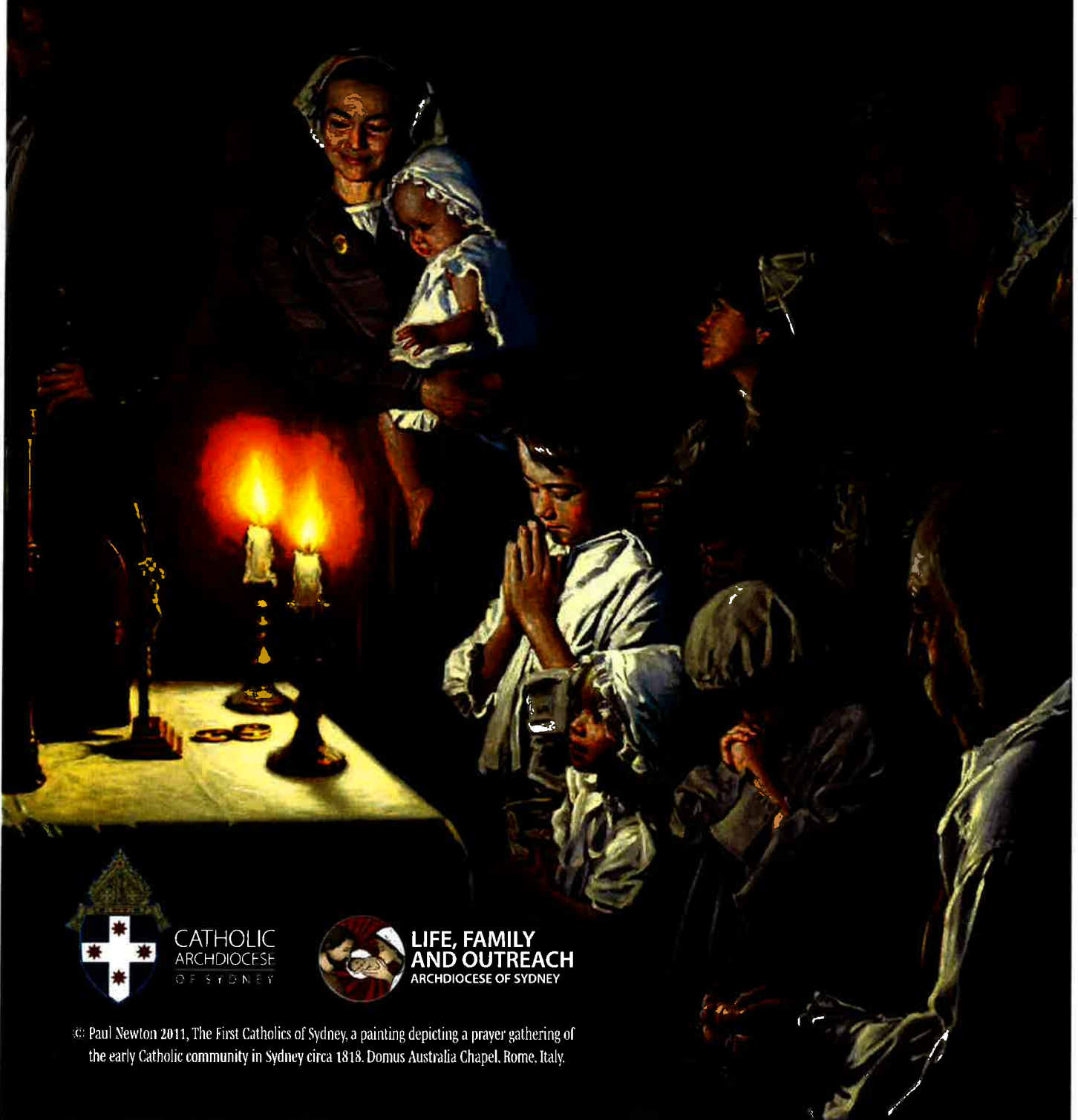


Spending Time with Jesus at Home

Our churches may be closed,
but the temples of the Holy Spirit
remain open... **that's you and me!**

Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament, is physically present within tabernacles in churches all over the world. Sadly, many of these churches, including our own, are currently closed. However, God is not far from us – He is very near. At Baptism, He has made His dwelling place in our souls, and desires to remain there. St Teresa of Avila tells us “If I had understood, as I do fully now, that in the little palace of my soul such a great King was living, I think I would not have left him alone so often.” Let us keep company with Jesus, and take time every day to be with Him in prayer!



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© Paul Newton 2011, The First Catholics of Sydney, a painting depicting a prayer gathering of the early Catholic community in Sydney circa 1818. Domus Australia Chapel, Rome, Italy.

STEP 1 / Create a Prayer Space

Find a place in your home where you will be able to visit each day and spend time in prayer. This can be a little altar in your bedroom or a corner in your living room - as long as it is somewhere that you will be able to pray without distraction. Make your prayer space beautiful; put in place a crucifix, a statue, or a holy image so that you will be able to focus easily on God. It is also helpful to have a candle and perhaps some flowers. Don't forget your Bible!

STEP 2 / Getting Started

Sit or kneel in a position that will help you to enter into a time of prayer. Begin, as always, by making the Sign of the Cross. This reminds us that we have been invited into the life of the Holy Trinity through our Baptism, and that God dwells within us. Blessing ourselves with holy water is also a tangible reminder of our Baptism. Now, take some time to recollect yourself, and really be mindful of His presence - this is an act of faith. Note: It is a good idea to keep holy water in the home. If you do not have any, you can ask your Parish Priest for some.

STEP 3 / Invoke the Holy Spirit

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. You may pray this or a similar prayer:
Come Holy Spirit! Help me to pray. Help me to put aside anything that will distract me. I give You my worries and concerns and all the burdens that I carry - they are now Yours. Help me to be close to You at this time, and to hear what You want to say to me. Grant me the desire and the will to respond to You in love.

STEP 4 / Allow God to Love You

Be still and allow God to love you. Prayer is our response to the love of God, but our response needs to be more like Mary than Martha (Lk 10:38-42), or like St John resting on the heart of Jesus (Jn 13:25). Here, seek to be as still as possible, and allow Him to do something for you - to love you and give you His peace.

STEP 5 / Listen to God's Word

God speaks to us and guides us through His Holy Word in Scripture. Take your Bible and choose a passage. You may open the Bible at any page, as God's Word will always have an effect. You may prefer to choose a book of the Bible and work through it, praying with a passage each day. Or you could read the Gospel reading of the day. Did something strike you? Did something touch you? Is there a lesson in the text for you? Ask God to reveal what He wants to say to you at this moment. Then make a specific decision about how you will respond. If it helps, write it in a prayer journal so that you can come back to it.

STEP 6 / Praying for Specific Needs

Are there any specific needs that you would like to entrust to God at this moment? Speak to Him; tell Him what you need. Call to mind those who have asked you to pray for them; the things that have come up in your prayer today, and anything that you may have been struggling with for some time. Now, place all of these cares into the hands of God, who is your Loving Father, trusting that He loves you and wants to give you everything that you need.

STEP 7 / Give Thanks

Thank God for the opportunity that you have had to be with Him and for all the good things that He continuously gives you. Even if you didn't feel anything today, know that God loves you and that He has brought about something new in your heart.

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.



OPEN THE DOOR TO *Jesus* IN PRAYER

HOW CAN I SPEND AN HOUR WITH JESUS IN ADORATION?

This is a simple guide to spending an hour with Jesus. You may spend as much time as you like on each point. In time, you may develop your own way.

1 MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Do this slowly and deliberately, reminding yourself that you have been invited into the life of the Holy Trinity through your Baptism.

2 HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE GOD

Come to God in humility. Place yourself in His presence and make an act of faith: "Jesus, you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. I believe, help my unbelief."

3 INVOKE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. It may take a few minutes to really surrender yourself to Him.

4 GIVE GOD YOUR JOYS AND WORRIES

Speak to Jesus as a friend. Tell Him about your joys and your worries. Intercede for those who need your prayers. Hand everything over to Jesus.

5 NOURISH YOUR PRAYER

Read and pray with the Word of God. What touched you? Make a decision on how to respond to this in the coming week.

6 WAIT IN PRAYER

You may feel inspired, but you may not. It's okay - maybe Jesus just wants you to rest on His Heart.

7 GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Offer Him your hour of prayer and thank Him for the opportunity of being with Him.

8 MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

NEVER JUDGE THE QUALITY OF YOUR PRAYER

It is God who works in us, not us in Him. You may experience dryness or distraction, but don't give in to the temptation of feeling that prayer is a waste of time. It is not about feelings but faithfulness. So don't be discouraged if you find it hard.

JUST REMEMBER: YOU LEARN TO PRAY BY PRAYING!

ADORATION is time spent in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, acknowledging that He is our Creator, and we are His beloved sons and daughters. In Adoration, it is God who does all the work, not me. I don't need to do anything! It is not about doing, it is about being - being in His presence, with the gift of my time and the surrender of an open heart.



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HOW TO MAKE AN ACT *of* SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

1 PREPARE YOUR HEART FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

Create a space where you will be able to pray quietly. Focus on an image of Jesus and light a candle before Him. Make the Sign of the Cross.

2 READ THE MASS READINGS

Slowly pray the readings for Mass of the day. These can be found in a Missal or on the Universalis App.

3 RECITE THE PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Recite the prayer below slowly, meditating carefully on each word. Believe that Jesus will give you the grace of a real encounter with Him.

4 SILENCE

Remain in silence for some moments, with Jesus in your heart. Allow Him to love you and to nourish your soul.



SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that You are present
in the Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already here,
and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.



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