

THE LORD'S PRAYER



Eternal spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, life-giver

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by peoples of the world!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

Sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power

That is love, now and for ever.

Amen.

(From a New Zealand Prayer Book)



LITURGY IN THE PANDEMIC

The experience of a Poor Clares community

For the Poor Clares the biggest deprivation during the pandemic was that they could no longer have Mass. Faced with Easter without a priest they decided to have a special Last Supper dinner with Gospel readings and instead of the washing of one another's feet had a washing of hands which, because of the pandemic, had a symbolism. Easter weekend was the start of a revelation. "The Last Supper took us to a new place", says Sr Gabriel, "We imagined how it had been that night, and we were there".

The nuns went four months without Mass. In the absence of a homily, the sisters took turns to share reflections. "It brought to life for us a great truth, that in the early Church the Word was considered no less than the Eucharist", says Sr Aelred, "I experienced weeks and weeks without Mass and it didn't impinge one iota with whatever union with Christ I have in my life. We would never have chosen it – we were devastated initially – but later we said: wasn't that wonderful? And going forward, if there's no priest available to say Sunday Mass, I doubt we'll ever be ringing round the parishes to find someone the way we used to do".

(Adapted from the Tablet, 17 October 2020)