

These two extracts from the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul titled, "Dies Domini", gives us an insight to our celebration of the Lord's Day with a family meal and some special prayers.

The Lord's Day — as Sunday was called from Apostolic times — has always been accorded special attention in the history of the Church because of its close connection with the very core of the Christian mystery... It is the day which recalls in grateful adoration the world's first day and looks forward in active hope to "the last day", when Christ will come in glory (cf. Acts 1:11; 1 Th. 4:13-17) and all things will be made new (cf. Rev 21:5). (Dies Domini, 1)

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. **This commits each of Christ's disciples to shape the other moments of the day — those outside the liturgical context: family life, social relationships, moments of relaxation** — in such a way that the peace and joy of the Risen Lord will emerge in the ordinary events of life. For example, the relaxed gathering of parents and children can be an opportunity not only to listen to one another but also to share a few formative and more reflective moments. (Dies Domini, 52)



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The Lord's Day Ceremony

The Lord's Day Ceremony is held on a Saturday evening, to welcome in Sunday, the Lord's Day.

It can be celebrated simply within our families and households, and also provides an opportunity to invite others into our homes.

We are encouraged to celebrate the Lord's Day Ceremony on the first Saturday of the month, but it may be celebrated on any week.



The Lord's Day Ceremony

Opening Song *(optional)*

Scripture *(generally the gospel from the Sunday is used)*

Leader: God our Father, in honour of Jesus your Son, we prepare to light this candle as we welcome the Lord's day.

Jesus, you are the light of the world.

Response: Come bring your light into our hearts.

Leader: The light reminds us of the Lord's presence with us

Response: Jesus, we embrace you

Leader: God's word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path

Response: Jesus, teach us to live in your ways

Leader: Jesus, you call us to let our light shine, so that others will see the good that we do and will praise our Father in heaven.

Response: Jesus, help us proclaim your love

Leader: In unity with all our brothers and sisters, and with all the angels and saints, we enkindle this light.

(Assistant lights the candle and raise hands over light)

Assistant: Father, you created light on the first day.
Jesus, you are the light of the world.
Holy Spirit, you give light to our hearts.
We praise you, triune God, you have taught us to enkindle the light for the Lord's day.

Song *(e.g. 'This little light of mine', 'The light of Christ')*

Leader: Let's welcome the day of the Lord in joy and peace.

(pour wine into cup, and hold the cup)

Lord, because you are so good to us, we have this wine, symbol of joy. We thank you for the blessings of this past week: for life, health and strength; for home, love and friendship; for the way you teach us in good and bad times. We thank you for this day of rest, and we thank you for Jesus, who is our true rest.

Response: Amen

Leader: *(raise cup)*

Praise be to you, Lord, you have created the fruit of the vine. (the cup is now passed)

(hold bread)

Lord, because you are so good to us, we have this bread, a sign of your daily care and love. This bread is made from many grains. As we share this bread, may we also share our lives together.

We praise you Lord, you make the earth grow food for all.

(The bread is shared. Each may say a short prayer of thanksgiving. Cheese and olives are also passed around at this time if desired).

Leader: This is the Lord's day. Let us be glad and rejoice in it.

Response: Thanks be to God

Song

(Parents may bless their children at this time)

Blessing: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."