

Instructions for creating a Home Altar/Sacred Space

The challenges of the corona virus, COVID-19, and being quarantined remind us of how much we miss community and gathering in a place set apart for worship. I am going to encourage you to set aside a place in your home to be your sacred space and then we can use this place for worship activities during Holy Week.

The first challenge in setting up a sacred place in your home is noise. You want your space to be free from the noise of the television and computers and it needs to be a spot that is accessible to everyone. If your living room is disconnected from where you watch television then it might be an ideal space to set up an Altar/Sacred space. Another good place are at the end of hallways where your Sacred Space can be out of the way yet available to all who live in your household. Once you have chosen a space, here are some of the things you will need:

1. Clean white linen or cotton covering
2. A Bible
3. A Cross or a sacred statue or picture
4. A candle

The Clean white linen or cotton covering represents the pureness of Christ. The white immediately reminds us that this is a special place that needs to be taken care of. The white cloth is also reminiscent of the shroud that Jesus body was wrapped in when he was laid in the tomb.

The Bible reminds us that Christ is the Word Incarnate. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. (John 1: 1-4)* God talks to his people through God's word and through the testimony of his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Cross reminds us of the sacrifice of Jesus for our salvation. Statuary and pictures of Christ and/or his saints remind us of the acts of those who have come before us. Please use whatever sacred item you have that reminds you of the love of Christ. It doesn't need to be ornate it just needs to have meaning for you and your loved ones.

The candle reminds us that light came into the world through Jesus Christ. We are God's light bearers in the world. God is truth and where the truth of God

shines it brings light to the dark injustices of the world; Light to those who have been forgotten and dismissed; Light to those living in the darkness of sin. Lighting our candle when we begin our devotions is a tactile way of inviting the Christ of Light into our space.

There are many ways to create these spaces. I invite you all to create an Altar/Sacred space and then share them with your church family. Here is my and Sonya's sacred space and the meaning behind it:



The Cross on the table has the scripture from Joshua on it that says "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord!" There is a Bible/Prayer Book combo that reminds us of our link to God's word and the Episcopal Church. The candle is scented with sage and citrus which reminds us of the blessings of Christ as God became incarnate and brought light into the world. The picture of St. James' was a gift from Patty Earhart and reminds me and Sonya of the blessings of our church family.

I am looking forward to all of you creating and sharing your sacred space!

A prayer to be used to dedicate an Altar/Sacred Space for use

Antiphon (said in unison)

You will bring them in and plant them, O Lord, in the sanctuary you have established.

Leader: All your works praise you, O God,

Family members: And your faithful servants bless you.

If a cross has just been put in place

Leader: Through the Cross of Jesus,

FAMILY MEMBERS: We have been brought near and reconciled to God.

Leader: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of the universe. Your gifts are many, and in wisdom you have made all things to give you glory. Be with us now and bless us as we dedicate our use of this space to your praise and honor. As often as we worship you here, precede us and abide with us. Be known to us in the Word spoken and heard, in fellowship with one another, and in the breaking of bread. Give us joy in all your works, and grant that this space may be a place where your will is done and your name is glorified; through Jesus Christ our Savior, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray. *Amen.*