

*At Home
Rogation Days
Observation Guide*



CATHOLIC RURAL LIFE
Promoting Catholic Life in Rural America

BACKGROUND

Rogation Days are an ancient Christian practice, a time set aside by the Church for prayer and penance, as we humbly implore the mercy of God.

The word rogare means “to ask” or “to pray.” These days, also known as Cross Days or Rogationtide, are marked by processions led by the processional cross, recitations of litanies, and blessings of seeds, soils, equipment, and buildings. They serve as a reminder of our connection to creation, our dependence on God, and the beauty, but also the power, of the natural world. Since the Fall, creation has held the potential to both sustain and destroy, and these days help us reflect on that reality.

Rogation Days have long been observed to appease God’s anger, to seek protection from natural disasters, and to request a bountiful harvest. In the spring, as the fields begin to turn green and there is promise of a good yield, we are also aware of the threats of frost, hail, and storms. These prayers and processions remind us that it is not the earth alone that brings forth fruit, and not the hand of man alone on which the harvest depends. Rather, it is God who gives the increase. In this season of hope and uncertainty, we turn with humility and confidence to the Giver of all good things.

Historically, Rogation Days arose in both Vienne, France and Rome, Italy in the late fifth century, during times of natural disaster and plague. The observances were later established in two forms: the Major Rogation on April 25, and the Minor Rogations on the three days before the Ascension. These days became beloved traditions because they were sincere expressions of penance and were believed to be effective in calling down God’s mercy. The practice of making an outward sign of penance to avert destruction harkens back to the days of Nineveh, when Jonah proclaimed God’s anger with the residents there and called them to repent of their evil ways or face ruin. Early Christians, especially in the East, frequently would recite the litany of saints as a way of asking for the help of the whole of Heaven in obtaining their petition.

As St. Mamertus of Vienne once proclaimed:

“We shall pray to God that He will turn away the plagues from us, and preserve us from all ill, from hail and drought, fire and pestilence, and from the fury of our enemies; to give us favorable seasons, that our land may be fertile, good weather and good health, and that we may have peace and tranquility, and obtain pardon for our sins.”

This guide is intended for use at home for farmers, homesteaders, gardeners, and those who want to join in the Church’s prayers for a good growing season, to be spared from natural disasters, and to implore God for His mercy and protection. Although the historic dates for the rogation processions are set for the spring, additional processions can take place throughout the year.



LITANY AND PROCESSION

The home procession, in the absence of a priest or deacon to lead, can be led by the owner of the property or head of household. The procession can begin at the corner of the property, barn or other outbuilding, or begin and conclude at the house. The recitation of the litany of saints takes place at the same time as the procession. It is common to walk around the perimeter of the property or around the living and work areas of the farm. In England, the tradition consisted of walking the parish boundaries with frequent stops for rest, food, readings, and sermons.

Litany of the Saints

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
God, the Father of Heaven,
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, one God,
Holy Mary,

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
pray for us*

After each invocation: "Pray for us."

Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins
St. Michael,
St. Gabriel,
St. Raphael,
All ye holy angels and archangels,
All ye holy orders of blessed spirits,
St. John the Baptist,
St. Joseph,
All ye holy patriarchs and prophets,
St. Peter,
St. Paul,
St. Andrew,
St. James,
St. John,
St. Thomas,
St. James,
St. Philip,
St. Bartholomew,
St. Matthew,
St. Simon,
St. Thaddeus,
St. Matthew,

St. Barnabas,
St. Luke,
St. Mark,
All ye holy apostles and evangelists,
All ye holy disciples of the Lord,
All ye holy Innocents,
St. Stephen,
St. Lawrence,
St. Vincent,
SS. Fabian and Sebastian,
SS. John and Paul,
SS. Cosmas and Damian,
SS. Gervase and Protase,
All ye holy martyrs,
St. Sylvester,
St. Ambrose,
St. Augustine,
St. Jerome,
St. Marin,
St. Nicholas,
All ye holy bishops and confessors,
All ye holy doctors,
St. Anthony,
St. Benedict,
St. Bernard,
St. Dominic,
St. Francis,
All ye holy priests and levites,

All ye holy monks and hermits,

St. Mary Magdalen,
St. Agatha,
St. Lucy,
St. Agnes,
St. Cecelia,
St. Catherine,
St. Anastasia,
All ye holy virgins and widows,
All ye holy saints of God,

Be merciful,

Be merciful,
From all evil,

pray for us.
make intercession for us.

spare us, O Lord.

graciously hear us, O Lord.
O Lord deliver us.*

*After each invocation: "O Lord, deliver us."

From all sin,
From Thy wrath,
From sudden and unprovided death,
From the snares of the devil,
From anger, and hatred, and every evil will,
From the spirit of fornication,
From lightening and tempest,
From the scourge of earthquakes,
From plague, famine, and war,
From everlasting death,
Through the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation,
Through Thy Coming,
Through Thy Nativity,
Through Thy Baptism and holy Fasting,
Through Thy Cross and Passion,
Through Thy Death and burial,
Through Thy holy Resurrection,
Through Thine admirable Ascension,
Through the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
In the day of judgment,
We sinners, beseech Thee, hear us.

That Thou wouldst spare us,

we beseech Thee, hear us.*

*After each invocation: "We beseech Thee, hear us."

That Thou wouldst pardon us,
That Thou wouldst bring us to true penance,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to govern and preserve Thy holy Church,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to preserve our Apostolic Prelate and all orders of the Church in holy religion,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to humble the enemies of holy Church,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give peace and true concord to Christian Kings and princes,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant peace and unity to the whole Christian world,
That Thou wouldst restore to the unity of the Church all who have strayed from the truth, and lead all unbelievers to the light of the Gospel,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to confirm and preserve us in Thy holy service,
That Thou wouldst lift up our minds to heavenly desires,
That Thou wouldst render our souls and the souls of our brethren, relatives, and benefactors from eternal damnation,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of the earth,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant eternal rest to all the faithful departed,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe graciously hear us.
Son of God,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Christ, hear us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

spare us O Lord.
graciously hear us, O Lord.
have mercy on us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father....
Hail Mary....
Glory Be...

Psalm 69

Be pleased, O God, to set me free; make haste, O Lord, to help me.
Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my life.

Let them be turned back and covered with dishonor that delight in my misfortune.
Let them be turned back abashed that say to me: "Aha, aha!"
Let all that seek Thee exult and be glad in Thee; and let them that seek Thy help say continually: "God be magnified."

But I am poor and destitute; O God, succor me!
Thou art my helper and my deliverer, O Lord, tarry not.
Glory be to the Father, etc.

V. Preserve Thy servants
R. Who trust in Thee, my God.
V. Be unto us, O Lord, a tower of strength.
R. In the face of the enemy.
V. Let the enemy do nothing to harm us.
R. And the son of iniquity have no power over us.
V. O Lord, deal not with us according to our sins.
R. Nor take retribution on us because of our transgressions.
V. Let us pray for our Sovereign Pontiff, N.
R. The Lord preserve him, and give him life, and make him blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies.
V. Let us pray for our benefactors.
R. Vouchsafe for Thy name's sake, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all them who do us good. Amen.
V. Let us pray for the faithful departed.
R. Eternal rest give them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
V. May they rest in peace.
R. Amen
V. For our absent brethren.
R. Preserve Thy servants who trust in Thee, O my God.
V. Send them, Lord, aid from on high.

R. And from Sion watch over them.
V. O Lord, hear my prayer.
R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Let Us Pray

O God, Whose nature it is ever to show mercy and to spare, receive our petition, that we and all Thy servants bound by the fetters of sin may by Thy sweet forgiveness be pardoned.

WE BESEECH THEE, O Lord, hear the plea of Thy suppliants, and pardon the sins of Thy penitents; and deign to grant us Thy tender forgiveness together with Thy peace.

SHOW US, O Lord, Thine unutterable mercy, that blotting out our transgressions, Thou wouldst vouchsafe to snatch us from the condemnation they deserve.

O God, our sins offend Thee, but our penance placates Thine anger! Regard graciously the entreaties of Thy people, and turn away the stripes which our transgressions justly deserve.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, have mercy on Thy servant, N., our Sovereign Pontiff, and direct him according to Thy clemency on the way to eternal salvation, that by Thy grace he may both desire the things that please Thee, and strive with his whole might to execute them.

O God, from Whom proceed all holy desires, good counsels, and just works, give to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; so that our hearts may be dedicated to the keeping of Thy law, and, the fear of our enemies being removed, we can by thy protection live our days in peace.

INFLAME, O Lord, our affections and our hearts with the fire of the Holy Spirit, that we may serve Thee with chaste body, and please Thee with clean heart.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed remissions of all sins; that by our fervent prayers they may obtain the pardon they have always desired.

WE BESEECH THEE, Lord, inspire and guide our works in their beginning, and accompany them unto fruition, that our every prayer and work may ever begin with Thee, and through Thee be accomplished.

ALMIGHTY, everlasting God, Who has dominion over the living and the dead, and art merciful to all whom Thou foreknowest shall be Thine by faith and good works; we, Thy suppliants, pray that they for whom we propose to pour forth our petitions, whether this present world still detain them in the flesh, or the world to come hath already received their souls, may by Thy benign goodness and through the intercession of Thy saints, obtain pardon for all their sins. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. R. Amen.

V. May the almighty and merciful Lord graciously hear us.

R. Amen

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R. Amen.

READINGS

Psalm 8

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is thy name in all the earth!
Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted
by the mouth of babes and infants,
thou hast founded a bulwark because of thy foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars which thou hast established;
what is man that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of man that thou dost care for him?

Yet thou hast made him little less than God,
and dost crown him with glory and honor.
Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
thou hast put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is thy name in all the earth!

CANTICLE OF THE THREE YOUTHS

Daniel 3:57-88, 56

(Leader and people alternate)

V. Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord;
R. Praise and exalt him above all forever.
V. Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord;
R. You heavens, bless the Lord;
V. All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord.
R. All you hosts of the Lord; bless the Lord.
V. Sun and moon, bless the Lord;
R. Stars of heaven, bless the Lord.
V. Every shower and dew, bless the Lord;
R. All you winds, bless the Lord.
V. Fire and heat, bless the Lord;
R. Cold and chill, bless the Lord.
V. Dew and rain, bless the Lord;

R. Frost and cold, bless the Lord.
 V. Ice and snow, bless the Lord;
 R. Nights and days, bless the Lord.
 V. Light and darkness bless the Lord;
 R. Lightning and clouds, bless the Lord.
 V. Let the earth bless the Lord;
 R. Praise and exalt him above all forever.
 V. Mountains and hills, bless the Lord
 R. Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord.
 V. You springs, bless the Lord;
 R. Seas and rivers, bless the Lord.
 V. You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord;
 R. All you birds of the air, bless the Lord.
 V. All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord;
 R. Praise and exalt him above all forever.
 V. You sons of men, bless the Lord;
 R. O Israel, bless the Lord.
 V. Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord;
 R. Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.
 V. Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord;
 R. Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord.
 V. Ananias, Azarias, Misael, bless the Lord;
 R. Praise and exalt him above all forever.
 V. Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost;
 R. Let us praise and exalt God above all forever.
 V. Blessed are you in the firmament of heaven;
 R. Praiseworthy and glorious forever.

Matthew 9:37-38

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

James 5: 7-8

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.*

You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.

James 5:16-18

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. Elijah was a human being like us; yet he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain upon the land. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the earth produced its fruit.

BLESSINGS/PRAYERS

These prayers are not a substitution for a blessing conferred by ordained clergy who have the authority from the Church to invoke God's grace upon an object, building, or property. However, lay people can make use of these prayers to request God's blessing upon their belongings and sprinkle holy water on or around these things. When done by a lay person on their own property, these prayers should not be concluded with the imparting of the sign of the cross as a priest or deacon would, but only by making the sign of the cross as at the conclusion of a private prayer. If other prayers or blessings are used, apostolic greetings such as "The Lord be with you" should be omitted when led by a lay person.

A Prayer in Planting Time

Dear Lord, You are wonderful in everything you do. In marvelous ways You take the full, rich life of the plant and carefully fold it into tiny seeds. You form the seeds according to many different shapes and sizes and colors, so that man can know what kind of growth will come of them.

When they are placed the earth they may look dry and dead, but when they are watered by the life-giving rain and nourished by the warm sun, they lose all their lifeless look and grow in an almost miraculous manner. By the power You gave them, they take the dead minerals of the earth and build up the nourishing, tasty foods that men need to sustain life.

This week, dear Lord, we will plant these seeds of (wheat, corn, or whatever it may be) that You have given us. Bless them, and watch over them, and bring them to the full growth and rich harvest that You wish to bless us with.

But, should You not allow them to come to full harvest, we accept Your will humbly. We trust that You will nevertheless watch over us and make the seeds of grace that You have given us grow to flower and fruit in the full Christian life that You intend for us here and hereafter. Amen.

Hymn of Thanksgiving (Te Deum)

We praise You, O God; we acknowledge You to be the Lord.
All the earth worships You, the Father everlasting.
To You all the angels, to You the heavens, and all the powers,
To You the cherubim and seraphim cry out Without ceasing;
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!
The heavens and the earth are full of the majesty of Your glory.
The glorious choir of the apostles praises You.
The admirable company of the prophets praises You.
The white-robed army of martyrs praises You.
Holy Church through the world acknowledges You,
The Father of incomprehensible majesty,
Your adorable, true, and only Son,
And the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
You, O Christ, are the King of glories.
You are the everlasting Son of the Father.
You, in order to save men, did not shun the Virgin's womb.

You have overcome the sting of death, and opened to believers the kingdom of heaven.
You are sitting at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.
You, we believe, are the Judge to come.
We beg of You, therefore,
to help Your servants,
whom you have re deemed with Your precious Blood.
Let them be numbered with Your saints in glory everlasting.
O Lord, save Your people, and bless those who are Your heirs.
And govern them and exalt them forever. Each day we bless You.
And we praise Your name in eternity, for ever and ever.
Be so kind, O Lord, as to keep us without sin this day.
Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.
Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, just as we have trusted in You.
In You, O Lord, I have trusted, let me not be put to shame forever.

V. Let us bless the Father, and the Son, with the Holy Spirit.

R. Let us praise and exalt Him forever.

O God, Your mercies are without number, and the treasure of Your goodness is infinite. We give thanks to Your most gracious majesty for the gifts You have given us. We continue to ask of Your mercy that, as You grant the petitions of those that ask You, You may never forsake them, but prepare them for the rewards to come through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers for Rain

Almighty God, we are in need of rain. We realize now, looking up into the clear, blue sky, what a marvel even the least drop of rain really is. To think that so much water can fall out of the sky, which now is empty and clear! We place our trust in you. We are sure that you know our needs. But you want us to ask you anyway, to show you that we know we are dependent on you. Look on our dry hills and fields, dear God, and bless them with the living blessing of gentle rain. Then the land will rejoice, and the rivers will sing your praises, and the hearts of men will be made glad. Amen.

A Prayer at Easter

TODAY, dear Lord, we celebrate Your rising from the dead. We are happy with You that You have been victor over death. We look around us at the green fields, filled with new life, and are everywhere reminded of You.

The seeds we plant seem dry and dead, but with the combined wonders of rain and sun, and the powers of the earth, they rise from their death-like sleep and grow green and beautiful in our fields. The trees, too, that stood so stark and lifeless through the winter are now bright with living green.

With these reminders of a resurrection all about us every day, help us remember that death is not the end of things for us, but the beginning. Help us keep in mind that we shall rise again on the last day, to live with You forever. Then there will be no weeping any more, nor any tears; no suffering, nor any pain, but joy and happiness and love with You forever. With You, then, will we celebrate the eternal Easter. It will be an everlasting spring for us, if we only realize now that there is no glory without suffering, no Easter without a Good Friday. Help us, by Your grace, to live the good lives that will merit this new life in heaven forever with You. Amen.

Prayer of the Christian Farmer

O God, Source and Giver of all things, Who dost manifest Thy infinite majesty, power and goodness in the earth about us, we give Thee honor and glory.

For the sun and the rain, for the manifold fruits of our fields, for the increase of our herds and flocks, we thank Thee. For the enrichment of our souls with divine grace, we are grateful.

Supreme Lord of the harvest, graciously accept us and the fruits of our toil, in union with Christ, Thy Son, as atonement for our sins, and for the growth of Thy Church, for peace and charity in our homes, for salvation to all. Amen.

Using holy water to bless the farm, land, equipment, seeds, crops, and animals use the following prayers:

A Blessing for all Domestic Animals

Lord God, You are King of heaven and earth. You are the Word of the Father, and through You He has given us all created things for our support. We beg You now to consider our lowly position. Just as You have given us help in our labors and needs, so, in Your most kind mercy, bless these cattle and beasts of burden with a heavenly blessing, and guard and preserve them. Be so kind, too, as to give us, Your servants, along with benefits that do not last, Your unfailing grace, so that we may gratefully praise and glorify Your holy name, who live and are King and God with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.
R. Amen.

Blessings of Poultry

Let us pray.

O God, creator of all nature, among other various types of creatures You were so kind as also to produce birds from the waters (Gen. 1:20) for the use of mankind. Of these Noah, when he came out of the ark, offered You a pleasing holocaust. And when You had led Your people out of Egypt by Moses, Your servant, You divided the clean from the unclean, and commanded that they should eat of them. We humbly beg of You to bless and sanctify the meat of these clean birds so that those who partake of it may be filled with Your abundant blessing and merit to be brought to the pastures of eternal life through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

(And they are sprinkled with holy water.)

Blessing of all kinds of Fruit Trees and Vines

Let us pray.

We beg You in Your goodness, almighty God, to pour the showers of Your blessing upon these newly budding trees and vines which You have made, and which You have been so kind as to nourish with temperate weather and sufficient rain. Bring the fruits of Your earth to full ripeness. Grant, too, that Your people may always give You thanks for Your gifts, so that You may fill them that are hungry with the fruits of a fertile land and that the poor and the needy may praise the glory of Your name, through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

(And they are sprinkled with holy water.)

Blessing of an Automobile, a Wagon or Tractor

Let us pray.

Lend a willing ear, Lord God, to our prayers, and bless this vehicle with Your holy right hand. Direct Your holy angels to accompany it, that they may free those who ride in it from all dangers, and always guard them. And just as by Your deacon Philip You gave faith and grace to the man of Ethiopia as he sat in his chariot reading the Sacred Word, so, point out to Your servants the way of salvation. Grant that, aided by Your grace, and with their hearts set on good works, they may, after all the joys and sorrows of this journey through life, merit to receive eternal joys, through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

(And it is sprinkled with holy water.)

Blessing for Horses or Other Animals

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You tried the glorious Saint Anthony (the Hermit) with various temptations, and allowed him to pass unharmed through the storms of this world. Grant to Your servants that we may profit by his splendid example, and by his merits and intercession be freed from the dangers of this present life, through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Let us pray.

May these animals, Lord, receive Your blessing. Keep them sound in body, and through the intercession of Saint Anthony (the Hermit) may they be freed from every evil, through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

(And they are sprinkled with holy water.)