

Let's Set the  
*Table of Life & Faith*

We are gathered here  
sharing a meal...



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A meal shared with family and friends, with loved ones, presents an image of life, love, and nourishment for body and soul. Each item placed on a table before a meal represents aspects of our Catholic faith, aspects that add to the blessings of our daily lives.

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Flowers are colorful, bright and cheerful. They add a touch of joy to the table. They also represent diversity and the different perspectives, colors, traditions and cultures we bring to one space in celebration of each person's individuality and what each individual brings to the community.

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Read Song of Songs 2:12:  
*"The flowers are springing up, the season of singing birds has come, and the cooing of turtledoves fills the air."*

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Candles light up the space. The light of a candle represents God. God is the light in our lives and guides our faith. God's light is present, glowing inside of us, shining through.

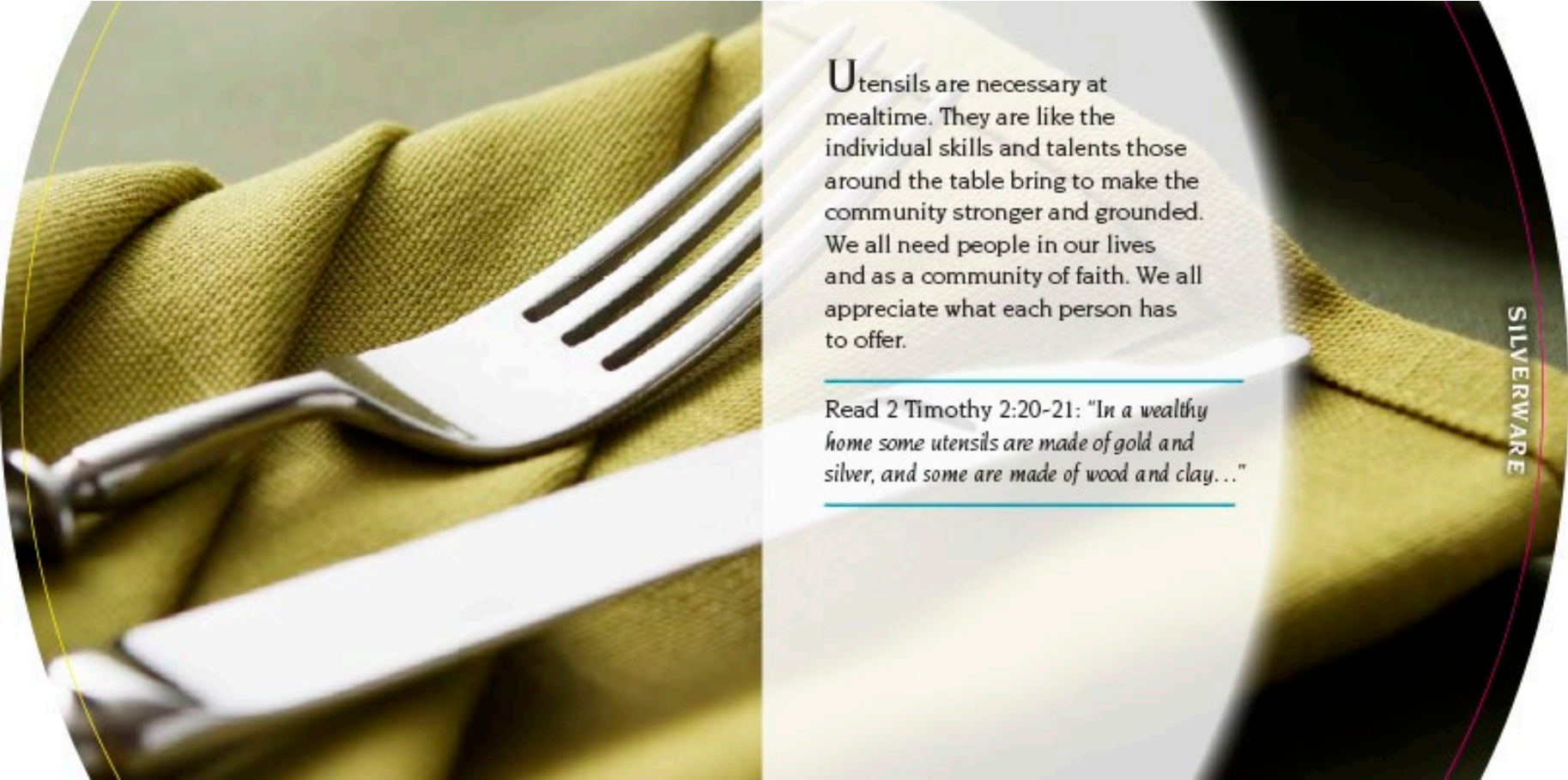
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Read Matthew 5:14-16: *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

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CANDLES





Utensils are necessary at  
mealtimes. They are like the  
individual skills and talents those  
around the table bring to make the  
community stronger and grounded.  
We all need people in our lives  
and as a community of faith. We all  
appreciate what each person has  
to offer.

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Read 2 Timothy 2:20-21: *"In a wealthy  
home some utensils are made of gold and  
silver, and some are made of wood and clay..."*

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Life can be a little bit messy. When we need a napkin to wipe something off, or someone to be the napkin for us, we remember being napkins to others, present and ready to help when in need.

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Pause and breathe: *Inhale, and count to three as you slowly exhale. Repeat three times while you reflect on how you have been a napkin for others in their times of messiness, and how others have been a napkin for you.*

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NAPKINS



Plates are the vessels to hold the food we eat. Aren't we blessed to have the food to fill them? Let us always keep in mind and heart those who hunger and have nothing to eat. May their bodies and spirits be nourished with the love of God always, for He will provide.

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*If alone: Pause and reflect for a minute or two reflecting on the blessing of food and how lucky you are to have it. Think of a time when you have not been so blessed and have felt hungry, perhaps not only in body but in soul and spirit.*

*Say an "Our Father" in thanksgiving for the food that fuels the life in your life.*

*If with someone: Pause and reflect for a minute or two. Share with the other person(s) a time in your life when you have felt hungry, or needed nourishment, not only in body but in soul and spirit.*

*Say an "Our Father" in thanksgiving for the food that fuels the life in your life.*

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**W**ater is life. Water is life-giving and life-saving. Water is the most precious gift God gave this world, and we must appreciate and be grateful to have it at our disposal.

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*Pause and reflect: Think of how water can be all around us and we take it for granted. Think of the water that comes out of the faucet in the mornings when we wash our faces or from a garden hose when we are outside. Imagine those who lack water in countries in Africa or in areas of India. Even in areas close to where we live where water is a luxury that we cannot live without during times of drought and unbearable heat. Water is life giving and life-saving.*

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WATER



Bread is food. Bread signifies Christ, the Bread of Life. When we break bread, when we share a meal, we honor Christ's table of plenty. We are blessed. With this food, our bodies are nourished and by understanding bread's Christian meaning, we satisfy our spiritual hunger.

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Read and reflect on John 6:27: *"Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him God the Father has set His seal."*

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Beverages that include all ages in this gathering and bring enjoyment to all of the company, young and old. Beverages can be sweet or effervescent, satisfying everyone's tastes. Beverages remind us that we all have different tastes, different likes, perspectives and opinions that make us who we are. Yet, together at a table and gathered with friends who share a meal, we become one community.

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Pause and think: *Reflect on the differences each of us brings to our families, our communities, our places of work. Make a list of five things that make you different, which are positive attributes which you can share with others. When you finish your list add "I am \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) and I am \_\_\_\_\_ (the attribute), a child of God made in His image."*

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WINE OR SOFT DRINKS



Salt and pepper are usually on a table to add flavor to the meal. Salt and pepper may change the meal a bit to make it better or to spice it up. When life gets a little bland or stale, sometimes we need a little salt and pepper to add a little flavor. Sprinkle some. It's OK.

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Read Deuteronomy 16:17: "Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you." You may not realize it, but you may be adding the condiment, the added flavor to someone's life at a time of need. Think of a time when you have received that added spice in your life at times of staleness and blandness, and when you have been a source of joy, and motivation to others when they were at a lull.

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Our table can have chairs or a bench or can be set on the floor and people sit on pillows. The important thing is to share the food, the stories, each other and then go into the world and invite others to join the next gathering. Or, encourage many other gatherings as we honor our faith, family and friends everywhere we go.

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Read Dt. 30: 15-20 and be commissioned to go into the world and don't stay at the table too long: *"See, I have today set before you life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am giving you today, loving the LORD, your God, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and ordinances, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the LORD swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them."*

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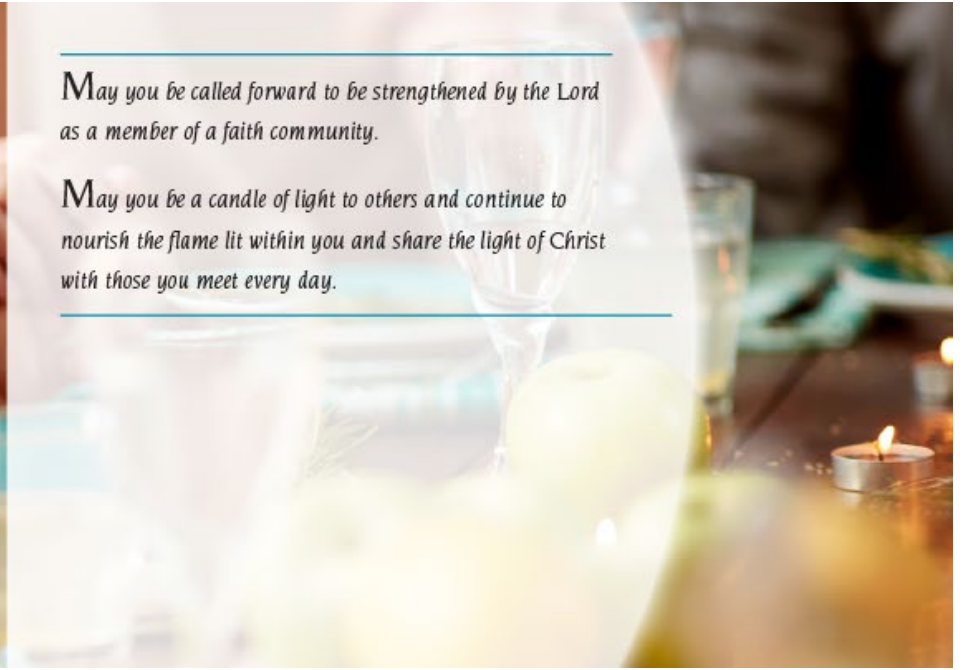


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*May you be called forward to be strengthened by the Lord as a member of a faith community.*

*May you be a candle of light to others and continue to nourish the flame lit within you and share the light of Christ with those you meet every day.*

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