

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland

DAY OF PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED ABUSE

Friday 4 March 2022

The Bishops of Scotland have established a Day of Prayer for those who have suffered abuse to be marked each year on the Friday following Ash Wednesday.

The following material is offered for use as a holy hour style "Service of Acknowledgment, Prayer and Reflection", although excerpts may also be used at Mass on 4 March.

At Mass the intercessions could be used either as intercessory prayers or as an extended Penitential Rite. The Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation are also appropriate.

Some of the prayers and readings may also be suitable to be incorporated in a service of Stations of the Cross.

SERVICE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, PRAYER AND REFLECTION

OPENING HYMN SUGGESTIONS

We cannot measure how you heal
Christ be beside me
Christ be our light
Be thou my vision

GREETING

We have come here
from pain and disillusionment,
from anger and confusion,
from sadness looking for hope.
We come together for one thing only:
to raise our hearts and voices and our very selves to God,
in the hope that the very act of raising them in
sorrow yet in faith,
they may be touched in their brokenness
and know the transforming and surpassing power of God's love.

OPENING PRAYER

God of compassion and love,
always present and just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.
Hear our cries as we agonise
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,
soothe restless hearts with hope,
steady shaken spirits with faith:
Show us the way to justice and wholeness,
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform our brokenness.
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,
so that we may act with justice
and find peace in you.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

READING

Reading

(Lectionary volume 2, p 529)

A reading from the letter of Saint James

1:19-27

You must do what the word tells you and not just listen to it.

Remember this, my dear brothers: be quick to listen but slow to speak and slow to rouse your temper; God's righteousness is never served by man's anger; so do away with all the impurities and bad habits that are still left in you – accept and submit to the word which has been planted in you and can save your souls. But you must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves. To listen to the word and not obey is like looking at your own features in a mirror and then, after a quick look, going off and immediately forgetting what you looked like. But the man who looks steadily at the perfect law of freedom and makes that his habit – not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice – will be happy in all that he does.

Nobody must imagine that he is religious while he still goes on deceiving himself and not keeping control over his tongue; anyone who does this has the wrong idea of religion. Pure, unspoilt religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(Lectionary volume 1, p 192)

Psalm 50(51):3-6, 12-14, 17

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.
2. My offences truly I know them;
my sin is always before me
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.
3. A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.
4. Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me,
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

(Or another suitable psalm may be sung.)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 11:29

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

GOSPEL

(Lectionary volume 1, p 630)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

11:25-30

You have hidden these things from the wise and revealed them to little children.

Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

HOMILY

LITANY OF TRUST

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

From the belief that I have to earn your love. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the fear that I am unlovable. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the false security that I have what it takes. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the fear that trusting you will leave me more destitute. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From all suspicion of your words and promises. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the rebellion against childlike dependency on you. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From refusals and reluctances in accepting your will. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From anxiety about the future. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From resentment or excessive preoccupation with the past. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From restless self-seeking in the present moment. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From disbelief in your love and presence. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the fear of being asked to give more than I have. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From the fear of what love demands. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
From discouragement. **Deliver me, Jesus.**
That you are continually holding me, sustaining me, loving me. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That your love goes deeper than my sins and failings, and transforms me. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation to lean on you. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you are with me in my suffering. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That my suffering, united to your own, will bear fruit in this life and the next. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you will not leave me orphan, that you are present in your Church. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That your plan is better than anything else. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you always hear me, and in your goodness always respond to me. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you give me the grace to accept forgiveness and to forgive others. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you give me all the strength I need for what is asked. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That my life is a gift. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you will teach me to trust you. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That you are my Lord and my God. **Jesus, I trust in you.**
That I am your beloved. **Jesus, I trust in you.**

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, **spare us, Lord.**
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, **graciously hear us.**
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, **have mercy on us.**

Let us pray, O God, that the gifts of the Holy Spirit will safeguard the mission of the Church.
May wisdom guide the work of the new Scottish Safeguarding Standards Agency,
may we understand the need for Christ's care for survivors,
may good counsel help put in place the right things to prevent abuse,
may we have fortitude to challenge any barriers to disclosing abuse,
may the People of God receive the knowledge to understand the importance of care for survivors
and their families,
may holy piety help us to rely on the Lord in our responsibility to keep people safe,
and may our wonder and awe before the Almighty help us see one another as images of God.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ROSARY

There may, at this point, be a decade of the Rosary following Pope Francis' request.

INTERCESSIONS

Presider:

Out of the depths, we cry to you O Lord. Hear our voices raised in supplication,
for we trust in your mercy and forgiveness, and we place our hope in your word.

Reader:

Let us pray firstly for the children, young people and vulnerable adults
whose lives have been scarred by the abuse they have experienced at the hands
of those whom they trusted and looked up to,
those whose task it was to nurture, care for and protect them,
but who cast aside the trust placed in them.
May those sons and daughters of God, innocent victims who have suffered so greatly,
be restored and strengthened by the power of Christ,
who can bring inner peace and fresh hope for living.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for the families and loved ones of those who have been abused,
as they seek to bring comfort, encouragement and healing to these innocent ones.
May they be able to sow the seeds of new beginnings
for those whose lives have been so wounded.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for the members of our Church, the body of Christ,
broken and scarred by the grave sin of abuse in all its forms.
We acknowledge that she can only begin to be healed
through repentance, reparation and firm resolve to protect the young and the vulnerable.
May Christ the Healer, who alone can redeem,
grant our Church the graces of humility, continuing conversion and adherence to truth;
May he grant us the courage to do whatever is necessary
to ensure abuse can never again happen in our communities

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for God's blessing on those who seek to bring about justice for all victims of abuse.
May they never be impeded in their work by those in authority in the Church or in any other
institution.
May the needs, the healing, and the new beginnings deserved by every victim
always be their first priority.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for those who minister in our Catholic parishes, schools and other communities:
for teachers who catechise our young in the ways of faith,
that they be enlightened with the wisdom of Christ the Teacher;
for priests who preach the word and celebrate the sacraments,
that they be kept holy by Christ the High Priest;
for ministers of hospitality and care who offer the friendship of the Catholic community
to all members of Christ's body and to all whom the Lord sends our way,
that they be sanctified by Christ, the giver of divine hospitality.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for all who spend themselves in the pursuit of peace, healing and reconciliation
for the abused, the needy, the weak and the vulnerable.
May they be sustained with the power of Christ, the divine reconciler.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray for ourselves in this faith community.
May our lives shine with the light of Christ;
may we have grace and energy to bring his good news to the poor,
and to echo in our words and actions his care in binding up hearts that are broken.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Let us pray that the gifts of the Holy Spirit will safeguard the mission of the Church.
May wisdom guide the work of the new Scottish Safeguarding Standards Agency,
may we understand the need for Christ's care for survivors,
may good counsel help put in place the right things to prevent abuse,
may we have fortitude to challenge any barriers to disclosing abuse,
may the People of God receive the knowledge to understand the importance of care for survivors
and their families,
may holy piety help us to rely on the Lord in our responsibility to keep people safe,
and may our wonder and awe before the Almighty help us see one another as images of God.

Pause for silent prayer. The cantor sings and all repeat:



Presider:

May these prayers rise in your presence like incense O Lord,
as a symbol of our sorrow and contrition, our humility and penitence.
Renew us in spirit, strengthen us in hope, perfect us in love.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SIGN OF PEACE

BLESSING

May God bless you with every heavenly blessing,
make you always holy and pure in his sight,
pour out in abundance upon you the riches of his glory,
and teach you with the words of truth;
may he instruct you with the Gospel of salvation,
and ever endow you with fraternal charity.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

R. Amen.

HYMN

A suitable hymn may be sung to conclude the celebration.

*Prepared by the Scottish National Liturgical Commission
February 2022*

Excerpts from the English translation and chants of *The Roman Missal* © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Opening Prayer adapted from a prayer of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Litany of Trust reprinted by permission of the Sisters of Life.

Jerusalem Bible texts © 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd. and Doubleday and Co. Inc. All rights reserved. Psalm text from the Grail Psalms © 1963 The Grail (England).