

# DAY OF PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED ABUSE

Friday after Ash Wednesday: 19 February 2021

## Prayers to be offered at home

On this national Day of Prayer for Those who have Suffered Abuse, the faithful are invited to join their prayers with those of the Catholic Church throughout Scotland for people in our families and communities who carry within themselves the deep and traumatic wounds of abuse in any way inflicted by the Church.

In preparation for this time of prayer, you are invited to place a crucifix and a lit candle on top of a white cloth on a table nearby.

### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### Then say:

"Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light the darkness has not overcome." (cf. Jn 8:12; Jn 1:5).

In silence, take a few moments to pray for people who bear the trauma and wounds of abuse.

### Penitential Rite

Lord Jesus, you stand alongside all who are suffering.

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

Lord Jesus, you listen to those who cry out to you, even when others fail to listen.

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

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of betrayal and hurt.

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

### Opening Prayer

Father, whose mercy has been revealed  
in the tenderness of your Son Jesus Christ  
who said to his disciples:  
"Suffer the little children to come unto me",  
may your Church be a secure home  
where all your children are brought closer to him.

May all those who have been abused  
be respected and compassionately accompanied,  
thereby receiving healing and restored dignity  
by the balm of your grace.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# Liturgy of the Word

## 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

Psalm 30(31):2. 6. 12-13. 15-17. 25 R. Lk 23:46

*(Lectionary volume 1, p 391)*

**R.** Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

In you, O Lord, I take refuge.

Let me never be put to shame.

In your justice, set me free,

Into your hands I commend my spirit.

It is you who will redeem me, Lord. **R.**

In the face of all my foes

I am a reproach,

an object of scorn to my neighbours

and of fear to my friends. **R.**

Those who see me in the street

run far away from me.

I am like a dead man, forgotten in men's hearts,

like a thing thrown away. **R.**

But as for me, I trust in you, Lord;

I say: 'You are my God.

My life is in your hands, deliver me

from the hands of those who hate me. **R.**

Let your face shine on your servant.

Save me in your love.'

Be strong, let your heart take courage,

all who hope in the Lord. **R.**

## 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

Matthew 11:25-30

*(Lectionary volume 1, p 630)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*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.**

*A period of silence may follow the readings from Scripture.*

## Prayer of Intercession

On this Day of Prayer for Those who have Suffered Abuse, we bring our intentions with humility before our loving Father.

We pray in sorrow for the suffering endured by our brothers and sisters in so many ways.  
Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who were disbelieved or punished for trying to speak the truth.  
Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose memories have been reawakened and whose pain feels as fresh as the time it was inflicted. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who hid the truth from themselves and from others.  
Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the families of survivors, for parents who experience guilt, for spouses and partners who deal daily with long-term consequences, and for all who suffer pain. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who chose to protect the institution rather than the children and vulnerable adults Christ himself calls us to protect.  
Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who perpetrated these crimes and committed these grave sins.  
Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for ourselves: that in anger, dismay, revulsion and despair we might be bearers of light in the darkness. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have died: may they know the fullness of unconditional love when they see God face to face. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father, our hearts do not find rest until they come to rest in you. Grant what we ask and give us your peace. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

### **Concluding Prayer**

Loving Father,  
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 always act with compassion and justice  
and find peace in you.

Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Acknowledgments:** Readings from *The Jerusalem Bible* © 1966 by Darton Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd. Psalm 30(31) from *The Psalms: A New Translation* © 1963 The Grail (England) published by HarperCollins.

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