

DIOCESE OF OSSORY



Lent Resources

Celebrations in the Parish



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LENTEN CELEBRATIONS IN PARISHES



Celebrating Evening Prayer In The Parish

Evening Prayer forms part of a rich and ancient tradition of prayer in the Church. As distinct to private prayer, this prayer belongs to and is the action of the community, the church. It is public, communal prayer in which the people of God gather to give thanks and praise at the end of the day and to offer their prayer and intercessions in the name of Christ.

While vowed religious are obliged to pray this prayer daily, this obligation exists to ensure that the Church as a whole answers the call to pray constantly. All the baptised have a right to gather and share in this prayer. Many parishes use Lent as an opportunity to schedule this community prayer.

The prayer can be led by a priest, deacon or lay minister and can also draw on other ministers such as ministers of music, greeters, art and environment, lectors and servers. It is helpful to set up a definite prayer space in the Church where people can gather for this prayer. This is also an occasion when incense could be used.

You might like to invite a group of parishioners to prepare and coordinate this prayer throughout the Lenten season.

The prayer follows a typical structure that can be adapted to suit parish needs:

ORDER OF SERVICE

PROCLAMATION OF LIGHT

A candle may be lit and lifted in the midst of the community, who stand to greet its light. Incense may also be carried in ahead of the light. The following may be sung or spoken:
Light and peace in Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God.

EVENING HYMN

A Lenten hymn could be used here or a hymn such as "God of Day and God of Darkness" (Gather # 750) is very suitable.

SERVICE OF WORD

The assembly sit and are fed by the word of God.

Psalm:

The Service of Word begins with the praying of one, two or three psalms. These might include a Lenten psalm or an assigned psalm for evening prayer that can be led by a cantor or spoken by the assembly.

Psalms that can be used at this point in Lent include: Psalm 91 (Gather # 50) Psalm 51 (Gather #37) Psalm 131 (Gather #71) Psalm 141 (Gather #11 – if using this incense could be added to the coal during this psalm)

Silence

Scripture passage:

A reading appropriate to the Lenten season can be used. This might be a reading of the day or of the following Sunday.

Silence

SONG OF PRAISE

The people stand and sing together a setting of the Magnificat. At this point the people can be incensed.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As the people remain standing a reader or other ministers leads them in a litany of intercessions, for example:

Together let us pray for the people of this faith community. (pause)
Lord in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

For those who suffer and those in trouble...Lord in your mercy.

For the concerns of this local community...Lord in your mercy.

For the world, its people and its leaders...Lord in your mercy.

For the church around the world – its leaders, its members, and its mission...Lord in your mercy.

For the community of saints...Lord in your mercy.

LORD'S PRAYER

Together the people pray the Lord's Prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

Through our annual Lenten observance, Lord,
Deepen our understanding of the mystery of Christ
And make it a reality in the conduct of our lives.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

Signs of peace may be exchanged at this point: On this Lenten night let us
offer one another a sign of the peace of Christ.

BLESSING

The grace of Jesus Christ enfold you this night. Go in peace.
Thanks be to God.

All depart.

Communal Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

SETTING THE SCENE

Create a peaceful atmosphere as people gather with gentle music playing in the background. Use cloths of purple and white to decorate the sacred space offering the contrast of our need of healing, and being healed.

The Lenten space can be used as a strong visual centre for the celebration.

INTRODUCTION

Celebrant. We gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All. Amen

Celebrant: Welcome to our celebration as we gather together in the forgiving love of God. How we live each day has its effect on other people. We all need the love and support of family and friends to help us to be the kind of people that God wants us to be. The relationships we have with each other and with God are what make us the people we are. This evening we gather as a community to celebrate the Lord's desire for us to live lives of joy and peace, of justice and freedom. Just by coming here this evening, we have each made a step on the road to being the community God calls us to be. As we journey through this time of Lent, we trust that God is at work in our lives. We are aware that there have been times when we have thwarted God's goodness So tonight we come to name what is wrong in our living and to ask God's forgiveness and mercy so that we can live as loving people

Celebrant: Let us say the *Confiteor* together
I confess to almighty God...
May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us...

Celebrant. Let us pray,
Compassionate and understanding God, loving creator of all,
Open our hearts to your boundless love and mercy.
Give us the courage to walk into your loving embrace
where we are restored.
We ask this, through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.



LITURGY OF THE WORD**Reader: First Reading****Ecclesiastes 3:1 2, 7 8**

There is a season for everything. a time for every occupation under heaven:
 a time for giving birth, a time for dying;
 a time for planting, a time for uprooting what has been planted.
 a time for tearing, a time for sewing,
 a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking.
 a time for loving, a time for hating.;
 a time for war, a time for peace

Reader: Responsorial Psalm**Psalm 51**

Response: Have mercy on us O Lord

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.

My offenses 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.

Indeed you love truth in the heart ,
 then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
 Do not cast me away from your presence,
 nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Celebrant Gospel**John 5:2: 9**

Now at the Sheep Pool in Jerusalem there is a building, called Betlizatha in Hebrew, which has five porticos; and under these were crowds of sick people blind, lame, paralysed. One man there had an illness which had lasted thirty eight years, and when Jesus saw him lying there and knew he had been in this condition for a long time, he said, 'Do you want to be well again?' 'Sir,' replied the sick man, 'I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is disturbed; and while I am still on the way, someone else gets down there before me.' Jesus said, 'Get up, pick up your sleeping mat and walk.' The man was cured at once, and he picked up his mat and walked away.

Celebrant: In our first reading, the prophet reminds us that there is a time to reflect on our lives. to see what is bringing life, and what is bringing disharmony ... God loves each one of us and desires that we live in harmony with ourselves , with others, with God and with all of creation ... Ecclesiastes asks us to look now at what needs to be uprooted, what needs to be planted, when are the occasions that we need to speak out, and when might we be silent....

But we are aware that so often we struggle to live as we would like to ... that we don't make the effort to be kind; we fail to be gentle; we get preoccupied with less important things and forget what it is really important....

The blind man in the gospel story blamed others for his affliction of not being healed others got to the pool before him, there were only so few times when healing was available Jesus asks him, as he asks each of us, Do we want to be healed? And so we take a few moments to ask ourselves, do we want to be healed? ... [Pause briefly]

As we come to make our confession this evening, we remember firstly that we are approaching a God who loves us dearly ...

So for a moment in the quiet, we take time to ask the Lord for what in us needs healing, what needs uprooting, what needs planting ... and we tell the Lord the ways in which we have not been loving in our relationships, with ourselves, with family, with the wider community ... how have we failed to live as God's chosen ones [Pause briefly]

TIME FOR CONFESSION

[It might be helpful at this time to dim the lights in the church to let the choir accompany us in prayerful song ... to create an atmosphere in which people can reflect, pray and confess ...]

We have gathered as a community to pray with one another as we seek God's forgiveness. While you are waiting to come forward for confession or when you have confessed, I invite you to pray with and for the others around you....and when we have all had the chance of confession, we will conclude our prayer together ... Now each of you will have the opportunity to make an Individual Confession ... I invite you to come forward to one of the priests, to mention when you were last at confession, to confess your sins and he will give you absolution and penance

[Time for Confession]

Each Priest will present the confessor with a Prayer card. The prayer card should have three words to the Hymn 'Come As You Are' (It reflects God's acceptance of everyone) . This should then be sung by the choir.

CONCLUSION

Celebrant: Aware that we are children of the one God and brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, together we say: *Our Father*

Celebrant: Lord, as you sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts to make us your children, we thank you for your forgiveness and love.
Help us always to live the example of forgiveness in all we do and say.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Come As You Are

Come as you are, that's how I love you.
Come as you are, feel quiet at home.
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven.
Come as you are.
Why stand alone?

No need to fear, love knows no limits,
No need to fear, love never ends.
Don't run away shamed and disheartened.
Rest in my love, trust me again.

I came to all sinners, not just the virtuous.
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.
Each time you fail to live by my promise.
Why do you think I love you the less?

Come as you are,
That's how I love you.
Come as you are, trust me again
Nothing can change the love that I bear you,
All will be well,
Just come as you are

St Patrick's Day Prayer Service

Leader: Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. (pause)

All: I rise today
Through a might, strength, the invocation of the Trinity.
Through the belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness
Of the Creator of Creation.

I arise today
Through the strength of Christ's birth with his baptism,
Through the strength of his crucifixion with his burial,
Through the strength of his resurrection with his ascension,
Through the strength of his descent for the judgment of Doom.

Reader 1: Patrick was born in about the year 400AD, either near what is now the English/Scottish border (in what was then the Province of Britannia in the Roman Empire), or near the River Severn by the present English/Welsh border. Wherever he was born, he was captured by raiders, made a slave and taken to Ireland when he was about 16 years old. There he was forced to work in the fields, looking after sheep and pigs. He managed to escape in a ship which took him to France. Some time later he became a priest and then a bishop. He returned to his birthplace and had a vivid dream or a vision, calling him to return to Ireland and take the Gospel to the people there. It was as a young man (and while he was a captive) that he had much time to think and reflect, and he grew in his relationship with God, spending days and nights in the open countryside, looking after the animals, he became more and more aware that God was there with him. Patrick learned to live in the Presence of God.

(Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC, Praying Each Day)

Response

All: I arise today
Through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's way to life before me.,
God's shield to protect me
From snares of devils
From temptations of vices,
From everyone who shall wish me ill,
Afar and anear
Alone and in multitude.

Reader 2: When Jesus disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. Mk 6:34

Leader: Triune God, we confess your mighty strength, and we bring before you our needs on this day when we commemorate your priest and bishop, Patrick. Our response is Creator of Creation, hear our prayer.

For our Pope, the Bishop of Rome... for all bishops... priests and deacons, that they may bring the Gospels to all peoples as Patrick did, we pray

In thanksgiving for the gift of faith to Ireland and for the spread of this faith throughout the world, we pray ...

For our country and its leaders, for the countries of our ancestors, and for all nations that they may devote themselves to peace and the benefit of their citizens, we pray ...

In thanksgiving for our teachers and for good teachers who will teach their pupils many things, we pray ...

For all who have been abducted, enslaved by others or by addictions, that they may find genuine freedom and justice, we pray ...

For (other voiced intentions), we pray...

Lord's Prayer

Final Prayer

All: Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
 Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
 Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
 Christ, when I lie down., Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise,
 Christ in the heart of every person who thinks of me,
 Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
 Christ in every eye that sees me,
 Christ in every ear that hears me. Amen.

Leader: St. Patrick, Patron of Ireland, All: Pray for us.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle, All: Pray for us.

Leader: Live, Jesus, in our hearts. All: Forever!