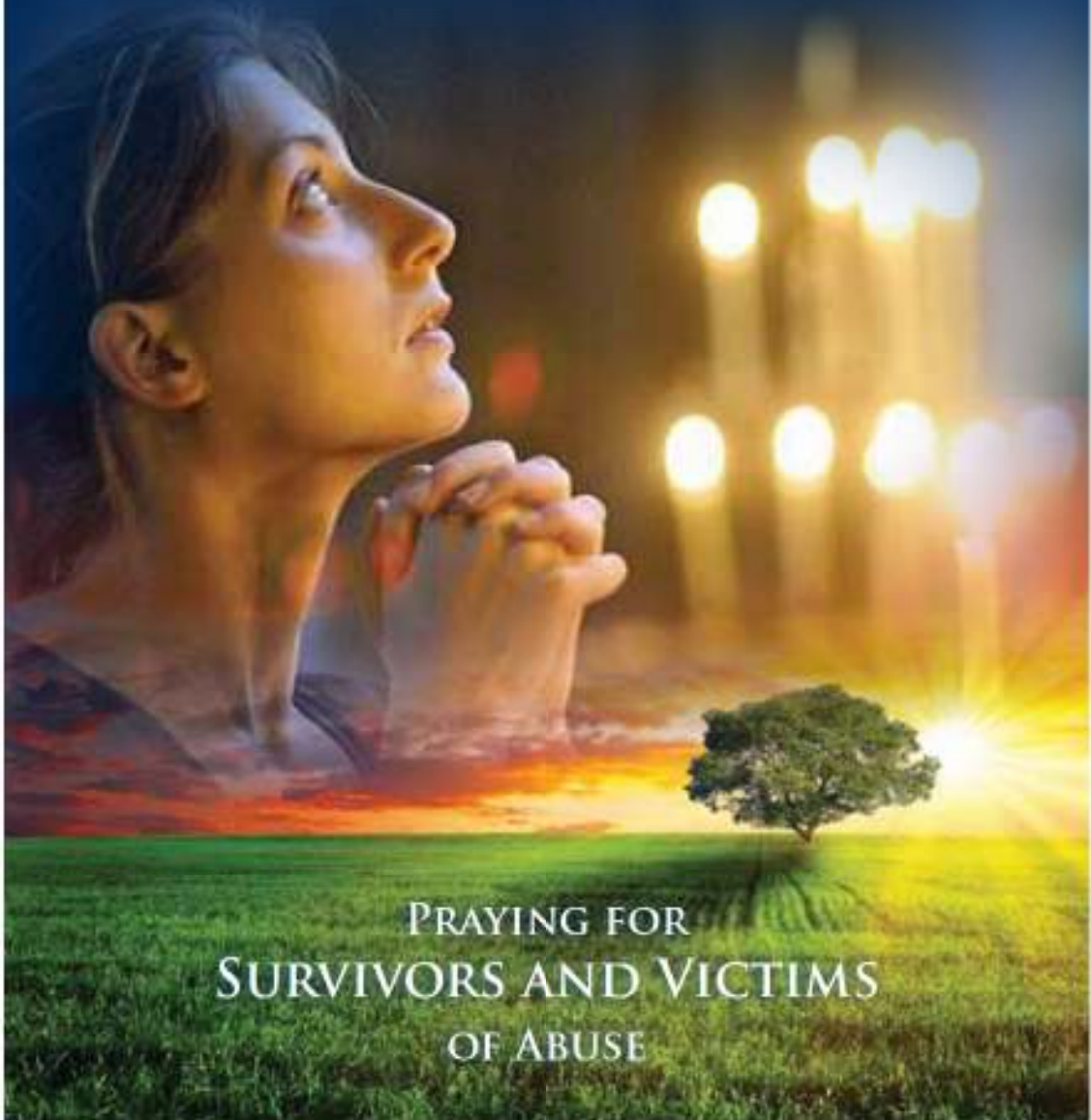




ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH
- ENNISKILLEN AND LISBELLAW -



PRAYING FOR
SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS
OF ABUSE

PRAYING FOR SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Pope Francis has asked that all should pray for survivors and victims of abuse. While this request focuses on sexual abuse, it is good to include the other forms of abuse: emotional abuse, physical abuse and neglect, which is the most commonly occurring form of abuse. We ask God to forgive the sin of sexual abuse of minors committed by members of the Church, including sins committed within families and educational institutions. We pray for forgiveness of the sins committed by those Church authorities who covered up for the abusers and ignored the pain of victims. On behalf of victims, we ask God to give them consolation. For those who accompany victims and survivors, we ask the grace of accompanying them effectively on the path of inner healing and reconciliation. We pray for ourselves that we may continue to show care for the victims.

Prayer at Lough Derg
Lord, we are so sorry
for what some of us did to your children:
treated them so cruelly,
especially in their hour of need.
We have left them with a lifelong suffering.
This was not your plan for them or us.
Please help us to help them.
Guide us, Lord. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (8:26-27)

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness.
For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly,
the Spirit himself expresses our plea
in a way that could never be put into words,
and God who knows everything in our hearts
knows perfectly well what he means,
and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit
are according to the mind of God.

A reading from the first letter of St Peter (5: 5b, 7, 10b-11)

Wrap yourselves in humility to be servants of each other,
because God refuses the proud and will always favour the humble.
Unload all your worries on to him,
since he is looking after you.

The God of all grace
who called you to eternal glory in Christ
will see that all is well again:
he will confirm, strengthen and support you.
His power lasts forever and ever. Amen.

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

From Psalm 33

The Lord is close to the broken hearted

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble will hear and be glad.

The Lord is close to the broken hearted

Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

The Lord is close to the broken hearted

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.

The Lord is close to the broken hearted

From Psalm 68 (69)

In your great love, answer me O God

I am wearied with all my crying,
my throat is parched.
My eyes are wasted away
from looking for my God.

In your great love, answer me O God

This is my prayer to you,
my prayer for your favour.
In your great love answer me, O God,
with your help that never fails.

In your great love, answer me O God

Lord, answer, for your love is kind;
in your compassion, turn towards me.
Do not hide your face from your servant;
answer me quickly for I am in distress.

In your great love, answer me O God

As for me in my poverty and pain,
let your help, O God, lift me up.
The poor when they see it will be glad
and God-seeking hearts will revive.

In your great love, answer me O God

From Psalm 26

The Lord is my light and my help

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

The Lord is my light and my help

For there he keeps me safe in his tent
in the day of evil.
He hides me in the shelter of his tent,
on a rock he sets me safe.

The Lord is my light and my help

O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.
Of you my heart has spoken:
'Seek his face.'

The Lord is my light and my help

It is your face O Lord that I seek;
hide not your face.
Dismiss not your servant in anger;
you have been my help.

The Lord is my light and my help

Do not abandon or forsake me,
O God my help!
Though father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will receive me.

The Lord is my light and my help

GOSPEL TEXTS

From the Gospel according to Matthew (11:28-30)

Jesus exclaimed:
'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.'

From the Gospel according to Matthew (18:5-7a, 10)

Jesus said to his disciples:
'Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.
But anyone who is an obstacle
to bring down one of these little ones who have faith in me
would be better drowned in the depths of the sea
with a great millstone round his neck.
Alas for the world that there should be such obstacles!
'See that you never despise any of these little ones,
for I tell you that their angels in heaven
are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

From the Gospel according to Mark (4:35-41)

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again.

From the Gospel according to John (10:11-18)

Jesus said:

'I am the good shepherd:
the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep.
The hired man, since he is not the shepherd
and the sheep do not belong to him,
abandons the sheep and runs away
as soon as he sees a wolf coming,
and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep;
this is because he is only a hired man
and has no concern for the sheep.
I am the good shepherd;
I know my own
and my own know me,
just as the Father knows me
and I know the Father;
and I lay down my life for my sheep.'

From the Gospel according to John (14: 1)

Jesus said to his disciples:
'Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God still,
and trust in me.'

From the Gospel according to John (14: 27)

Jesus said to his disciples:
'Peace I bequeath to you,
my own peace I give you,
a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.'

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Introduction

With humility of heart, we pray to God,
whose love and faithfulness endures forever.

We pray for people who have been abused
whether physically, mentally, emotionally or sexually
that the Lord of all tenderness and compassion
will restore them and give them peace.

We pray that we become more and more a community
that actively protects the most vulnerable people of society, particularly our
children.

We pray that the Spirit of Wisdom enlightens people
to put an end to acts of violence and abuse.

We pray for the healing professions
who minister to those who suffer violence and abuse,
that God will give them an abundance of wisdom, compassion and love.

Concluding Prayer

God our rock and our strength on whom we lean,
help us to create an atmosphere of trust
which allows the unspeakable to be said.
Help us to live with our painful memories.
May we support each other and be safe places for each other.
Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

VARIOUS PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS

Prayer

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.
Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,
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 of distress
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 peoples 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.

Prayer

Praise to you, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
source of all consolation and hope.

By your Son's dying and rising
he remains our light in every darkness,
our strength in every weakness.

Be the refuge and guardian
of all who suffer from abuse and violence.

Comfort them and send healing
for their wounds of body, soul and spirit.
Rescue them from bitterness and shame
and refresh them with your love.

Heal the brokenness in all victims of abuse
and revive the spirits of all who lament this sin.

Help us to follow Jesus
in drawing good from evil, life from death.

Make us one with you in your love for justice
as we deepen our respect
for the dignity of every human life.

Giver of peace, make us one in celebrating your praise,
both now and forever.

Amen.

*(From a prayer produced by the United States
Catholic Conference of Bishops)*

A Litany

In the Gospel of Matthew, even before Jesus is born he is called: "Emmanuel – a name which means 'God-is-with-us'" Jesus' first work is to accompany us. We hear this again the invitation to Jesus from the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus when "they pressed him to stay with them"
We invite him to accompany us as we pray: Stay with us Lord

When peace is fragile	Stay with us, Lord
When tempers are raised	Stay with us, Lord
When atrocities occur	Stay with us, Lord
When forgiveness is rejected	Stay with us, Lord
When talks break down	Stay with us, Lord
When agreements are broken	Stay with us, Lord
When darkness weighs upon us	Stay with us, Lord
When we cannot see you	Stay with us, Lord
When burdens feel too heavy	Stay with us, Lord
When hope seems faint	Stay with us, Lord
When we are weak	Stay with us, Lord
When faith seems difficult	Stay with us, Lord

Another Litany

We ask the Risen Lord to continue to walk with and protect those who are burdened. We pray: Walk with them, Lord

For all who have lost hope	Walk with them, Lord
For all who suffer	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are sick and in pain	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are struggling	Walk with them, Lord
For all who have been badly hurt in life	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are grieving	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are depressed	Walk with them, Lord
For all who feel rejected	Walk with them, Lord
For all who feel unloved	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are oppressed	Walk with them, Lord
For all who are anxious	Walk with them, Lord



INFORMATIONAL NOTE ABOUT TOWARDS PEACE

Towards Peace is a service offering spiritual support to people who have experienced abuse, be it physical, emotional, sexual and/or spiritual abuse, which was perpetrated by Church personnel, individually or institutionally. Funded by the Irish Catholic Bishop's Conference and the Association of Missionary and Religious in Ireland (formally CORI and IMU), the vision of *Towards Peace* is to provide a safe supportive space for people and their families, whose spiritual life has been damaged by abuse. It is also a response to the continually growing understanding of the spiritual impact of the trauma of abuse.

Through spiritual accompaniment with a trained spiritual director *Towards Peace* endeavours to accompany people as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace one step at a time. There is no predetermined roadmap on this journey. Each person travels at their own particular pace. The service is free of charge.

For further information please contact the *Towards Peace* office:

Phone: 00353 (0)1 5053028

Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie

Website: www.towardspeace.ie

Postal Address:

Columba Centre, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co Kildare.