

Diocese of Elphin
 Post-Primary & Third Level Prayer Service
 to celebrate



<i>Compassion</i>	MERCY	<i>Gentleness</i>
Love		<i>Sincerity</i>
Forgiveness		Kindness
<i>Patience</i>		<i>Generosity</i>
<i>Gratitude</i>		<i>Courtesy</i>
<i>Healing</i>		

on
 Friday 23rd September 2016

Greetings from Bishop Kevin



Thank you for coming together today for this time of prayer.

You may wonder why I have invited you to do this today. Since becoming pope on March 13th 2013, Pope Francis has frequently reminded us of two core beliefs which are shared by Christians, Muslims and Jews. The first is that God is merciful, not just sometimes, but always. He reaches out to us to lift us up. The second core belief is that God wants us to be merciful and kind to one another.

This year, Pope Francis has designated this year as a “Jubilee of Mercy”, a special year when we reflect on the Mercy of God and allow it to become part of our lives. He has reminded us how, in moments of quiet prayer especially, we come into the presence of God who knows us even better than we know ourselves. God knows our desire to be good and he also understands our struggles. He knows our successes and failures and he never stops loving us.

Pope Francis has also asked us to be “Merciful Like the Father”. We sometimes experience the Mercy of God in a very concrete way in the goodness of other people who believe in

God. In our turn, we can also be channels of God's mercy to others.

I decided to respond to the invitation of Pope Francis by celebrating the Jubilee of Mercy with different groups on different dates during the year. Already we have had the Jubilee of Mercy for the sick and those who care for them; for people expecting a baby; for people involved in sports; for priests. Today, I want to join with everybody who is involved in education to celebrate God's mercy.

I think our schools can be communities of mercy, if we all allow the love of God to touch our lives. We can be more forgiving; we can care for one another in times of difficulty or sadness. In that way, with God's help, we can be "Merciful Like the Father". In your time of prayer today, I invite you to reflect on the different ways in which your school is a community of mercy and to give thanks to God.

Thank you.

+ Kevin Doran
Bishop of Elphin

Sacred Space

Recommended Setting

An Assembly in which students, teachers and ancillary personnel have view of a Sacred Space that includes the following elements:

Jubilee of Mercy Banner / Poster

Jubilee of Mercy Candle

Bible

Holy Water (optional)

Incense (optional)

Artwork of students related to theme of Mercy (optional).

PowerPoint Projector & Screen (optional)

A Lectern (Music Stand) from which the service is led and the Word of God proclaimed.

Leadership Requirements

Presider

Choir and/or Cantor

Musician(s)

Ministers of the Word (to proclaim readings)

Readers (Participatory Reflection & Prayer of the Faithful)

Person to manage PowerPoint (if being used).

PRAYER SERVICE

WELCOME & GREETING

To begin the liturgy the leader welcomes and greets the gathering, reads Bishop Kevin's Greeting and invites everyone to join in the singing of the Opening Hymn.

OPENING HYMN

The hymn may be drawn from the sample list below, or another suitable song may be selected. Ideally the hymn will have a refrain that can be sung by all. It may also be possible to link it with a PowerPoint presentation or You Tube presentation drawn from the Internet.

Misericordes Sicut Pater! (Merciful like the Father!)

- Official Hymn for the Jubilee of Mercy

God of Mercy and Compassion

- PowerPoint slides to accompany available

@ <http://www.godsongs.net/2014/03/god-of-mercy-and-compassion.html>

Song of Mercy by Andy Severyn

- See <https://youtu.be/sKWab9-1LDg>

Heart Of Jesus, Heart Of Mercy by Br Michael Herry fms

- See <http://www.maristmusic.org.au/hymn-for-the-jubilee-year-of-mercy/>

Be merciful as God is merciful. Be merciful to all by Ian Callanan

Hold us in your mercy by Ian Callanan

Remember remember your mercy Lord by Paul Inwood

- *This can be sung as a round.*

- See <http://www.ocp.org/compositions/1480>

When the hymn is completed, the leader recalls God's gracious presence with the greeting:

Leader: *The Lord be with you.*

And the Gathering responds:

All: *And with your spirit.*

PENITENTIAL RITE

The penitential rite prepares all to receive the Lord's Word by calling to mind God's mercy and by recalling sins.

Leader: *As we begin, let us call to mind God's goodness, and our failures to respond to that goodness.*

Brief silence

Leader: *Lord, you call us to repentance.
Lord, have mercy.*

All: *Lord, have mercy.*

Leader: *Lord, turn us – again – to you.
Christ, have mercy.*

All: ***Christ, have mercy.***

Leader: *Lord, grant us new life – and new beginnings.
Lord, have mercy.*

All: ***Lord, have mercy.***

Leader: *May our great and gracious Lord have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting.*

All: ***Amen.***

GLORIA

The Leader announces the Gloria and indicates whether it will be said or sung. The leader, choir or cantor then begins by speaking (or singing) the first line.

A suggested beginning is:

Leader: *At this special time, let us praise God with special joy by
saying (singing) together:*

***Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,***

*Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.*

*Lord Jesus Christ,
Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand
of the Father,
have mercy on us.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

OPENING PRAYER

The Leader offers a prayer to God through Christ. This prayer speaks the purpose of the Gathering and asks the Lord's continuing presence and help.

A suggested Opening Prayer is:

Leader: *Gracious Lord,
Today we celebrate the gift of your mercy in the life
of our school community.
Open our hearts to your love and our minds to your truth*

*as we join in prayer with all the people around the world
who are praying at this time.
Help us to hear and understand your Word – spoken to us
today.
We ask this through Jesus, our Saviour and our friend.*

All: Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Service continues with readings from Sacred Scripture. These may be chosen from the readings that follow or from other suitable readings found in the Roman Lectionary.

The Minister of the Word speaks from the Lectern. It is important for all in the assembly to hear clearly. Therefore, every effort needs to be made to read the passages slowly and distinctly, with the sense of the meaning of the text in mind.

A short period of silence (ten to fifteen seconds) is recommended after each reading.

FIRST READING

Reader: *A reading from the Prophet Micah (Mic 6:6,8)*

*“With what gift shall I come into the Lord’s presence
and bow down before God on high?*

*What is good has been explained to you;
this is what the Lord asks of you:
only this, to act justly,*

*to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with your God.”*

The Word of the Lord.

All: ***Thanks be to God.***

or

Reader: *A reading from the first Letter of St. Paul to the
Corinthians (1 Cor 13:4-13)*

*Love is patient and kind; it is never jealous;
love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or
selfish;
it does not take offence, and is not resentful.
Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights
in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope,
and to endure whatever comes.
Love does not come to an end.
But if there are gifts of prophecy, the time will come when
they must fail;
or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever;
and knowledge – for this, too, the time will come when it
must fail.
For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is
imperfect;
but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will
disappear.
When I was a child, I used to talk like a child,
and think like a child, and argue like a child,
but now I am an older person,*

*all childish ways are put behind me.
Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror;
but then we shall be seeing face to face.
The knowledge that I have now is imperfect;
but then I shall know as fully as I am known.*

*In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and
love; and the greatest of these is love.*

The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Alternate first readings include:

Isaiah 25:6-9 – *The LORD will destroy death forever.*

Joel 2:12-19 – *For gracious and merciful is He, slow to anger, rich in
kindness*

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – *God was reconciling the world to Himself in
Christ*

Ephesians 2:1-10 – *God who is rich in mercy...brought us to life with
Christ.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The following responsorial psalm may then be sung or read.

Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8-9, 11-12

Reader / Cantor: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

All: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Reader / Cantor: *Bless the LORD, my soul;
all my being, bless his holy name!
Bless the LORD, my soul;
and do not forget all his gifts.*

All: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Reader / Cantor: *He pardons all your sins,
and heals all your ills,
He redeems your life from the pit,
and crowns you with mercy and compassion,*

All: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Reader / Cantor: *Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
He will not always accuse,
and nurses no lasting anger;*

All: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Reader / Cantor: *For as the heavens tower over the earth,
So his mercy towers over those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.*

All: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ideally the acclamation will be sung by everyone,
led by the cantor / choir.

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Open our hearts, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son. (cf.Ac16:14)*
Alleluia!

or

Alleluia, alleluia!

*If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him. (cf. Jn 14:23)*
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Reader: *A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke .
(Lk 19:1-10)*

All: *Glory to you O Lord.*

Reader: *Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the town when
a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance:
he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man.
He was anxious to see what kind of man Jesus was, but*

he was too short and could not see him for the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way. When Jesus reached the spot he looked up and spoke to him: 'Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I must stay at your house today.' And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. 'He has gone to stay at a sinner's house' they said. But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, 'Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will pay him back four times the amount.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek out and save what was lost.'
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: ***Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

or

Reader: *A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
(Lk 6:27-36)*

All: ***Glory to you O Lord.***

Reader: *Jesus said to his disciples:
"To you who hear I say,
love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.
To the person who strikes you on one cheek,
offer the other one as well,*

*and from the person who takes your cloak,
do not withhold even your tunic.
Give to everyone who asks of you,
and from the one who takes what is yours do not
demand it back.
Do to others as you would have them do to you.
For if you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners love those who love them.
And if you do good to those who do good to you,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners do the same.
If you lend money to those from whom you expect
repayment,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners lend to sinners,
and get back the same amount.
But rather, love your enemies and do good to them,
and lend expecting nothing back;
then your reward will be great
and you will be children of the Most High,
for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.
Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.
The Gospel of the Lord.*

All: ***Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

Leader: *Let us take one minute in silence
to ponder God's word to us today.*

Silence

Alternative Gospel passages include:

Matthew 7:7-11 – *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find.*

Luke 15:1-7 – *The parable of the lost sheep*

Luke 15:11-32 – *The prodigal son*

PARTICIPATORY REFLECTION

Leader: *I now invite _____ to lead us in a participatory reflection.*

Reader: *Our Daily Love
... and the refrain to be repeated
after each sentence is:*

*Let me love each person, seeing them
with the eyes of God who gives us everything.*

All: ***Let me love each person, seeing them
with the eyes of God who gives us
everything.***

Reader: *Love is patient*

All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is at the service of others*

All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is not jealous*

All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is not boastful*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is not rude*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is generous*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love is not irritable or resentful*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love forgives*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love rejoices with others*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love bears all things*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love believes all things*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love hopes all things*
All: ***Refrain***

Reader: *Love endures all things*
All: ***Refrain***

BLESSING

Leader: *Go in the peace of Christ, glorifying Christ by your life.*

All: *Thanks be to God.*

If a bowl of bowls of Holy Water have been placed in the Sacred Space the leader may also invite participants to bless themselves with the Holy Water after the Closing Hymn.

CLOSING HYMN

The hymn may be a repeat of the Opening Hymn, be drawn from the sample list below, or another suitable song may be selected. Ideally the hymn will focus on God's mercy and have a refrain that can be sung by all and will be led by the cantor and / or choir.

*How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him
Let us build a house where love can dwell.
In Christ there is no east or west
Seek ye first
Walk in the light
When creation was begun
Brother, sister let me serve you.
I the Lord of sea and sky*

***** ENDS *****

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

The school community now presents its special needs and concerns to God through Christ. Additional petitions may be added according to the needs of the school community. The leader may also ask people to speak their intentions from the congregation so the whole community can join in praying for these needs.

The Leader may begin with:

Leader: *The Lord has said "ask and you will receive."
Confident, then, of our Lord's love and mercy,
we bring our needs to our gracious God.*

Reader: *that Jesus may help each of us to be a caring and loving
person here in school, in our homes and in our
communities.
Let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader: *that Jesus may inspire all leaders to be just and merciful
and to promote reconciliation and human dignity.
Let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader: *that all new pupils and staff will feel welcome and
respected in our school and that Jesus will help us all
to be caring towards one another.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader: *that the poor, the forgotten, the sick, and the suffering will experience the compassion of Christ in their trials, and so be sustained in hope.
Let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader: *that the Holy Spirit will be the special friend of school communities throughout the world and help us in our work, our recreation and in our relationships with one another.
Let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader: *that all who have died, and especially those who were dear to us, may experience the boundless mercy of God in his heavenly kingdom.
Let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Leader: *Let us unite these prayers now with all the prayers in our hearts as we pray together.*

All: *Our Father*

CONCLUDING RITE

PRAYER

The following prayer, an abbreviated version of a prayer

written by Pope Francis for the Jubilee of Mercy Year may be made available via PowerPoint or as a Prayer Card.

Leader: *By way of concluding our time of prayer and worship let us pray together the prayer Pope Francis composed for the Jubilee Year of Mercy.*

All: *Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.*

*You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:
Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm,
may bring good news to the poor,
proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.
We ask this through the intercession of Mary,
Mother of Mercy,
you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit
for ever and ever.*

Amen.