



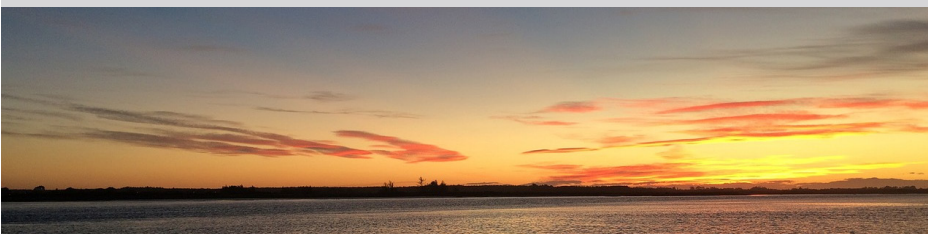
Praying Together over Those we have Loved

Background

Traditionally, November is the time when Catholics are particularly mindful of people who have died: the saints who have gone before. It is healing to remember those who have touched our lives, those who have loved us and who we have loved. The prayer outline that follows, offers an opportunity for people to come together and pray over those who have been a part of our lives, but who are no longer with us.

Preparation

- Think about how you will alert people of this prayer opportunity.*
- Think about your venue. Make sure you have comfortable seating for everyone.*
- Ensure everyone is warmly welcomed.*
- Have refreshment to share afterwards.*
- The leader / reader roles can be taken by a variety of people. Best if people have time to practice beforehand.*
- The songs and psalm suggested can be replaced by others. If a musician is available, this is a better option.*
- Any links you choose to use, open them before prayer begins so the prayer flows better.*
- Prepare a focus area where people can place photos or names of those they want to remember. Have unlit candles available nearby. At the appropriate time, people can get a candle from there, and place it in the focus area.*



Leader - Sign of the Cross:

Welcome A warm welcome to everyone. We have all gathered to remember. To remember people who have been important to us, people who we have loved and who have loved us. People who have shaped our lives, but people we can no longer trust. If you have a photo, I invite you now to place it on our central focus, and light a candle as we sing, on Eagles Wings.

A song

On Eagles Wings by Michael

Joncas: <https://www.youtube.com/Lo&list=RDy22lG4Z49Lo&index=1>

As the song is sung invite people to bring forward and place a photo of anyone they want to remember.

Reader Let's take a few moments to remember and be grateful for the people who have touched our lives.

For the people who have loved us.

All We give thanks.

For mothers, from whom we received our life and who shaped our growing with their guidance.

All We give thanks.

For fathers, who protected and encouraged, who shared our oversized dreams.

All We give thanks.

For friends who laughed and cried with us.

All We give thanks.

For children who were gone before their life had time to blossom.

All We give thanks.

For the saints whose vision of love rippled with hope and possibility.

All We give thanks.

For workers in the vineyard, who sought justice and cared for the forgotten and lowly.

All We give thanks.

For public figures who worked tirelessly to care for people.

All We give thanks.

For those – too many to name, who have lived and died.

All We give thanks.

Leader Lighting of candles. I invite you to come to the focus area and light a candle for those who you are remembering and praying for in this time.



As people come forward and light candles, this song is played: In God's Peace John Michael Talbot
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmUxSD-Xb3M>

Reader We listen to a reading from Isaiah 25:6-8.

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.

On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever.

The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. The word of the lord
All Thanks be to God.

Reader Let's listen to and reflect on the words of this psalm, psalm 62 - *John Michael Talbot* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf82JWp-KzQ>

Reader A reading from the Gospel of Matthew 6:25-34

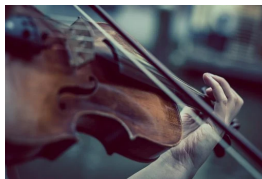
"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need

them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. The Gospel of the lord
All Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader For a few minutes we are taking the opportunity to relax and simply listen. This is a piece of music called Schindler's List, played by Christophe Letourneau <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-gmdAP7XEK>

You can either just play the music or play video and music. You might want to stop the video at 5.18, before the applause begins.



Reader – Let us pray

Loving God

How generous you are.

You fill our days with family we love
and who love us.

With friends to share the joy of life.
There is so much sweetness in the
company of others.

The memories created wind their
way deep into our soul and become a
lasting presence to savour.

Then a gap opens up.

We say goodbye to someone we have
loved dearly.

It is as though a beautiful tree has been uprooted by a gale force wind and lies still on the ground.

The wound of losing someone dear to us leaves an ache that is so deep, we have no words to give it expression. The loss accompanies us through our days.

And yet in all this, we are sure of your presence.

We are sure that your tender heart feels the wound of loss also.

We thank you for the wonderful gift of this loved one we have known.

This beautiful person we have been blessed to spend so much time with. We thank you for the field of memories, for the photos, the smiles and the laughter we have shared.

We thank you for the trials we walked through together. Even for the misunderstandings and the new opportunities they gave rise to.

We thank you for your love which 'bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things.'

For your that love we have shared, which stays with us today and which, 'never ends.'

We praise you for your goodness to us. Through Christ we pray.

All Amen

Reader Offering of Peace - After the resurrection, Jesus returned to see those he had spent time with in life. Each time he did this, his greeting was, 'Peace be with you!' He understood well, that life can be fraught with worry.

We also know that the peace of God surpasses all our anxieties and all our understanding. St Paul prayed, and we do too, that, 'the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

With that understanding, let us offer each other a sign of peace, a sign of consolation and a sign of hope.

People stand, move among each other and offer each other a sign of peace, consolation and hope.

Reader Dismissal – *with people still standing, say;*

Standing where you are, let's pause and receive God's blessing.

May God's presence quench your thirst for companionship and peace.

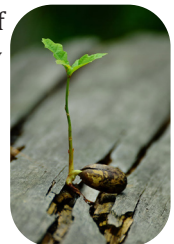
May God's love touch and heal the wounds of your heart.

May God's peace restore you and bring you to fullness of life.

And may the spirit of those who have loved you be a source of hope, guidance and joy in your life.

Through Christ we pray.

All - Amen



Refreshments

This prayer guide is available on the Auckland Liturgy Centre website - Ritual Prayers <https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/liturgy/resources/ritual-prayers/>

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