

# 2019 NATIONAL DAY OF SORROW AND PROMISE LITURGY

Sunday 20 October 2019

"Whoever believes in me,  
as the Scripture has said,  
'Out of his heart will flow  
rivers of living water.'"  
John 7:38



*There are several opportunities for prayerful silence throughout the liturgy in solidarity with those who have been abused, their families and communities. We remember that many of us have been impacted by the tragedy of abuse in our church, directly and indirectly.*


# LITURGY of SORROW and PROMISE

Catholic Religious Australia

20 October 2019

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and pay respect to the first nations people as the original and ongoing custodians of this land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside indigenous people for reconciliation and justice.



## PROCLAMATION

Voice 1: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.  
Trust in God still  
and trust in me.” Jn14:1

Voice 2: “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.” Jn 14:27

*Silence*

## GATHERING PRAYER

Leader: Peace-giving God,  
whose presence is ever reliable  
and ever unexpected;  
we come in the name of Christ  
to confess that we have sinned.

All: We have used our power to dominate,  
and our weakness to manipulate.  
We have evaded responsibility  
and denied dignity  
to ourselves and our brothers and sisters.

Leader: Hear our cries of distress  
over the harm we have done.

All: Breathe peace into our bodies and souls,  
soothe our troubled hearts with hope,  
steady our shaken spirits with faith.

Leader: Transform our brokenness,  
so that we may act with justice,  
and care with tenderness.

All: Peace of our hearts,  
we ask this with confident hope  
in the One who lives with you for ever and  
ever. Amen

## THE WORD: HEARING SURVIVORS AND FAMILIES

### *A SURVIVOR, A RELIGIOUS AND A PRIEST*

*“My abuse started as a young teenager in the Minor Seminary on the first night after we newcomers were dropped off by our families and the charming, energetic, student director we’d seen on ‘Come and See Days’ turned controlling, harsh and authoritarian. It was psychological at first but became physical two weeks later and continued. Since the family home was a place of verbal and domestic violence, the fear and terror added to the destruction of any self, of worthwhileness, of being in anyway loveable or able to love.*

*So much of the struggle was trying to keep loving the God, the faith and the congregation itself that had hurt me so much. Such terrible conflict and confusion. “If I had any integrity I should walk away! I’m only staying because I’m too fearful to leave”. I hated the man who did this to me, but my whole reason to be a religious was to forgive. On days like this of Sorrow and Promise, we religious ask forgiveness for our failures, yet I’m a victim of abuse by the Congregation as much as a member of it.*

*While the abuse was never forgotten, it was buried deep inside. The years of formation and ministry led*

*me through rebelliousness, to becoming a workaholic, then an alcoholic. Years fuelled by denial and anger. Though I was in fact a caring, compassionate and successful priest, so much was an attempt to hide the shame and inadequacy inside, from being seen. Everything felt a lie. Breakdown, when it came, was a blessing, I wasn't able to fight or struggle anymore. The wound still oozes, but at least I can look others, hurt by our church, in the eye and say "I know what it's like and I am so sorry you have had to endure this, too."*

*Music is played  
(5.23 mins):  
"Cry," Songs  
from the River,  
Volume 1  
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## *DEBBIE - A mother of an abuse survivor*

*"I have been so upset since my daughter told me what happened to her when she was just a little girl. I*



*am so angry that I trusted that man as a family friend and I thought a good influence on my children because he was a Brother and would help them with their faith. When I thought he was reading stories and teaching her about God he was abusing her. I feel so guilty that I didn't even suspect he was doing that and I feel so bad that she didn't think she could tell me or her Dad because we always said he was such an important person to have as a friend of the*

*family. We put him up on a pedestal and that made it too hard for her to tell us. I'm so angry at him and I'm so angry at God for letting that happen to my child. You don't know how terrible it is for a parent to know that we let that happen to her. I always wondered why she seemed to not care about her appearance and never had any boyfriends. She's a really beautiful*

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woman but she doesn't see that at all. I think her life has been ruined by the abuse."

**JERRY – 61 years old**

"I was sexually abused at school by one of the Brothers when I was 11. I didn't understand what was happening but I was frightened, and I couldn't tell anyone, especially not my parents because they thought the world of the Brothers because we were poor, and so



they didn't have to pay any school fees for me and my brother.

I always felt I was to blame and I realise now, I was pretty anxious and depressed most of my teenage and young adult life. I got married though and had some kids and that kept me pretty distracted

for about 20 years because I buried myself in work. I



*had a breakdown in my late 40s and couldn't work anymore and was moody and angry and depressed. My marriage eventually broke up and I ended up living on my own in a small flat and really for the past 10 years I have been living like a hermit and having little contact with anyone.*

*I got in contact with the institution and since then, have been helped a lot with counselling and other things like getting my teeth fixed and getting some decent furniture. I've felt more confident to contact my adult children and I got to see my newest grandchild which was just great. I think I'll be OK.*

### *Silence*

*To allow the words of the victims to enter deeply into our hearts, we enter into fifteen minutes of silence during which the music is played (3.00 mins): "Peace," Songs from the River Volume 4  
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## OUR RESPONSE

### Psalm 69

Leader: We pray in response,  
In your great love, answer me, O God

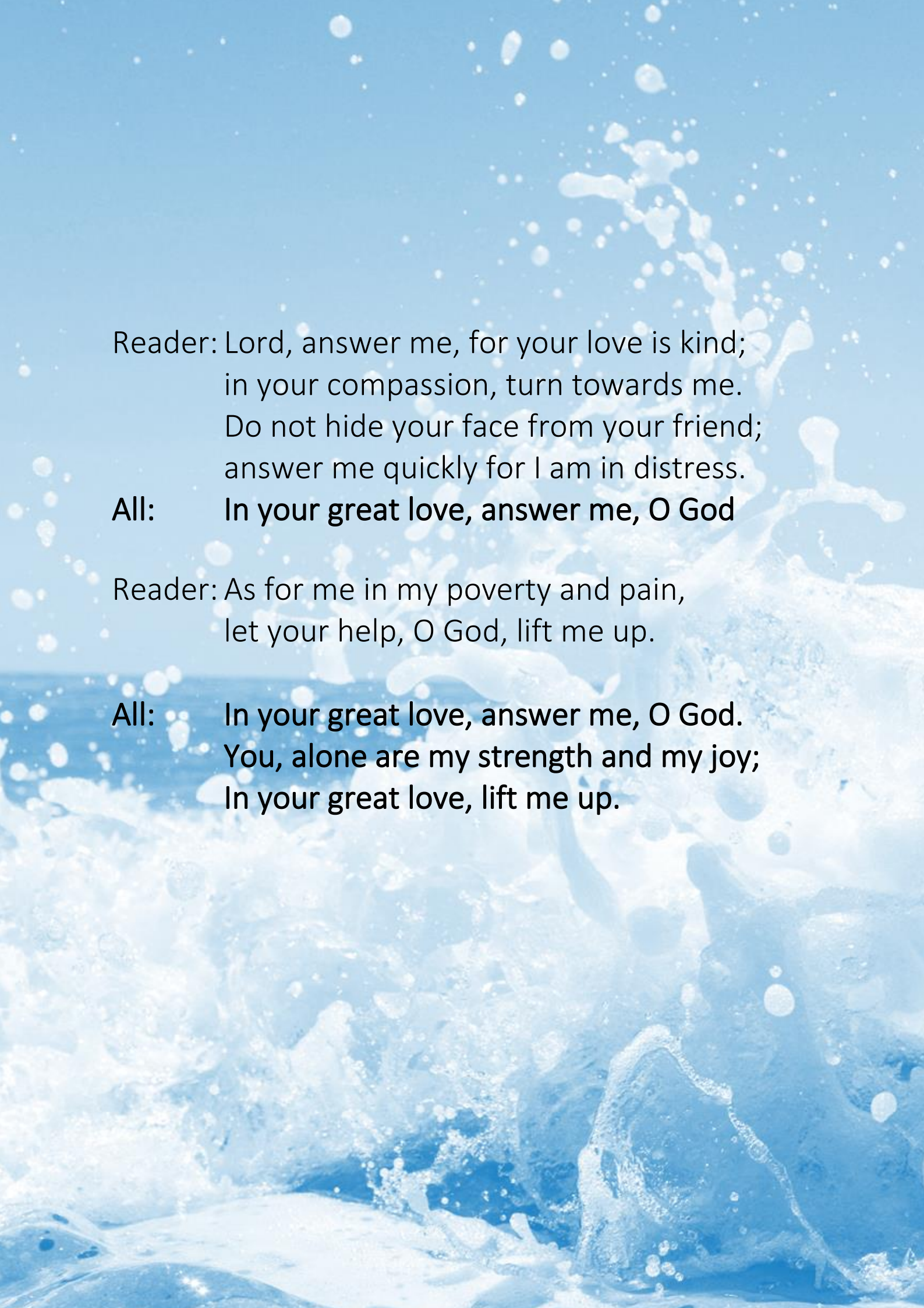
**All: In your great love, answer me, O God**

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

**All: In your great love, answer me, O God**

Reader: 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.

**All: In your great love, answer me, O God**



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

**All: In your great love, answer me, O God**

Reader: As for me in my poverty and pain,  
let your help, O God, lift me up.

**All: In your great love, answer me, O God.  
You, alone are my strength and my joy;  
In your great love, lift me up.**

## THE WORD OF GOD

Meanwhile, near the cross on which Jesus hung, his mother was standing with her sister, Mary wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

Jn 19:25

*Silence*

When the soldiers came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

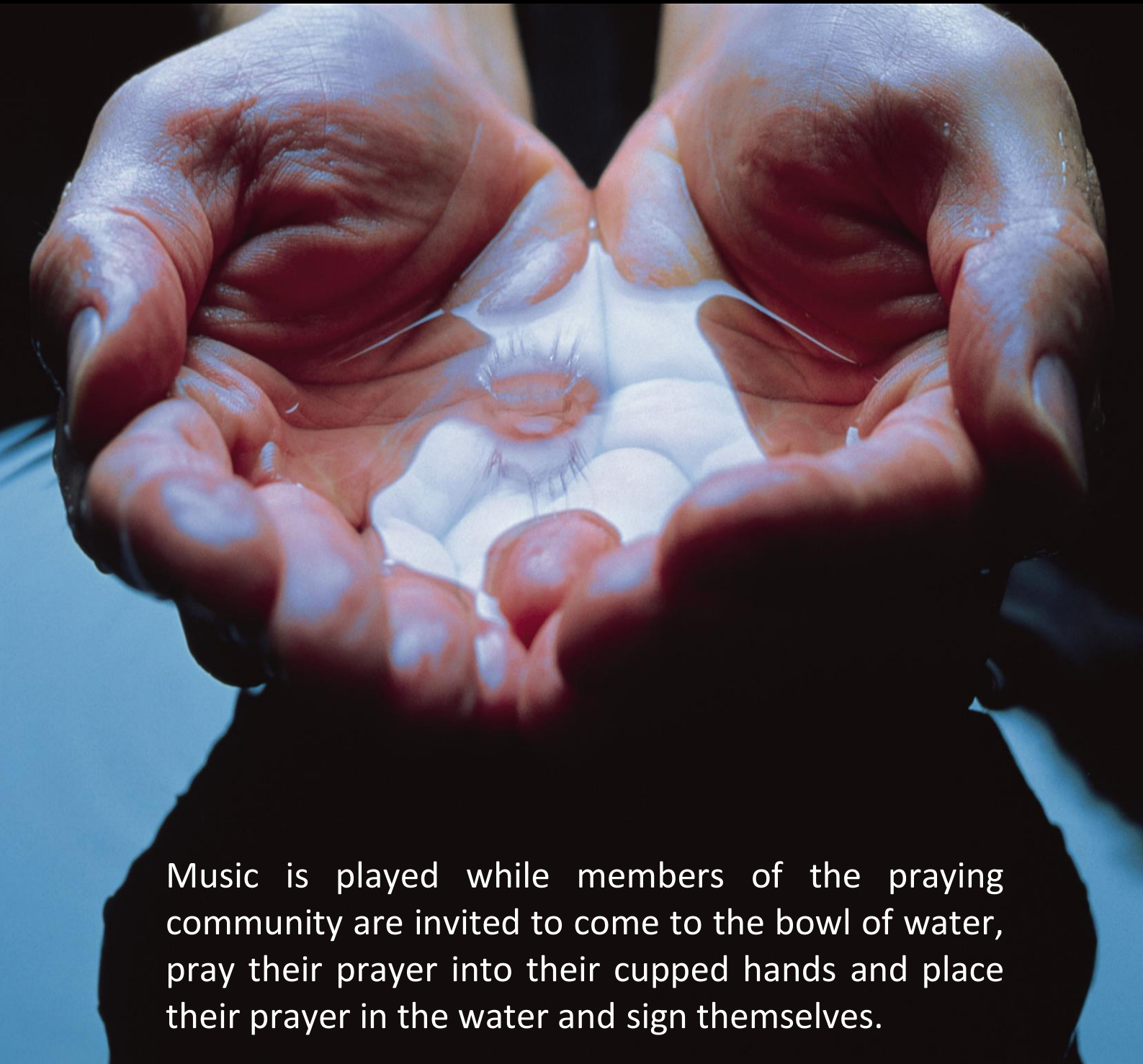
Jn 19:33

*Silence*



*Artist: Lance Stirling. Printed with kind permission of  
St Stephen's Anglican Church, Greythorn VIC.*

## OUR RESPONSE IN SILENCE AND RITUAL



Music is played while members of the praying community are invited to come to the bowl of water, pray their prayer into their cupped hands and place their prayer in the water and sign themselves.

Music: (4.40 mins): "Hope," *Songs from the River* Volume 5 © Ruth Fazal. Used with permission  
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## LITANY OF SORROW AND PROMISE

**Leader:** Have mercy on us God, remember us in your kindness, stand with all who are burdened. Enfold them in your healing love.

**Leader:**

For all victims and survivors of clerical, religious and familial abuse, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who have been deeply hurt in life, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are the victims of broken agreements, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who have lost hope, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who suffer, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are sick and in pain, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are struggling, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are grieving, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are depressed, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who feel rejected, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who feel unloved, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are oppressed, *Stand with them, Lord*

For all who are anxious about their future, *Stand with them, Lord*

Pause for a moment of Silent Reflection

**Leader:**

In hope and trust we pray:

For courage and wisdom,

For strength in weakness,

For commitment to justice,

For dignity for all,

For restoration to fruitfulness,

For conversion of heart,

We pray to the Lord

We pray to the Lord

We pray to the Lord

We pray to the Lord

We pray to the Lord

We pray to the Lord

**Leader:**

With this prayer in our hearts we turn again to You, O tender God.

All: And with Your help promise to commit to listening, believing, supporting and doing all we can, to ensure the tragedies of the past never happen again.

Fill our hearts with hope and peace that infinitely exceed all we could ever ask for.

We ask this in Christ's name.

Amen

# PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS - HYMN

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love  
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness only light,  
And where there's sadness ever joy

Oh Master, grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Make me a channel of your peace  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
In giving of ourselves that we receive  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.



# PROMISE STATEMENT

As Catholic Religious of Australia, we are stirred by sorrow for the failings of the past. We encounter the depth of pain endured within our midst.

WE promise to listen to and support those who have been harmed by abuse

WE promise to act to prevent abuse, respond with compassion and justice and put the protection of children and the vulnerable at the heart of all our ministries

WE promise to support all those walking courageously with the abused and those working fearlessly for the prevention of abuse

WE promise to work tirelessly and humbly to build a culture in our Church which is loving and answerable to the wider community

WE promise to partner with those who have been abused, with governments, civil agencies and society at large to continue to learn and work towards a safer, more respectful and accountable Church

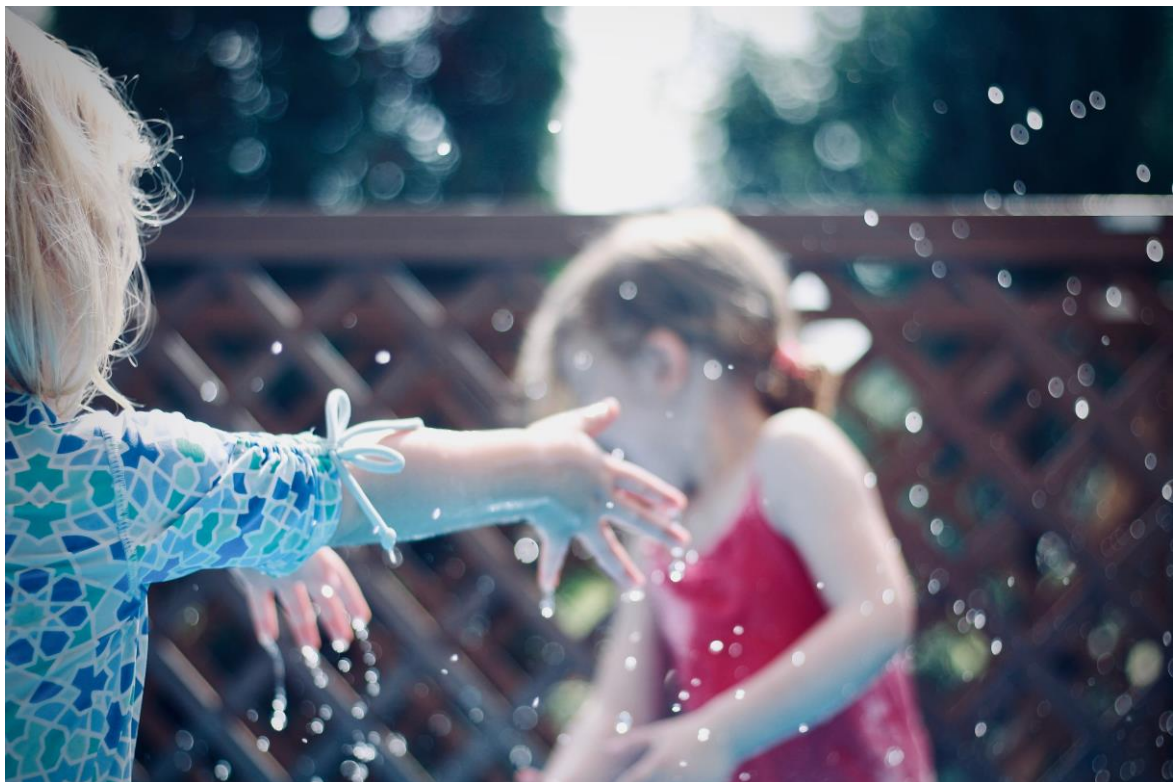
*(...PTO)*

# PROMISE STATEMENT

WE promise to be people of action, to embed prevention and safeguarding practices and governance reforms throughout our Church

WE promise to remember and to be forever changed

20 OCTOBER 2019





Sexual abuse is a crime. If you are aware of sexual abuse, contact the police in Victoria by calling **1800 333 000**; for all other states call **131 444**. It is also important for a person who has been abused to contact the congregation itself, which is required to comply with State laws and report allegations to the police or other authorities.

If this liturgy has caused you to experience distress, we encourage you to seek support from a friend, colleague, professional counsellor or pastoral supervisor. The following services may help:

- [Lifeline Australia](#) - 13 11 14 - Crisis support and suicide prevention
- [Beyondblue](#) - 1300 22 4636 - Support for depression, suicide prevention
- [Kids Helpline](#) - 1800 55 1800 - Phone Counselling Service
- [Suicide Call Back Service](#) 1300 659 467
- [Mensline](#) 1300 78 99 78
- [1800 Respect](#) 1800 737 732
- In an emergency call triple zero (000)

"Come to me,  
all you who are weary and burdened,  
and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28-30

