

TO LAMENT

is to taste the tears of God



MARIST BROTHERS
Province of Australia

REMEMBRANCE & PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

for Victims of Sexual Abuse

Let us begin by joining with Mary in opening our hearts to ponder and remember. She pondered all these things in her heart.

LUKE 2:19

[a period of silence]

Let us enter into the presence of the One whom she honoured: He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy. LUKE 1:53

[a period of silence]

Let us now enter into the experience of those whom we remember:

[a period of contemplative preparation, then a personal reading of this reflection]

Lord, I cannot find the words that I should say,
Nor will I ever know the pain nor know the deep despair
of souls who have been hurt for lack of love and care.
This is a prayer, a plea, that you would come
and gently heal the souls of all whose hearts still bleed.

Heal the silent scream of those who cry through nights and years.
The child who forever weeps and wakes in adult dreams.
Heal the pain that never seems to fade,
replace with love the guilt of endless shame.

Hear the voice that longs to tell its tale,
hear the words where integrity prevails,
hear the truth where honesty has failed.
Hear us now we call upon your name.

Heal all hidden memories in the deepest painful place,
suppressed through years of suffering.
From memories erase all thoughts of fear and failure
with tears that wash each face.

You, Lord, were stripped,
bruised and beaten, unprotected,
so vulnerable, derided, mocked, betrayed,
and in the tomb where you were laid,
we place the hurt, the hate, the wounds of history.

[Based on the Prayer for the Healing of Memories by Liam Lawton]

OUR RESPONSE - A LAMENT

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

For sin that hurts children and the vulnerable

For sin that steals innocence and disbelieves truth

For sin that crushes spirits and breaks hearts

For sin that is overlooked and disregarded

For sin that is ignored and hidden away

For sin that judges victims and excuses offenders

For sin that is criminal

For sin that harms the Body of Christ, the Church

Hear our supplication, Lord

Forgive the failures of your people

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

We make reparation, O Lord.

And show us your compassion.

And show us your compassion.

[adapted from a prayer of the Australian Bishops' Conference]

FROM SCRIPTURE - ROMANS 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

OUR RESPONSE

PRAYERS OF PETITION

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER
O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER
WHEN I CALL ANSWER ME.
O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER
O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER
COME AND LISTEN TO ME.

[Taizé]

We turn to God in sorrow and humility, confessing our sins against our Loving God and God's children, asking for mercy and forgiveness, justice and healing.

- Let us pray for forgiveness for the crimes and sins of sexual, physical, emotional and spiritual abuse perpetrated by Marists against children and young people.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, we ask forgiveness for the failure to love, respect, nurture and cherish young people in our care, especially the most vulnerable. (R)

- Let us pray for the survivors of abuse who have been psychologically harmed and spiritually damaged by people claiming to be followers of your Son.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, we pray for healing and peace for all those who have been abused and whose suffering is ongoing. (R)

- Let us pray for forgiveness for all those in authority who failed to respond as good shepherds to those abused.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, we ask your forgiveness for the deaf ears, the blind eyes and the hard hearts of those in authority in your Church. (R)

- Let us pray for the families and friends of those who have been abused as we lament the sorrow they carry because of the injuries inflicted on their loved ones.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, we ask you to heal the families and friends of those who have been abused. May Mary, the mother of your son, who stood at the foot of the cross, support and comfort them. (R)

- Let us pray for all in the Church whose faith has been shaken by the abuse scandals.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, heal the hearts of all those in our Church who have been disillusioned and saddened and whose faith has been shaken by the abuse scandals. (R)

- Let us pray that we may be a community that actively cares for and protects children and vulnerable members of our society.

(silent prayer)

God of compassion and love, help us to cherish, respect and protect the young and the vulnerable at all times. (R)

[These intercessions were adapted from the Kilmore Diocese Prayer 2017]

Psalm 34

I will bless GOD at all times,
praise continually on my lips.
With thanksgiving I glory in GOD.
Let the lowly hear and be glad.

Join with me in singing of GOD's greatness,
together let us praise our God.
I sought and GOD replied,
setting me free from all my fears.

Look to GOD, and be radiant.
This poor person cried, and GOD heard me,
and saved me from every danger.

The angel of GOD encamps
around those who revere GOD.
O taste and see that GOD is good.
Blessed are you who take refuge in GOD.

Live in awe, you holy ones.
You will want for nothing.
The rich and powerful suffer want
and go hungry.
Those who seek GOD lack nothing good.
Come, listen to me;

I will teach you to cherish GOD.
Do you desire life, and time to enjoy
success?
Well then, keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.

Finish with evil. Learn to do good.
Seek peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of GOD are on the just,
to attend to their cry for help.
Cry out for help. GOD hears,
and rescues from every danger.

GOD is near to those whose hearts are
broken,
helping those whose spirits are crushed.
Many are the afflictions of the just,
but GOD rescues from them all.

Evil brings death to the wicked.
Those who hate the just will be condemned.
GOD redeems the lives of GOD's servants.
No one who takes refuge in GOD will be
rejected.



Concluding Prayer

God our rock and our strength on whom we lean,
heal your people's wounds
and transform brokenness into wholeness.

Grant us the courage and wisdom,
humility and grace,
to act with justice.

May your Spirit breathe wisdom into our prayers and actions.

May we support each other and be safe places for each other. Amen.

Mary, Our Good Mother	pray for us.
St Marcellin	pray for us.
And let us always remember	to pray for one another.