

# The Light of Christ

## Prayer for Survivors of Abuse

Welcome

### Opening Response

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world.

**The light no darkness can overcome.**

Stay with us now, for it is evening.

**And the day is almost over.**

Let your light scatter the darkness.

**And shine upon your people here.**

### Introduction

The risen Christ, who shines forth in the Paschal Candle, brings light to those who are darkness and strength to those who are powerless.

### Listen to Scripture

#### Reading

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?

When evil-doers draw near  
to devour my flesh,  
it is they, my enemies and foes,  
who stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against me  
my heart would not fear.

Though war break out against me  
even then would I trust.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,  
for this I long,  
to live in the house of the Lord,  
all the days of my life,  
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,  
to behold his temple.

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.

And now my head shall be raised  
above my foes who surround me  
and I shall offer within his tent  
a sacrifice of joy.

I will sing and make music for the Lord.

Psalm 26(27)

O Lord, hear my voice when I call;  
have mercy and answer.

Of you my heart has spoken:  
'Seek his face'.

It is your face, O Lord that I seek;  
hide not your face.

Dismiss not your servant in anger;  
you have been my help.

Do not abandon or forsake me,  
O God my help!

Though father and mother forsake me,  
the Lord will receive me.

Instruct me, Lord, in your way;  
on an even path lead me.

When they lie in ambush protect me  
from my enemy's greed.

False witnesses rise against me,  
breathing out fury.

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness  
in the land of the living.

Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.

Hope in the Lord!

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Prepared by the *Isaiah Journey* Working Group of the Bishops' Conference  
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## Reflection 1

- What the places, or the people with whom, you find shelter and safety?
- What gives you strength?

## Read with the Church

### Documents

Extracts from *Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the People of God*

“If one member suffers, all suffer together with it” (1 Cor 12:26). These words of Saint Paul forcefully echo in my heart as I acknowledge once more the suffering endured by many minors due to sexual abuse, the abuse of power and the abuse of conscience perpetrated by a significant number of clerics and consecrated persons. Crimes that inflict deep wounds of pain and powerlessness, primarily among the victims, but also in their family members and in the larger community of believers and nonbelievers alike. Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated. The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults.

It is always helpful to remember that “in salvation history, the Lord saved one people. We are never completely ourselves unless we belong to a people. That is why no one is saved alone, as an isolated individual. Rather, God draws us to himself, taking into account the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in the human community. God wanted to enter into the life and history of a people”. Consequently, the only way that we have to respond to this evil that has darkened so many lives is to experience it as a task regarding all of us as the People of God. This awareness of being part of a people and a shared history will enable us to acknowledge our past sins and mistakes with a penitential openness that can allow us to be renewed from within. Without the active participation of all the Church’s members, everything being done to uproot the culture of abuse in our communities will not be successful in generating the necessary dynamics for sound and realistic change.

It is essential that we, as a Church, be able to acknowledge and condemn, with sorrow and shame, the atrocities perpetrated by consecrated persons, clerics, and all those entrusted with the mission of watching over and caring for those most vulnerable. Let us beg forgiveness for our own sins and the sins of others. An awareness of sin helps us to acknowledge the errors, the crimes and the wounds caused in the past and allows us, in the present, to be more open and committed along a journey of renewed conversion.

## Reflection 2

- Where do you see glimmers of light in the darkness?
- How do you see your part in bringing about change?

## Preparation

What are your sorrows with regard to abuse within the Church?

What do you hope for?

*You may be invited to share these (as much or as little as you wish) with the group or you may wish to keep them to yourself.*

## Prayer

Litany of the Sacred Heart — *see separate sheet*

## Notes

This format is based on one (*How Holy this Feast*) used in the preparation for 2018 Eucharistic Congress *Adoremus*. The Holy Hour can be used by itself, or some may wish to gather and reflect beforehand and bring the fruits of their reflection in prayer before Blessed Sacrament. Further Notes on the group and on Exposition may be found on the Liturgy Office website:

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Adoremus/HHTF-notes.pdf>

# Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament

## Exposition

### Song

*Possible themes include: the Light, Love of God for us, and Justice. Suggested titles:*

- The light of Christ

## Adoration

### Reading

- Repeat the Scripture reading (Psalm 26) or just selected verses.
- Alternative texts include: Isaiah 9:2-7, Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

### Song

- The reading could be followed by the singing of a simple Taizé chant, such as *The Lord is my light*

### Prayer

- After a period of silence the *Litany of the Sacred Heart*.

### Silence

## Benediction

### Eucharistic Song

- Bread for the world (Farrell)

### Prayer.

*The following is suggested from the Rite:*

Lord,  
give to our hearts  
the light of faith and the fire of love,  
that we may worship in spirit and in truth  
our God and Lord, present in this sacrament,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

## Reposition

### Acclamation

- *Laudate omnes gentes* Taizé