

Committee on the Liturgy

Solemnity of Saint Peter and Paul, 2002

Dear Bishop:

In the final hours of our meeting in Dallas we discussed the indispensable role of prayer and penance in the light of the pastoral challenges of clerical sexual abuse and our response to it.

In last week's mailing you received the helpful reflections of Archbishop Patrick F. Flores, Archbishop of San Antonio. Archbishop Flores suggested that we center on prayer and penance on the part of the Bishop including Holy Hours, the Divine Office, recitation of the Rosary, reading of the Sacred Scriptures and prayer in common with our priests and people. Finally, he suggested the possibility of fast and abstinence "if possible, on a daily basis."

The Secretariat for the Liturgy has developed this book of resources for *A Holy Hour for Healing* in order to assist you in planning days or occasions of prayer and penance in the light of clerical sexual abuse and our response to it (also available at on the Conference website at www.usccb.org/liturgy). Since the Bishops indicated a variety of preferences for dates for such celebrations, we have prepared this Holy Hour in such a way that it may be used by Bishops individually or with a gathering of the priests or faithful. As always, you may adapt this resource to meet your needs in any way you find helpful.

May God continue to help us to be agents of his healing presence in the world and through prayer and penance make us holier Bishops, holier Priests, and a holier Church.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend Oscar H. Lipscomb
Archbishop of Mobile
Chairman

If the Blessed Sacrament is to be exposed, the rites contained in Chapter II (*Forms of Worship of the Holy Eucharist*) of *Holy Communion and Worship of the Holy Eucharist outside Mass* should be followed. Additional resources may be found at <http://www.usccb.org/comm/pray.htm>.

- [A Prayer for Healing](#)
- [A Litany for Healing](#)
- [Readings from Sacred Scripture](#)

A Prayer for Healing

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong:
your only Son
was delivered into the hands of the wicked,
yet healed us with the blood of his cross.

May the gentle Jesus
join to his own suffering,
the pains of those abused
by priests who have betrayed your love,
and servants of your Church,
whose sin has brought us shame.

May Christ hear the cries of those abused,
may he quell their restless fears with faith in your protection,
their doubt, with confidence in your love,
and all rage with trust in your healing mercy.

Grant all Shepherds of his Church
the compassion to protect his lambs,
the strength to guide his flock,
and the wisdom to model their lives
on Christ, the Good Shepherd.

God of justice and compassion,
protect all children from abuse,
and deliver us from hate.
May we seek only justice and truth,
and trust in your unending mercy.

We ask this through the same Christ, our Lord.

A Litany for Healing

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Protect all children, Lord

With your enduring love

Grant us the grace, Lord

To protect and nourish the innocent

Preserve our nation, Lord

To be chaste and pure in love

For children wounded and tearful

Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!

For children confused or alone

Save, heal and protect them!

For children afraid or abandoned	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children beaten	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children who sleep in fear	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children afraid to go home	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children afraid of their abusers	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children assaulted	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For children whose innocence has been stolen	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For those who cannot trust, Lord	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For those who cannot love, Lord	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For those whose hearts are filled with fear	Save, heal and protect them, O Lord!
For the Church, called to be the light of the world	Banish all darkness from her children, O Lord!
For Bishops, called to be Good Shepherds	Make them vigilant defenders of the weak, O Lord!
For Priests, conformed to the person of Christ	Grant them purity and Christ-like love, O Lord!
For all ministers of the Church, called to live the Gospel	Grant them a love of Christian virtues, O Lord!
For priests who abuse children	Grant them repentance, O Lord!
For parents or relatives who abuse their children	Grant them repentance, O Lord!
For teachers and coaches who abuse children	Grant them repentance, O Lord!
For all who abuse children	Grant them repentance, O Lord!
To doctors and therapists, Lord	Grant compassion and skill
To houses of healing and renewal,	Grant wisdom and dedication

Lord	Grant a love for the truth alone
To men and women of the media, Lord	Grant wisdom and conviction
To lawyers and judges, Lord	Grant repentance and healing
To those imprisoned for abuse, Lord	Pray for us!
Holy Mary, Mother of God	Pray for us!
Saint Peter and Saint Paul	Pray for us!
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton	Lord, have mercy
Saint —Goretti	Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy	
Lord, have mercy	

Readings from Sacred Scripture

Strengthened by that food, he walked to the mountain of God.
1 Kings 19:4-8

Elijah went a day's journey into the desert,
until he came to a broom tree and sat beneath it.
He prayed for death saying:
"This is enough, O LORD!
Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers."
He lay down and fell asleep under the broom tree,
but then an angel touched him and ordered him to get up and eat.
Elijah looked and there at his head was a hearth cake
and a jug of water.
After he ate and drank, he lay down again,
but the angel of the LORD came back a second time,
touched him, and ordered, "Get up and eat,
else the journey will be too long for you!"
He got up, ate, and drank;
then, strengthened by that food,
he walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb.

Seek good that you may live.
Amos 5:4, 14-15, 21-24

Seek good and not evil,
that you may live;
then truly will the LORD, the God of hosts,
be with you as you claim!

Hate evil and love good,
and let justice prevail at the gate;
then it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts,
will have pity on the remnant of Joseph.

I hate, I spurn your feasts, says the LORD,
I take no pleasure in your solemnities;
your cereal offerings I will not accept,
nor consider your stall-fed peace offerings.
Away with your noisy songs!
I will not listen to the melodies of your harps.
But if you would offer me holocausts,
then let justice surge like water,
and goodness like an unfailing stream.

He was pierced for our offenses.
Isaiah 52:13--53:1

See, my servant shall prosper,
he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.
Even as many were amazed at him—
so marred was his look beyond human semblance
and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man—
so shall he startle many nations,
because of him kings shall stand speechless;
for those who have not been told shall see,
those who have not heard shall ponder it.

Who would believe what we have heard?
To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
He grew up like a sapling before him,
like a shoot from the parched earth;
there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him,
nor appearance that would attract us to him.
He was spurned and avoided by men,
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
one of those from whom men hide their faces,
spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,
our sufferings that he endured,
while we thought of him as stricken,
as one smitten by God and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins;
upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole,
by his stripes we were healed.
We had all gone astray like sheep,
each following his own way;
but the LORD laid upon him
the guilt of us all.
Though he was harshly treated, he submitted

and opened not his mouth;
like a lamb led to the slaughter
or a sheep before the shearers,
he was silent and opened not his mouth.
Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away,
and who would have thought any more of his destiny?
When he was cut off from the land of the living,
and smitten for the sin of his people,
a grave was assigned him among the wicked
and a burial place with evildoers,
though he had done no wrong
nor spoken any falsehood.
But the LORD was pleased
to crush him in infirmity.

If he gives his life as an offering for sin,
he shall see his descendants in a long life,
and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through him.
Because of his affliction
he shall see the light in fullness of days;
through his suffering, my servant shall justify many,
and their guilt he shall bear.
Therefore I will give him his portion among the great,
and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty,
because he surrendered himself to death
and was counted among the wicked;
and he shall take away the sins of many,
and win pardon for their offenses.

To be conformed to the image of his Son.

Romans 8:28-32

Brothers and sisters:

We know that all things work for good for those who love God,
who are called according to his purpose.
For those he foreknew he also predestined
to be conformed to the image of his Son,
so that he might be the firstborn
among many brothers and sisters.
And those he predestined he also called;
and those he called he also justified;
and those he justified he also glorified.

What then shall we say to this?
If God is for us, who can be against us?
He who did not spare his own Son
but handed him over for us all,
how will he not also give us everything else along with him?
What will separate us from the love of Christ?
Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine,
or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly
through him who loved us.
For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor principalities,
nor present things, nor future things,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor any other creature will be able to separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*One soldier thrust his lance into his side
and immediately blood and water flowed out.*

John 19:31-35

Since it was preparation day,
in order that the bodies might not remain
on the cross on the sabbath,
for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one,
the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken
and they be taken down.
So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first
and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus.
But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead,
they did not break his legs,
but one soldier thrust his lance into his side,
and immediately blood and water flowed out.
An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true;
he knows that he is speaking the truth,
so that you also may come to believe.

Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them.

John 21:1-14

Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.
He revealed himself in this way.
Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus,
Nathanael from Cana in Galilee,
Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples.
Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."
They said to him, "We also will come with you."
So they went out and got into the boat,
but that night they caught nothing.
When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore;
but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.
Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?"
They answered him, "No."
So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat
and you will find something."
So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in
because of the number of fish.
So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord."
When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord,
he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad,

and jumped into the sea.
The other disciples came in the boat,
for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards,
dragging the net with the fish.
When they climbed out on shore,
they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread.
Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught."
So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore
full of one hundred fifty-three large fish.
Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.
Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast."
And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?"
because they realized it was the Lord.
Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them,
and in like manner the fish.
This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples
after being raised from the dead.

Her many sins have been forgiven because she has shown great love.

Luke 7:36-50

A certain Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him,
and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.
Now there was a sinful woman in the city
who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee.
Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment,
she stood behind him at his feet weeping
and began to bathe his feet with her tears.
Then she wiped them with her hair,
kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment.
When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself,
"If this man were a prophet,
he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him,
that she is a sinner."
Jesus said to him in reply,
"Simon, I have something to say to you."
"Tell me, teacher," he said.
"Two people were in debt to a certain creditor;
one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty.
Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both.
Which of them will love him more?"
Simon said in reply,
"The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven."
He said to him, "You have judged rightly."
Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon,
"Do you see this woman?
When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet,
but she has bathed them with her tears
and wiped them with her hair.
You did not give me a kiss,
but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered.

You did not anoint my head with oil,
but she anointed my feet with ointment.
So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven;
hence, she has shown great love.
But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."
He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."
The others at table said to themselves,
"Who is this who even forgives sins?"
But he said to the woman,
"Your faith has saved you; go in peace."