



## Prayer Services for Survivors of Abuse and Those Whom We Love

Friday, September 29, 2017  
8:30PM Eastern / 5:30PM Pacific

Hosted by the Founders of The Healing Voices Magazine  
TheHealingVoices.com

### HOUSEKEEPING MOMENT

Welcome to this Prayer Service for Survivors of Abuse and Those Whom We Love. Before we begin, permit me please to explain our setting and process..... You may be happy to know that in some cities, several people have gotten together and are listening over speaker phone, with a nice evening together. We're delighted you are all here.

Our program begins with an introduction, followed by a song and a series of prayers to which you may reply or just "feel" an "amen." We have a Scripture reading and a brief reflection, a closing prayer and then, last, our HUM A LONG for Amazing Grace. All this ... in one-half hour.

During this prayer service, you may experience technical problems. Please use the chat box if you have signed on using your computer. If you've called in, please feel free to text me at <>. I'll do my best to help you, but please be patient! I'll be juggling a few things over here.

All who lead us in prayer tonight are survivors of child abuse, most by clergy but others by someone with authority in the setting of the Catholic Church. We have come together from all corners of the nation to pray tonight for all who have been hurt by abuse in the Church which we continue to love.

Now, let's begin with a brief moment of music to settle into this prayerful space, mindful of our Lord's sovereignty, justice, wisdom, mercy and love ...

### MUSICAL MEDITATION

You Raise Me Up ...

## INTRO: POPE'S CALL FOR PRAYER

On behalf of the Founders of *The Healing Voices Magazine*, I thank you all for participating in our prayer service today. My name is <>. I am a childhood sexual abuse survivor.

Today we join together as the Holy Father has encouraged us to pray when he approved the Universal Day of Prayer for the victims/survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Recently, The Vatican's Commission for the Protection of Minors said in a statement: "Prayer is one part of the healing process for survivors and the community of believers, and public gatherings for prayer also help raise awareness about the issue." I agree with this statement from the commission, and believe survivors of abuse have an important role to play in helping the Church heal. So...

I'd like to begin our service with a simple prayer suggested by the Vatican's Commission:

Since your mercy has been revealed  
In the tenderness of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who said to his disciples:  
"Suffer the little children to come unto me",  
we pray that your Church may be a secure home  
where all children and vulnerable adults are brought closer to your Beloved Son.

May all those who have been abused  
physically, emotionally and sexually by your ministers,  
be respected and accompanied by  
tangible gestures of justice and reparation so that  
they may feel healed with the balm of your compassion.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.....

## GUARDIAN ANGELS

My name is <> and my prayer requests the intercession of our Archangels.

St. Michael, our protector and guardian, may your wings shelter us from harm.  
St Gabriel, our messenger, deliver God's voice guiding us on our path to Him.  
St. Raphael, our healer, cleanse our minds and restore our faith that leads us to new life.

Help us draw closer to God that His healing grace may uplift and restore all wounded souls.  
Help us all become aware of the "luminous darkness" where we meet God in our deepest pain.

We come together tonight, oh Lord, to receive Your Light, Your Illumination in every dark place.  
We come together tonight, oh Lord, to receive light from each other.  
We have gathered together, at this service, as one,  
to offer prayers for healing for all who have been wounded in any way  
by the sin of abuse in our Church and in our world.

We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ..

## 1 – SURVIVORS

My name is <>, and my prayer is for survivors of abuse by clergy and others in the Church, as well as for all who have been abused as children or suffered other trauma or harm.

May we find a steady path toward healing, and a network of uplifting support in healthful relationships and may we be sustained in our grieving of childhood and all that is lost to us.

May we overcome any addiction, manage any chronic illness, grow strong in our daily routines, move beyond any toxic relationship and grow deeper in any bond with affirming people.

May we learn to manage wounds and serve generously with our talents and gifts as wounded healers, bringing others closer to the Lord with our testimonies of survival and new life.

May we take stock every day of the blessings in the “here and now,” and especially learn to see and appreciate our own talents, our many gifts, our resilience and our potential.

We ask this in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ ....

## 2 – FOR LOVED ONES

My name is <>, and my prayer is for the family members of abuse survivors, those in families of origin and also those in our adult families.

For husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers ... for our children ... for our extended families ... for our friends who suffer with us, sometimes so terribly deeply, by one degree of separation, O Lord, we ask you to ...

Bless them generously for what they have given us and we cannot repay,

Comfort them for what they have lost, help them find the space for their own healing, guide them out of anger and isolation where the wound we share may have led them, and keep kindly steeped in grace all those who have rejected us or attacked us for speaking truth and breaking the secret.

Please send your Spirit to mend all relationships broken, and to strengthen all relationships which have borne with us the burden of our experience and our recovery.

We ask you, Lord, to restore and keep our families, loved ones and friendships safe and whole, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ....

## 3 – HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

My name is <>, and my prayer is for professionals who offer health care for survivors and those whom we love: psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, counselors, physicians, nurses, as well as educators and victim advocates.

We ask the Lord to bless these professionals generously for their skill, training and knowledge, and for their persistence and patience in recognizing the complications and unique struggles involved in working with us.

Look upon their willingness to listen and learn from us with kindness, oh Lord, and help others see their example in caring for survivors of abuse or trauma and those whom we love.

Give them all the graces that they need to live balanced lives, to be preserved from the burden of secondary trauma and to experience your love for them as abundantly as we have felt their support and care. We ask this in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ ....

#### **4 – LAWYERS**

My name is <>, and my prayer is for all those professionals who seek to defend and otherwise protect survivors and those whom we love, including advocates, legislators, judges, magistrates, mediators, attorneys, law enforcement, reporters and victim service agencies.

We thank you, Lord, for their successes in bringing attention to this difficult and neglected controversy. We thank you for their persistence in developing and applying law to preserve the safety of children and to redress the injuries experienced by survivors.

We ask you to give them your blessing as they continue with their efforts at protecting the fundamental rights and dignity of all persons.

Please give them all the graces they need for the perseverance to seek your Justice --without succumbing to vengeance...

for the strength to reflect your Mercy-- without submitting to indifference....

And for the courage to pursue Truth and manifest your Grace -- without surrendering to cynicism.

We ask this in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ....

#### **5 – VACS, OTHERS IN CHURCH**

My name is <>, and my prayer is for all those within the Catholic Church who serve survivors and their family members in a mutual process of healing, justice and reconciliation, including ...

Survivor ministers, victim assistance coordinators, child protection professionals and spiritual directors, and all those who serve or have served on Review and Advisory Boards.

We thank you, Lord, for their work and commitment in making Church reforms real by patiently devising and operationalizing them.

We ask you to bless them for the role in our healing and reconciliation, and we ask you to grant them your wisdom and counsel as they continue to offer in coming years a doorway for us to begin and maintain a relationship with the Church.

Keep them well, and whole, and near you, full of hope. We ask this in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ ....

#### **6 – PRIESTS, SISTERS, ORDAINED**

My name is <> and my prayer is for priests, sisters, deacons, religious and all ordained and lay ministers.

Lord, may these, Your servants, not grow weary or disheartened serving, as they do, in a world which often belittles their very real gift of self – particularly because of the abuse committed by others.

May they be comforted whenever they must grieve (often quite alone) after learning a brother or sister was an abuser of one of us.

May all who minister to survivors of abuse and trauma .... Trust in the power of the Good News to be sufficient in their spiritual ministry ....

And may the Lord grant a special blessing for those forgotten priests, sisters and others who were quietly caring for survivors of clergy abuse long before institutional reforms in the Church began.

We ask this in the name of the Lord ....

## **7 – ABUSERS**

My name is <>, and my prayer is for abusers.

May progress in jurisprudence and law enforcement successfully ensure all child abusers are restrained from committing crimes – for the safety of all, and for the sake of abusers’ souls.

May bishops and leaders use their authority ... wisely .... to protect all potential victims from abuse and ... to protect all abusers from acting on their compulsions.

May the Lord give special graces to the families and friends of abusers to provide informed and compassionate witness and support, especially for following protocols to prevent further abuse.

And, may the Lord bring abusers into His Light so that they may be able to follow His commands, and serve His Will in mercy, justice and peace.

We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ....

## **8 – SUFFERING IN DISASTERS**

My name is <>, and my prayer is for my neighbors and all others who are grappling with the impact of Hurricane Harvey as well as Hurricanes Irma and Katia, Jose and Maria. We pray as well for those suffering from all other disasters.

And, we pray tonight in a special way for survivors of abuse among these victims, for they may be struggling as well with an added cross involving triggers of past trauma with limited relief.

Oh Lord, wrap all of us in your loving care. May we feel a shower of graces to face the hardship before us, with you ever near, as we recover physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually from these horrible events, and ...

May we remain strong in our faith, basking the soothing Light of the Son of God.

We ask this in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ...

## 9 – POPE BISHOP CHURCH

My name is <>, and my prayer is for the Church, for our Pope Francis, and for all the leaders of the Church to be moved by our prayers.

May they have all the graces that they need to advance in protecting all children, caring for all survivors of abuse, and growing in holiness as we heal together from the terrible scourge of child abuse within the Church.

May everyone in the Church come together in prayer and faithful obedience to the Lord, fearless in facing down evil and hopeful in the Lord's promises for new life, and....

Dear Lord, guide our Church leadership in their pastoral role to gather all their people and to turn to you in prayer for the healing of the WHOLE CHURCH.

We ask this in the name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ...

## 10 – FOR OUR WORLD

My name is <>, and my prayer is for the whole wide world and everyone in it.

Dear Lord, we lift up all Catholics and all our Christian brothers and sisters, those who are Jewish and of all other faiths. May we all share in the willingness to oppose the abuse of children and vulnerable adults, and may we have the fortitude to do so.

We also lift up unbelievers and those with ambivalent hearts, and those who have lost their faith as the result of abuse or indifference to abuse. We ask you to visit with extra love and light all victims of abuse or trauma and all victims of human trafficking, all who suffer from post-traumatic stress, and all who are suffering the ravages of war and conflict.

Send your Spirit with its many gifts to all of these, oh Lord, and draw them to the fount of all the graces they need for a safer life now and a more peaceful future.

Remember us, too, Lord, gathered here tonight. Free us from whatever holds us back so we may flourish in lives you have given us.

Help us all to be healed, each of our unique burden, so we may be free to offer all our talent generously to this, Lord, your world.

We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ...

## SCRIPTURE READING

A Reading of the Gospel According to Matthew (28:1-10)

ALL: GLORY TO YOU OH LORD

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow. The guards were shaken with fear of him and became like dead men. Then the angel said to the women in reply, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said.

The Word of the Lord.

## REFLECTION

*A survivor's reflection on how Easter morning both Mary's went to the tomb under the sure knowledge that evil had triumphed over innocence and holiness. It took an angel to remove the stone that could show them otherwise—that Jesus has vanquished death, suffering, sin and evil, even the evil that harmed us as children.*

## HOUSEKEEPING

In a moment, our prayer service will conclude with a closing prayer and the song AMAZING GRACE.

On behalf of all the founders of The Healing Voices Magazine and Spirit Fire, I thank you for joining us. It has given all of us great joy to gather in prayer with you.

Would you like to know more about integrating our Catholic faith into recovery from abuse? Please visit our website [THE HEALING VOICES DOT COM](http://THE HEALING VOICES DOT COM).

Would you like to offer similar services or partner with survivors to advance recovery from spiritual wounds? Please visit [SPIRIT FIRE DOT LIVE](http://SPIRIT FIRE DOT LIVE).

After this service ends, you will receive an email with this information, as well as an opportunity to provide feedback so we may make these prayers services better.

Also, after the service ends, I will remain online for anyone who wishes to speak.

You may also contact me at the following email: [TERESA @ SPIRIT FIRE DOT LIVE](mailto:TERESA@SPIRITFIREDOTLIVE). I will be happy to put you in touch with others who participated in this prayer service if both parties agree to connect.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are suffering alone, help is there. If tonight brings up feelings that are too heavy or overwhelming, you can call the National Suicide Prevention Line 1 800 273 8255 or Google its chat line. This information is also in the email you received this morning.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Oh Lord, re-create us to become the person whom You created,  
And let us be that person well!

Send us Your Spirit

To give us the knowledge and understanding we need to heal and bring healing to others,  
To bless us with wisdom and counsel which we may share with others,  
To grant us fortitude in the daunting effort to recover and help others recover,  
To inspire us with the freedom of humility and the wonder of Your Magnificence.

Lead us to wholeness, Lord, lead us to holiness.

Accept the ashes of what has been destroyed, and return the riches You have promised.

Refashion our suffering into love, so we may live as wounded healers serving those around us.

Remind us every day how

In the sight of Your all-seeing eye, Lord, we are each beautiful.

In Your wounded heart, Lord, we are each loved in perfection.

As your reflection in Creation, Lord, we each are completely and totally lovable.

We praise you, oh God, and raise ALL THESE PRAYERS TONIGHT up to You, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen..... Now, is everybody ready to hum along?

**AMAZING GRACE**

**EVERYBODY!**

**HUM A LONG**

We will keep the line open now for up to an hour – if attendees want to stay and talk. If there are a lot of people, I'll facilitate in a round table approach. If just a few, we will all just talk but I'll continue to serve as a facilitator to be sure just technically, by phone, everyone is heard.

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