**Praying**

**for the**

**Faithful Departed**

A painting of a cave entrance

Description automatically generated

Resource for Parish Liturgy During the Month of November

*As visitors enter the church, they are given a candle representing light and hope in the midst of grief and darkness. During the ceremony, the candles are brought forward to the front of the altar in memory of those who died.*

**OPENING HYMN**

**Be Still for the Presence of the Lord** Evans

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,

The holy One, is here;

Come bow before him now

With reverence and fear

In him no sin is found

We stand on holy ground.

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,

The holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around;

He burns with holy fire,

With splendour he is crowned:

How awesome is the sight

Our radiant king of light!

Be still, for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place:

He comes to cleanse and heal,

To minister his grace -

No work too hard for him.

In faith receive from him.

Be still, for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place.

Be Not Afraid

**You are Mine** De Angelis/Marcucci

I will come to you in the silence

I will lift you from all your fear

You will hear My voice

I claim you as My choice

Be still, and know I am near

I am hope for all who are hopeless

I am eyes for all who long to see

In the shadows of the night,

I will be your light

Come and rest in Me

Do not be afraid, I am with you

I have called you each by name

Come and follow Me

I will bring you home

I love you and you are mine

I am strength for all the despairing

Healing for the ones who dwell in shame

All the blind will see, the lame will all run free

And all will know My name

Do not be afraid, I am with you

I have called you each by name

Come and follow Me

I will bring you home

I love you and you are mine

I am the Word that leads all to freedom

I am the peace the world cannot give

I will call your name, embracing all your pain

Stand up, now, walk, and live

Do not be afraid, I am with you

I have called you each by name

Come and follow Me

I will bring you home

I love you and you are mine

**INTRODUCTION**

November affords us the opportunity to pause, reflect and remember all those who have died and gone before us and rest in the sleep of peace. This time is also an opportunity for our parish to gather, to pray together and to find comfort in the knowledge that Jesus is with us throughout all our suffering and loneliness, and he continues to journey with us.

Grief and loss deeply affects us all and often in different ways. For some, it leaves us in the grip of fear and hopelessness, just like the apostles experienced in the days following the death of their beloved teacher, friend and master. They locked themselves away in this fear and hopelessness. However, it was into this turmoil that Jesus appeared, bringing with him his peace (John 20:19-20). "Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” And so it is for us. Jesus understands our grief. He understands our fear. He understands our hopelessness. He understands each of us and leads us into His peace.

We now light the Paschal Candle, the symbol of the Risen Christ among us…..Come, Lord Jesus. The lighted candle reminds us that in our grief and darker moments, Christ our Light is with us. This is our hope - that those who have died now rest with God. Our faith assures us that we will be reunited with them again when there will be no more partings.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, you are the God of Promise.

As we gather in your name, inspire us with the confidence to know that you make all things new. You promised your disciples that you have a place prepared for all those who take up the Cross and follow you.

May we hold on to the promise that you have prepared a place for our loved ones in your heavenly kingdom.

We make this prayer through Christ, Our Lord.

**Amen.**

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**FIRST READING**

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom. (3:1-9)

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die, their going looked like a disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are at peace.

If they experienced punishment as men see it, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their affliction, great will their blessings be.

God has put them to the test and proved them to be worthy with him; he has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them as a holocaust. When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble, so will they. They shall judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever. They who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

**R./ The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I want.**

The Lord is my Shepherd,

there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures

where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me,

to revive my drooping spirit. **R/**

He guides me along the right path,

he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness,

no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff,

with these you give me comfort. **R/**

You have prepared a banquet for me

in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil,

my cup is overflowing. **R/**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me

all the days of my life.

In the Lord’s own house shall I dwell,

for ever and ever. **R/**

**SECOND READING**

A reading from the First letter of St John. (1John 3:1-6)

Think of love the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God’s children, and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

*Before the Gospel is proclaimed, the congregation is invited to light their candles. Having spent some time in silent prayer, remembering those who have died, they are invited to bring the candles to a designated space in the sanctuary, accompanied by music/hymn.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

It is my Father’s will, says the Lord,

That whoever believes in the Son

Shall have eternal life,

And that I shall raise him up on the last day.

**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL**

A reading from St Matthew's Gospel.

At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**HOMILY**

**INTERCESSIONS**

1. May God give a place in the kingdom of heaven to all the faithful departed. **Lord, hear us.**
2. We pray for all those who mourn the death of a child, or a husband or wife, a parent, a brother or a sister, a relative or a friend. **Lord, hear us.**
3. We pray for all those who have died alone, unwanted and unmourned. Welcome them Lord into your heavenly kingdom. **Lord, hear us.**
4. We pray for all those who work in health and palliative care, those who work in funeral ministry and our clergy. We pray that the Holy Spirit will fill them with His compassion and wisdom as they minister to the dying and bereaved. **Lord, hear us.**
5. We pray for all those who have suffered an unspeakable loss and who are unable to overcome their sorrow. **Lord, hear us.**
6. We pray for those who have died and have no one to mourn and pray for them. **Lord, hear us.**
7. A Dhia, Gabhaimis buíochas leo siúd a chabhraoinn in aonslí le h-einne atá ag fulaingt pian an bhais. **A thiarna, eist linn.**
8. We pray for one another, strengthen our faith and may we may find peace knowing that our loved ones are at peace with our Lord and Saviour. **Lord, hear us.**

**LITANY OF HOPE**

As we stand together the response to each invocation is:

**R./ Our Hope is in you, Lord God.**

Come to us, O God, when the night surrounds us. (R)

Come to us in the night of disappointment. (R)

Come to us in the night of guilt.(R)

Come to us in the night of fear.(R)

Come to us in the night of hatred.(R)

Come to us in the night of loneliness.(R)

Come to us in the night lost love.(R)

Come to us in the night of anxiety.(R)

Come to us in the night of pain.(R)

Come to us in the night of questioning.(R)

Come to us in the night of rejection.(R)

Come to us in the night of broken relationships.(R)

Come to us in the night of despair.(R)

Come to us in the night of hopelessness.(R)

Come to us in the night of death and stay with me, my God in every night. (R)

(Litany adapted from Living Church Resources – Diocese of Down & Connor)

Let us bring all these prayers before our Father in the words Jesus gave us:

**Our Father...**

**REFLECTION**

**The Empty Chair**

Grief sometimes comes in empty chairs

or empty stares

and sometimes whispers

“why weren’t you there?

I needed you…”

Patience sometimes builds with empty chairs

and empty stares

and sometimes we wait

for love to come say,

“thanks… for waiting

and believing in me…”

The loneliness in empty chairs

and empty stares

forgotten dates

and poignant waits

is do-able

bear-able

Yes. It really is…

God’s unseen Body sits across

in that empty chair

and loves

and listens

and waits

until we stop

to hear Him ~ -Deb Vaughn

**Music** A Time to Remember *Lawton*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, God, whose days are without end

and whose mercies beyond counting.

Keep us mindful that life is short and the hour of death unknown.

Let your spirit guide our days on earth

in the ways of holiness and justice,

that we may serve you in union with the whole Church,

sure in faith, strong in hope, perfect in love.

And when our earthly journey is ended,

lead us rejoicing into your kingdom,

where you live for ever and ever. **Amen**.

**FINAL BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. **Amen.**

The Lord lift up his countenance to you and give you his peace. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, ✠ the Son and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen**.

Our Service of remembrance is ended; go in the peace of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**FINAL HYMN**

**May the Road Rise to Meet You** Munro

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

May the rain fall softly on your fields

And until we meet again

May you keep safe

In the gentle loving arms of God

For everything there is a season

A time for meeting

A time to say goodbye

In all things

God is near

Always guiding your way

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

May the rain fall softly on your fields

And until we meet again

May you keep safe

In the gentle loving arms of God

For everything there is a season

A time for laughter

A time for tears and pain

In all things

God is near

Always guiding your way

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

May the rain fall softly on your fields

And until we meet again

May you keep safe

In the gentle loving arms of God

**Abide With Me** Lyte

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;

the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.

When other helpers fail and comforts flee,

Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;

earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.

Change and decay in all around I see.

O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour.

What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?

Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?

Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless,

ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.

Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?

I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes.

Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;

in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

The Scripture readings included in this program have been taken from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition translation.

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