

CRACKED WIDE OPEN

Diocesan Lent Course 2021

Session 1 – Come To Me

Notes:

- This outline order of service is provided to assist parishes where the provision of small groups does not, for whatever reason, prove possible in Lent. (It could, if so desired, be used in addition to small groups – this is a local decision.)
- The use of this outline is another way to encourage people to engage with the filmed conversation between the two bishops and move, from that and the gospel passage, into some reflection on the ministry, mission and unity of the Church.
- As it is an act of worship consideration should be given to the use of silence and music both of which can be inserted at various places in the celebration. Local custom and the availability of resources will dictate the musical provision but – please try to use some as it introduces another dimension to the assembly.
- The use of silence should be considered particularly in relation to reflection following the filmed conversation and around the use of the suggested areas for thoughtful reflection and/or discussion.
- Local circumstances, numbers attending and current regulations and restrictions will all need to be considered by those planning the service.
- The filmed conversation for this week is the longest of the five. The Guidance Notes suggest how this might be split in half.

Before the session begins, place a copy of Rublev's Icon of the Trinity in a central position. Prepare a bowl and jug of water.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

We have too often exchanged the worship of the living God for
idols of our own imagining.
As we offer our praises to the holy and undivided Trinity,
and to worship him in spirit and in truth,
let us call to mind our sins.

We pause for a moment to recall those times we have fallen short in our Christian life.

Father, you come to meet us when we return to you:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, you died on the cross for our sins:

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, you give us life and peace:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

Opening Prayer

Holy God,
our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings from the Bible and 'The Church: towards a common vision'

Mark 1:9-15

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

[New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised]

The Church: towards a common vision

53. One such exercise of oversight reflects that quality of the Church which might be termed "synodality" or "conciliarity." The word synod comes from the Greek terms syn (with) and odos (way) suggesting a "walking together." Both synodality and conciliarity signify that "each member of the Body of Christ, by virtue of baptism, has his or her place and proper

responsibility” in the communion of the church. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the whole Church is synodal/ conciliar, at all levels of ecclesial life: local, regional and universal. The quality of synodality or conciliarity reflects the mystery of the trinitarian life of God, and the structures of the Church express this quality so as to actualize the community’s life as a communion. In the local eucharistic community, this quality is experienced in the profound unity in love and truth between the members and their presiding minister. In crucial situations synods have come together to discern the apostolic faith in response to doctrinal or moral dangers or heresies, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised to send after his return to the Father (cf. John 16:7.12-14). Ecumenical synods enjoyed the participation of leaders from the entire Church; their decisions were received by all as an acknowledgment of the important service they played in fostering and maintaining communion throughout the Church as a whole. The churches currently have different views and practices about the participation and role of the laity in synods.

We listen to the Bishops’ Conversation for this session.

Silence

Discussion/thoughtful reflection around the following questions (they have been taken from those provided for use by groups).

1. “How can we identify the Church which the creed calls one, holy, catholic and apostolic?”
2. “What is God’s will for the unity of this Church?”
3. “What do we need to do to put God’s will into practice?”

And others may include:

From the conversation between the two bishops and in the light of the extracts from *TCTCV*, what do we think would build our relationship with our bishop in such a way as to better equip us to be signs of the Kingdom?

How effective are we as signs, pointing to the fullness of the life of God? Any suggestions as to what might improve my own life in this way?

The nun’s challenge to Bishop Will was direct – Are you giving yourself to Christ? Are you/we? What holds us back?

Bishop Ruth spoke of the demands placed upon her after she realized the depth of the love of Jesus for her personally. She knew that this would result in struggles to make changes. Do you recognize this? Where have you experienced these needs to change and how have you been helped to face them?

Thanksgiving for Holy Baptism

I saw water flowing from the threshold of the temple.

Wherever the river flows everything will spring to life.

Alleluia.

On the banks of the river grow trees bearing every kind of fruit.

Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail.

Their fruit will serve for food, their leaves for the healing of the nations.

For the river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Water may be poured into a bowl

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, sovereign God of all,
to you be glory and praise for ever.

You are our light and our salvation.

From the deep waters of death
you have raised your Son to life in triumph.

Grant that all who have been born anew by water and the Spirit,
may daily be renewed in your image,

walk by the light of faith,

and serve you in newness of life;

through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ,

to whom with you and the Holy Spirit

we lift our voices of praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

Blessed be God for ever.

An Affirmation of Faith is said.

Let us declare our faith in God.

We believe in God the Father,

**from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

cf Ephesians 3

Intercessions are offered.

Father, we thank you that by baptism

you have raised your children with Christ
to new life in the Spirit.

Guide and protect them with your grace,
that they may follow you all their days
and grow in knowledge and love of you.

Father, by the victory of your Son,
give light to the world.

May Christ who conquered sin and death
keep his whole Church faithful to his gospel.

Help us always to hold fast to truth
and to walk in the way of life.

Father, by the victory of your Son,
give light to the world.

May the Holy Spirit fill the hearts and minds of all nations
to unite the world in peace and love.

By your healing power restore all that is broken
and unite us with you, our God and Father.

Father, by the victory of your Son,
give light to the world.

The Lord's Prayer

(Either)

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

Amen.

(or)

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

Our Father, who art in heaven,

**hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Almighty God,
in our baptism you have consecrated us
to be temples of your Holy Spirit.
May we, whom you have counted worthy,
nurture this gift of your indwelling Spirit with a lively faith
and worship you with upright lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.