

CRACKED WIDE OPEN

Diocesan Lent Course 2021

Session 4 – Do this in memory of 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.

Before the session begins, place some bread and wine or, perhaps, a plate and a cup in a central position.

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

Prayers of Penitence

Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord
in an unworthy manner
eats and drinks judgement upon themselves.
Examine yourselves, therefore, and call to mind your sins.
cf 1 Corinthians 11.27-29

Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you forgive our sins:

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood:

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'

John 3:14-21

¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.'

[New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised]

The Church: towards a common vision

42. There is a dynamic and profound relation between baptism and the eucharist. The communion into which the newly initiated Christian enters is brought to fuller expression and nourished in the eucharist, which reaffirms baptismal faith and gives grace for the faithful living out of the Christian calling. The progress in agreement about the eucharist registered in ecumenical dialogue may be summarized as follows. The Lord's Supper is the celebration in which, gathered around his table, Christians receive the body and blood of

Christ. It is a proclamation of the Gospel, a glorification of the Father for everything accomplished in creation, redemption and sanctification (*doxologia*); a memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus and what was accomplished once for all on the Cross (*anamnesis*); and an invocation of the Holy Spirit to transform both the elements of bread and wine and the participants themselves (*epiclesis*). Intercession is made for the needs of the Church and the world, the communion of the faithful is again deepened as an anticipation and foretaste of the kingdom to come, impelling them to go out and share Christ's mission of inaugurating that kingdom even now. St Paul highlights the connection between the Lord's Supper and the very life of the Church (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:17-33). 43. Just as the confession of faith and baptism are inseparable from a life of service and witness, so too the eucharist demands reconciliation and sharing by all those who are brothers and sisters in the one family of God. "Christians are called in the eucharist to be in solidarity with the outcast and to become signs of the love of Christ who lived and sacrificed himself for all and now gives himself in the eucharist.... The eucharist brings into the present age a new reality which transforms Christians into the image of Christ and therefore makes them his effective witnesses." The liturgical renewal among some churches may be seen in part as a reception of the convergences registered in ecumenical dialogue about the sacraments.

We listen to the Bishops' Conversation for this session.

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

"The communion into which the newly initiated Christian enters is brought to fuller expression and nourished in the eucharist, which reaffirms baptismal faith and gives grace for the faithful living out of the Christian calling." From paragraph 42 in the background reading. What proportion of those baptised in your community are likely to be nurtured into Eucharistic fellowship?

In the light of the conversation between the bishops concerning Nicodemus, what emphasis should be placed on sacraments/sacramental acts and nurture in the faith? Are they related?

Does the following quotation from St Anselm relate in any way to the bishops' conversation and the encounter between Nicodemus and Jesus? *"For I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but I believe in order to understand. For I believe this: unless I believe, I will not understand"*?

Should the celebration of the eucharist enable us to look 'up and out' or 'down and in'? Which is your dominant experience?

Response

Spend some time looking at the bread and wine. What does celebrating the eucharist mean to you? Think about how your Christian community celebrates Holy Communion. How does that shape your life as a Christian? Ponder the following verses from the Bible:

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.
He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24.31 a, 35

Jesus said,
'I am the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

John 6.35

The cup of blessing that we bless,
is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?
The bread that we break,
is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?
Because there is one bread,
we who are many are one body,
for we all partake of the one bread.

1 Corinthians 10.16, 17

As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11.26

Intercessions are offered.

Loving Father,
Christ gave us his body
to be our spiritual food,
listen as we pray for his body the Church,
spread throughout the world. We pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martin our
bishop and for Ruth and Will his suffragans.

In faith we pray:

we pray to you our God.

At his table we recognise the presence of Christ,
who takes away the sin of the world,
listen as we pray for that world
and for its peoples for whom his blood was shed ...
In faith we pray:
we pray to you our God.

Christ gives us his meal of holy fellowship,
listen as we pray for all whom you have given us,
our friends and all whose lives are joined with ours ...
In faith we pray:
we pray to you our God.

At his supper we remember the night of Christ's agony and trial,
listen as we pray for all who share his sufferings
through fear or pain or distress of many kinds ...
In faith we pray:
we pray to you our God.

At the eucharist we join our praises with the whole company of heaven,
listen as we pray for all who have trusted Christ's promise
to raise up on the last day those who eat his flesh and drink his blood ...
In faith we pray:
we pray to you our God.

Lord, satisfy our hunger with the food that lasts,
the bread of God which comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world,
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
Amen.

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.**

Lord Jesus Christ,
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament
you have given us the memorial of your passion:
grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries
of your body and blood
that we may know within ourselves
and show forth in our lives
the fruits of your redemption;

for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.