

The Diocese of Melbourne
Liturgical Committee

Death and Dying

Service of Remembrance and Lament

*Authorised by the Archbishop of Melbourne
for use in the Diocese of Melbourne
24 August 2021*



A Service of Remembrance and Lament

These resources are intended to be used in the context of a Memorial Service to mark the service of defence or diplomatic personnel in Afghanistan.

1 *A hymn may be sung as the leaders enter*

The leader acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Country on which the gathering takes place, and may use the following words

We meet on the traditional lands of the *Kulin* Nation
and pay our respects to their elders past and present,
and to Aboriginal People and Torres Straight Islanders with us.

We give thanks for the service of First Nations People to our nation
in times of conflict and in peace.

(2)

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

2 *Some of the following sentences from Scripture may be read*

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness:
when I was hard-pressed you set me free;
be gracious to me now and hear my prayer.

Psalm 4.1

In you have I hoped all the day long, O Lord:
because of your goodness.
Remember your compassion and your loving-kindness:
for they are from of old.

Psalm 25.5–6

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Psalm 46.1

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

Psalm 130.1

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.

John 3.16

Christ must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

1 Corinthians 15.25–26

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38–39

3 *This introduction may be used. One or more persons may share in leading and lighting candles*

We come together in the presence of God
to bring before him our lament and sorrow
and to pray for peace.

We commit to God's eternal peace
all those who have died in Afghanistan:
civilians, soldiers, security personnel.
We remember our own friends and loved ones
who lost their lives in Afghanistan.
We pray for all who, in their bodies and spirits,
still carry the wounds of this conflict.

Silence is kept. A candle may be lit

We ask for God's gift of peace:
Prince of Peace, grant your peace.

We commit to God's compassion and care
the people of Afghanistan:
all those who remain desolate and destitute,
living in turmoil and uncertainty.
We remember those afraid of losing their dignity and future:
women and children, religious minorities,
and any who may face persecution.

Silence is kept. A candle may be lit

We ask for God's gift of protection:
Everlasting Father, grant your protection.

We commit to God's justice and mercy
the wrong done in Afghanistan:
We remember with shame the times
when soldiers and workers
have acted badly and arrogantly,
and by their inaction or actions
have brought harm to the people.

Silence is kept. A candle may be lit

We ask for God's gift of forgiveness:
Wonderful Counsellor, grant your forgiveness.

We commit to God's providence and protection
the future of Afghanistan:
We give thanks for all who have
contributed to the wellbeing and flourishing of others,
and ask that their work may not have been in vain.
We pray that, despite our fears, the government of the future
will act with justice and compassion, restrain evil and revenge,
and instead promote the safety and good of all.

Silence is kept. A candle may be lit

We ask for God's gift of grace:
Mighty God, grant your grace.

4 *A minister may introduce the confession*

As we turn to God,
the source of peace and protection, forgiveness and grace,
we bring before him the sins and shortcomings of the world;
its pride, its selfishness, its greed;
its evil divisions and hatreds.

We confess our share in what is wrong,
and our failure to seek and establish that peace
which God wills for his children.

Silence is kept

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

4 *Where the confession is used, the priest stands and declares God's forgiveness*

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness
to all who turn to him in faith:
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

5 *The leader invites the people to pray, and says*

God of all mercy, giver of all comfort,
look graciously, we pray on all who are gathered here
and on all who suffer because of the conflict in Afghanistan:
Give us a sense of your love and light transcending the darkness
so that we may find our way home
and comfort those with whom we share the pain.
This we ask in the name of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

(2*)

6 *One or two readings from Scripture are read, a Psalm may be sung. Suitable passages include:*

*Psalm 23
Psalm. 46
Psalm 90
Psalm 121*

*God is our shepherd
God is our refuge and strength
Teach us to number our days
Our help comes from the Lord*

Matthew 5.1-12a

John 14.1-6

Romans 8.31-38

1 Corinthians 13

1 Corinthians 15

2 Corinthians 4.16-5.10

Philippians 3.10-16, 20-21

1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

Revelation 21.1-7

The Beatitudes

Jesus the way, the truth and the life

God's love in Christ Jesus

Faith, hope and love

The resurrection of the dead

Living by faith and hope

God's purposes for us

The coming of the Lord

The new heaven and the new earth

Poems and personal reflections may be included

An address may be given

A hymn or anthem may be sung

7 The Prayers

God of all mercy, your Son Jesus ministered to those in need: We pray for our fractured world, and all who suffer because of war; by loss of home and country; by loss of friends and loved ones; by loss of happiness, security or freedom. We pray for all whose hearts are still bitter, and who find it difficult to forgive. Banish from us the spirit that makes for war and instil in our hearts a love for peace and for our fellows.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all mercy, your Son Jesus died for the sins of the world: Forgive the sins of Western nations and people whose actions and inactions have contributed to the harm, grief and poverty of the people of Afghanistan. We pray that your mercy and grace transform our arrogance and evil to humility and love, to understanding and generous compassion, for the long-term benefit of the people of Afghanistan.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all wisdom, your Son Jesus challenged the folly of his day: Give wisdom to all governments and leaders, that they may know how and when to be involved in the affairs of other nations, put the interests of others ahead of their own, and act in ways that promote the long term good and the lasting peace of our world.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all consolation, your Son Jesus came into this world to turn the darkness of death and suffering into the dawn of new life: We pray for those who lost loved ones in the conflict in Afghanistan – Afghans and Westerners. Draw them closer to each other in their common grief. Be for them a refuge and strength. Comfort them with your presence. Grant them confidence in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life which your Son promises to all who place their trust in him.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all compassion, your Son Jesus prayed for his friends to be protected from evil and harm: We pray for the people of Afghanistan. For all who fear for family and friends left behind, all who are being evacuated, all who now seek asylum. We pray for their protection

and for those who work to bring them to safety. We pray for our leaders, that they would be generous in offering asylum and the chance to rebuild lives to all who have been displaced.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all peace, your Son Jesus promised his gift of his peace: We pray that the gift of peace may come to war-torn Afghanistan. We pray for those who now administer the nation. We pray they will exercise wisdom and restraint, that they will cherish the dignity of each human life; that they will promote and honour human rights; that they will protect women, children and vulnerable people from harm; they will not act in retaliation; so that peace and goodwill will flourish for all in Afghanistan.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of our future, your Son Jesus promised that he would be with us even unto the end of the age: We pray for ourselves that we may be people who know your presence and peace in times of difficulty and trouble. We pray that all who now are hopeless will be given the courage to face each new day strengthened by the knowledge that you are with them always.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

8 *The following Psalm Litany may be used*

O Lord, answer us in the day of trouble,
send us help from your holy place.

Show us the path of life,
for in your presence is joy.

Give justice to the orphan and the oppressed
and break the power of wickedness and evil.

Look upon the hungry and the sorrowful
and grant them the help for which they long.

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad;
may your glory endure for ever.

Your kingship has dominion over all
and with you is our redemption.

(1)

9 *The Lord's Prayer*

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to 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.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

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

10 The Act of Remembrance

The leader invites the people to stand and keep silence

Let us remember before God, and commend to his safe keeping, those who have died for their country in war; those whom we knew, and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived and died in the service of our Commonwealth, the people of Afghanistan, and the peoples of the world.

The Ode

They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
and in the morning,
We will remember them.
We will remember them.

From 'For the Fallen' Laurence Binyon (1869–1943)

The Last Post may be sounded

Silence is kept

Lest we forget.
Lest we forget.

Rouse may be sounded

Candles may be lit in remembrance of family and friends lost in war

10A The following commitment may conclude the Act of Remembrance

We commit ourselves to bring healing and transformation to the world,
and to foster a common vision of peace:

**Lord God, help us to know that goodness is stronger than evil,
love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, life is stronger than death,
and that victory is ours through the One who loved us so much,
that he gave his life for his friends, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(3)

10B Instead of the commitment in 10A, the following prayer may also be used

O God, our ruler and guide, in whose hands are the destinies of this and every nation, we give you thanks for the freedoms we enjoy in this land and for those who laid down their lives to defend them: we pray that we, gratefully remembering their courage and their sacrifice, may have grace to live in a spirit of justice, of generosity, and of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

(3)

11 *A hymn or the National Anthem may be sung*

12 *The priest may give this or another blessing*

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour everyone; love and serve the Lord; rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

13 *A minister may dismiss the people with these words*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:
in the name of Christ. Amen.

Acknowledgements

*These resources are based on A Service of Prayer and Lament for Afghanistan prepared by the Diocese of North Queensland which has been adapted and augmented by the Liturgical Committee of the Diocese of Melbourne for use in the Diocese. Material to which acknowledgement is made by a number refers to the list of sources or authors below. A text accompanied by the symbol * indicates that alterations have been made.*

The Anglican Church in Australia

1 *A Prayer Book for Australia*

Individual Churches

2 *St James' Cathedral Townsville*

3 *St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne*