

***Among the Communion of Saints:
A Prayer of Compassion and Lament***
St. Agnes Church, Springfield, Illinois
September 12, 2018

Opening Prayer:

Pope Francis:

"While it is important and necessary on every journey of conversion to acknowledge the truth of what has happened, in itself, this is not enough. Today we are challenged as the People of God to take on the pain of our brothers and sisters wounded in their flesh and in their spirit."

"If, in the past, the response was one of omission, today we want solidarity, in the deepest and most challenging sense, to become our way of forging present and future history."

Song: O God, When Trust is Shattered

(PASSION CHORALE 7.6.7.6.D ("O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"))

Author's Note: *This hymn was written with input from survivors and counselors. It also references Pope Francis' Aug. 20 letter, using in particular: "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26).*

O God, when trust is shattered
by wolves among your sheep,
when youth and children suffer,
when those remembering weep,
when victims tell their stories,
when leaders hide abuse,
bring healing, love and mercy!
Bring justice, God of truth!

When leaders side with evil,
when people do their worst,
may we reach out to victims
and put their healing first.
If any member suffers,
we all will suffer, too.

Bring healing, love and mercy!
Bring justice, God of truth!
We pray that the abusers
will learn sin's awful cost,
and — making no excuses —
will know that they are lost.
Then may they find redemption—
to heal their wounded souls.
Bring healing, love and mercy!
Bring justice, God of truth!

May all who serve in churches
be careful, watchful, wise.
May we prevent abuses
and hear your children's cries.
We pray that institutions
will seek your way anew.
Bring healing, love and mercy!
Bring justice, God of truth!

Tune: Hans Leo Hassler, 1601; harmony by Johann Sebastian Bach, 1729
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Quiet Time:

Reading: Ezekiel 34:1-11

Response: Veni Sante Spiritus

Reading: James 2:12-14

Response: Veni Sante Spiritus

Reading: Matthew 19: 13-15

Response: Veni Sante Spiritus

Litany of Compassion and Healing

Lord, have mercy. **Lord have Mercy.**
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

For abused children whose innocence has been stolen

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

For abused children who are beaten

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

For children afraid of and silenced by their abusers

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

For adults who experienced childhood abuse

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

For vulnerable adults

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

For family members of those abused

Protect and Heal, O Lord.

That priests and church workers who abuse children

Come to remorse and repentance.

That those imprisoned for abuse

Come to remorse and repentance.

That those who are free and still abusing others

Come to remorse and repentance.

That those in authority who do not protect children

Come to remorse and repentance.

That bishops, priests and religious

Respond with compassion, wisdom and courage.

That doctors, therapists, and teachers

Respond with compassion, wisdom and courage.

That lawyers, judges, and media workers

Respond with compassion, wisdom and courage.

Song: Stand in Hope (Finlandia)

1. We stand in pain and long to see salvation
For we have known your comfort and relief.
We try again to gain some consolation
But former blessings fade in present grief.
Subdue, O God, the torrents of temptation;
Redeem our hearts, restore our lost belief.

2. We stand in hope, recounting all your graces,
We bless your name, and pray your will be done.
Your healing mercy, gentle to embrace us,
Reveals your love, your own beloved Son.
He knows our weakness, all our broken places,
And by his death our dying is undone.

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Closing Prayer:

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by his Blood on the Cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear the cries of our brothers and sisters
who have been gravely harmed,
and the cries of those who love them.
Soothe their restless hearts with hope,
steady their shaken spirits with faith.
Grant them justice for their cause,
enlightened by your truth.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform brokenness into wholeness.
Grant us the courage and wisdom,
humility and grace, to act with justice.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors.
Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace in justice.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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