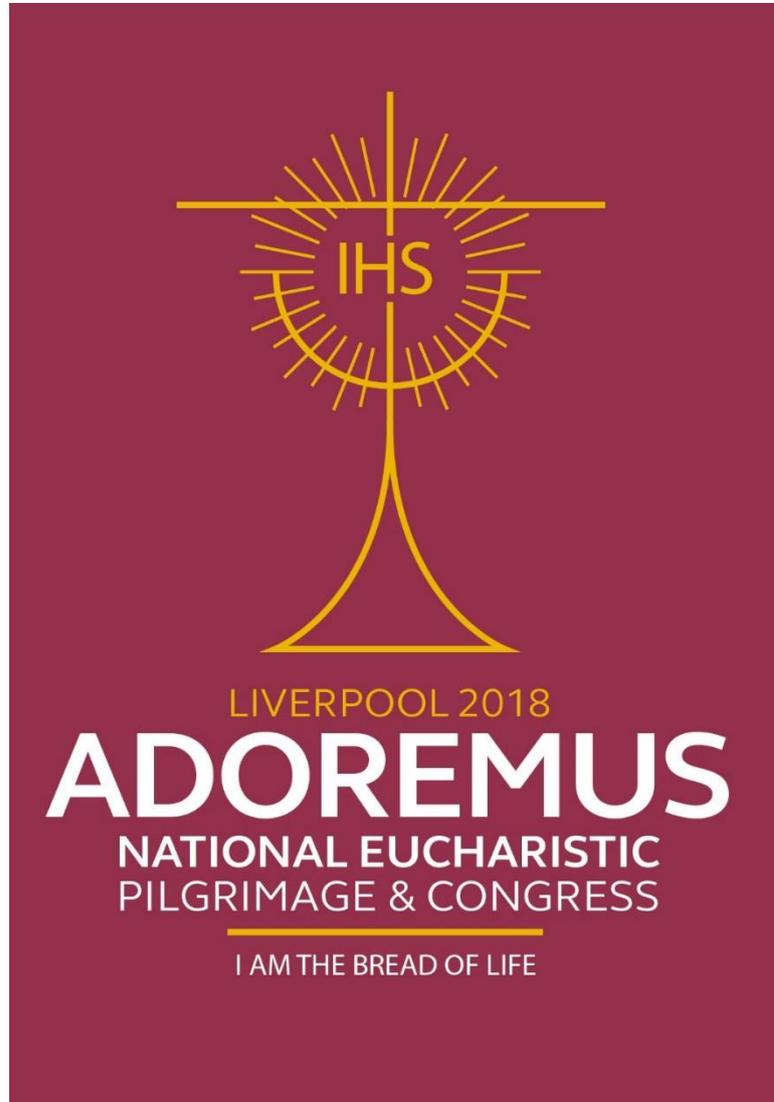


ENCOUNTER HIM



A RESOURCE FOR LEADERS OF EUCHARISTIC ADORATION



THE DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM

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Introduction

What is Eucharistic Adoration?

Eucharistic Adoration or Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a type of worship that is celebrated before the Blessed Sacrament (the Eucharist, the Body of Christ or Jesus) outside of Mass. A consecrated host is taken from the tabernacle and is placed in a special vessel called a "monstrance" (meaning 'to show') so it can be seen. It is called "adoration" as we are adoring Jesus' real and substantial presence. The Blessed Sacrament is not a sign or merely a symbol of Jesus but it is fully him; Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. During Eucharistic Adoration we are in the very presence of God, so it is a very special form of prayer. The term "Exposition" comes from the fact that the host is "exposed" for all to see.

Why do we have Eucharistic Adoration?

Eucharistic Adoration helps us form a greater understanding and appreciation of Jesus' presence in the Eucharist. Jesus, after instituting the Eucharist at the Last Supper, invites his disciples to go and pray with him on the Mount of Olives. Famously he instructed his disciples not to stop children coming to him to spend time with him. It is only in spending time with someone that we get to know them. The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we get to know him and grow in friendship.

What do we do in Eucharistic Adoration?

Most people who have seen Eucharist Adoration may have experienced a long time of silent prayer while kneeling. This is one way, but it is not the only way. The time with Jesus should be an opportunity to show him honour, praise and for us to enjoy spending time with him. This resource has gathered together scripture readings, prayers, reflections, activities and hymns. It is also encouraged to have a time of silence to allow, as Blessed John Henry Newman wrote, "heart to speak unto heart".

How do we celebrate Eucharistic Adoration?

Hopefully this document will be able to take you through setting up the hall, preparing a service, what to include, themed service etc.

How do we use this document?

Encounter Him is an advisory resource aimed at helping to celebrate Eucharistic Adoration in an engaging way.

There are six themed services given as an example of how services can be used to encounter Jesus, by focusing on a particular characteristic of their relationship with him.

Setting up for Eucharistic Adoration

Traditionally, Eucharistic Adoration has taken place in churches or in Blessed Sacrament chapels. The monstrance would be placed on the Altar/High Altar and the people knelt in the pews. This is a very reverent way of honouring Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament. It is

also quite practical if you have a large number of people adoring. However, there are a number of other ways that the place of worship could be set up to encourage a personal encounter with Jesus. They will be explored here.

Basics

Whichever way you decide to set up the place of worship, there are a few things that are essential:

- An altar, table or appropriate stand so the monstrance can be seen.
- A white cloth to go on the altar/table
- Candles – there should be at least two candles lit at all times on or near the altar.
- A corporal – the square piece of cloth used on the altar normally at Mass to catch any fragments of the consecrated host. This should be placed under the monstrance.
- A monstrance – the stand for displaying the Blessed Sacrament.
- A Priest, Deacon or a commissioned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament.

Placement of the Altar

Here we will discuss the benefits and disadvantages of the different options.

- At the front:
 - ~ Advantages: Can fit many people into your space as the altar could be right up against the wall. Could project on to the wall behind it for responses/images/words to hymns and songs etc.
 - ~ Disadvantages: If a large space, those at the back might feel quite distant. Instead of a sense of “encountering” it could give the sense of “observing”.
- At the side:
 - ~ Advantages: Can be similar to the altar at the front – pushing altar against the wall, projection behind, but with those at the back much closer as the length of the room is drastically decreased.
 - ~ Disadvantages: Still may create the feeling of “observing” rather than “encountering”.
- In the middle:
 - ~ Advantages: Everyone is very close to the Eucharist; greater sense of encounter; Christ is placed at the centre - a great symbol to focus on.
 - ~ Disadvantages: If intending to use projection this can be difficult, and those at the side of the altar would not have a great view of the monstrance.

The important thing is to choose the set up you think is the most appropriate.

Structure

This document does not aim to set out a set structure for your celebration but to offer a selection of things that should be included, so that you can put together an order of service that works best for you.

Silence

An important and often overlooked part of praying is the use of silence. It is in the silence that we listen, that we ponder and reflect on God’s presence. As Elijah discovered it is often in the stillness that we hear God’s voice more clearly (1 Kings 19:11-13). Periods of silence

after readings or prayers and at the beginning or the end allow for what we say and do to travel from our head to our heart.

Music

St Augustine was reported to have said: 'He who sings well prays twice'. Music is an incredible way to praise and honour Jesus. This could be through singing hymns or worship songs, or by listening to recorded music. It is good to mix modern songs with some of the great hymns from the heritage of the Church.

Scripture

Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament; he is also present in the Word of God. It is important to include Bible readings so that we can hear God speaking to us as we speak to him in prayer. For this document, the Good News Translation has been used but the Bible references have been given if you wish to use another.

Prayer

There is a variety of ways to pray and intentions that drive our prayers. We should bring all our lives to prayer; the things we need help with or are worried about, the things we are thankful for, sorry for, angry about, or our awareness of who God is and how we want our faith to grow. Personal prayer time is important. Spontaneous prayer can be very appropriate to express our feelings and prayers written in advance help us prepare for our time with God, while traditional prayers add a great depth for us to reflect on and unite us with our fellow Christians gathered here and throughout history.

Actions

As many people learn in different ways, so it is with prayer and some find physical actions quite important. A physical activity can be a great way to connect with Jesus. Some suggested activities have been gathered in this document.

Reflection

Jesus was a great teacher and often used parables to help teach the people. This document contains some reflections on Bible passages as well as themes.

Exposition & Reposition

This section deals with the practicality of how to expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament.

Exposition

- The altar should already be set with an altar cloth, candles, corporal and the monstrance (just to the side of corporal). The Blessed Sacrament should be in a lunette (the section from the monstrance that detaches) in the tabernacle or in a pyx.
- Encourage everyone to kneel (if possible).
- Genuflect before the tabernacle/pyx and bring the lunette to the altar. Place the monstrance on the corporal and put the lunette inside the monstrance, then turn it to face the people.
- Genuflect and then return to your place.

- It is good to encourage a time of silence and prayer at this point. After a short time encourage people to remain kneeling, if they wish, or to move to a more comfortable position and carry on with the rest of the service.

Reposition

- As the time of your service draws to a close, encourage everyone to kneel, say a closing prayer before the Blessed Sacrament (it is traditional to say the Divine Praises at this point).
- Genuflect and approach the monstrance; it would be appropriate to sing a Eucharistic Hymn such as: *O Sacrament most holy, Tantum ergo Sacramentum*, or *Adoration* by Matt Maher.
- Remove the lunette and return it to the appropriate place.
- Do not raise the monstrance to give a blessing. This is called "Benediction" and can only be done by a priest or deacon.

Prayers for Eucharistic Adoration

Opening Prayer – once the Blessed Sacrament is exposed

Living Lord,
 as You came to earth as a child
 to be with us and share Your life with us;
 so are You present here in the Most Holy Eucharist.
 In our time together today bring us closer to You,
 so that we may know that You are present with us
 and encounter you anew in our lives.
 Amen

Closing Prayer – just before the Blessed Sacrament is reposed

Lord Jesus Christ,
 you gave us the Eucharist
 as the memorial of Your suffering and death.
 May our worship of this Sacrament
 of your Body and Blood
 Help us to experience the salvation
 you won for us
 and the peace of the kingdom
 where You live with the Father
 and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever.
 Amen

The Divine Praises – can either be said in unison or each line repeated

Blessed be God.
 Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.
 Blessed be the name of Jesus.
 Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.
 Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.
 Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
 Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
 Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.
 Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.
 Blessed be her Glorious Assumption.
 Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
 Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
 Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints. Amen.

O Sacrament Most Holy,
 O Sacrament Divine
 All praise and all thanksgiving
 Make every moment thine

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
 Veneremur cernui:
 Et antiquum documentum
 Novo cedat ritui:
 Praestet fides supplementum
 Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque
 Laus et jubilatio,
 Salus, honor, virtus quoque
 Sit et benedictio:
 Procedenti ab utroque
 Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

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Encounter His Healing

Scripture: The woman healed of a haemorrhage (Mark 5:25-34)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

There was a woman who had suffered terribly from severe bleeding for twelve years, even though she had been treated by many doctors. She had spent all her money, but instead of getting better she got worse all the time. She had heard about Jesus, so she came in the crowd behind him, saying to herself, "If I just touch the hem of his clothes, I will get well."

She touched his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once; and she had the feeling inside herself that she was healed of her trouble. At once Jesus knew that power had gone out of him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

His disciples answered, "You see how the people are crowding you; why do you ask who touched you?"

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. The woman realised what had happened to her, so she came, trembling with fear, knelt at his feet, and told him the whole truth. Jesus said to her, "My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your trouble."

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

This story comes from the middle of another story. Jesus is approached by the leader of the synagogue who asks Jesus to come and heal his daughter who is dying. He is an important man in the town and it could be very easy for Jesus to focus on this alone because somebody very popular and important wants his help. We can often be like this; somebody very important or popular asks us to do something or speaks to us that we can forget everyone else around us. Jesus does not do this; he is aware of everyone who needs his help.

The woman would have been an outcast of the town; the people of the time would have avoided her because of her illness. She has been rejected so much that she does not even dare ask Jesus for help; she does not see herself important enough to speak to him. Yet she believes; she believes that Jesus has the power to heal her, that he is so powerful that she just needs to touch the very edge of his clothes and she will be healed. What great faith she has; what great love she has for Jesus. Imagine how scared she would have been walking into a crowd so big and full of people who dislike her. She has to try to fight her way to the front to get close to Jesus; this is her one chance to have all her pain taken away. She must have been so excited too, here is Jesus, the miracle worker, the Messiah. Did she also know that Jesus was the Son of God?

What about us? Do we believe in Jesus' power? His love? That he can bring us peace and healing? Would we go to the same great efforts to reach him?

When she touched him, Jesus knew she was there. Jesus knows the deepest thoughts of our hearts and minds. Jesus knew that she loved him and wanted to be healed. He could have kept on walking; she'd been healed and he had somewhere important to be. He didn't keep going; he stopped. He wanted to meet her. She encounters him. He encounters her. They talk; she trusts him with all her worries; he listens and gives her peace.

What an amazing experience for her. This is not just for her though; here with us is Jesus; he is in the middle of this crowd and he wants to help you. He wants to heal you of anything that is upsetting or hurting you. He invites you to come to him, to encounter his healing.

Action – Touching the hem

Things needed: A piece of cloth/priest's stole (purple or white)
Aim: To share in the woman's experience of Jesus healing.

From the base of the monstrance place a flowing piece of cloth that touches the monstrance and then flows over the front of the altar. Another option would be to use a priest's stole (white is a sign of celebration, of the Eucharist, or purple which is a sign of waiting, preparing, repentance and healing). If there is space behind the altar, the cloth could go both sides. Congregation: to take some time to consider where/how they might need Jesus' healing. When ready, come and kneel at the altar (at the feet of Jesus in the Eucharist) and touch the hem of the cloth/stole. Perhaps say a quiet prayer. The key thing is to spend some time with Jesus.

Suggested Worship Songs

Lord I come to you (the power of your love); You never let go – Tim Hughes; Alabaster – Rend Collective; We fall down – Chris Tomlin; Lord, I need you – Matt Maher; Freedom Reigns – Jesus Culture.

Suggested Hymns

Be still for the Presence of the Lord – David J Evans; Be still and know that I am God – Unknown; Lay your hands gently upon us – Carey Landry; O let all who thirst – John B. Foley; As the deer pants for the water – Martin Nystorm.



Encounter His Forgiveness

Scripture: Zacchaeus the Chief Tax Collector (Luke 9:1-10)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

Jesus went on into Jericho and was passing through. There was a chief tax collector there named Zacchaeus, who was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus, who was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to Zacchaeus, "Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today."

Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy. All the people who saw it started grumbling, "This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!"

Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Listen, sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much."

Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today, for this man, also, is a descendant of Abraham. The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

Zacchaeus wanted for nothing. He had lots of money, a large house, protection, power, everything that anyone would want. So why did he run to try to see Jesus? Why did he climb a tree just so that he could catch a glimpse of Him? Men of honour and wealth did not run in Jesus' culture; they were too important to run. The fact that Zacchaeus runs shows that he thinks Jesus is greater than himself.

What does Jesus have that Zacchaeus doesn't?

Forgiveness.

Zacchaeus lives in a place where nobody likes him, because he has offended and hurt everyone around him. He is a tax collector. Tax collectors were hated as they took money off their own people to give to the Romans who were oppressing them. Not only was that bad, as the people did not have much money, but they used to take more than they were supposed to and keep the extra money. Zacchaeus, though, is not just any tax collector; he is the chief tax collector. This means he has probably wronged the other tax collectors, so even they did not like him.

Imagine how shocked Zacchaeus would have been when Jesus said he wanted to go to his house. Here was this great man, who many thought would free them from the Romans, wanting to come to Zacchaeus' house. Zacchaeus who was one of the Romans' greatest allies. He might have been scared about what Jesus would do. Yet we know Zacchaeus wanted to meet Jesus so he was probably more confused. Had anyone wanted to go to his house before? Why did Jesus not hate him? Did Jesus like him? What was to like about him?

It is only by Jesus offering friendship and love that Zacchaeus offers his sorrow. He offers an apology and tries to make amends. He throws away the house, money, power and protection he had before, so he can receive Jesus' forgiveness.

We can also fill our lives with things that separate us from Jesus and those around us. We can choose to do things that are wrong as they appear to give us happiness but what is that happiness worth? Is gossiping and saying hurtful things worth losing a friend? Is name-calling

worth making someone upset? Is stealing worth losing people's trust? Is sin worth rejecting Jesus' love? His friendship?

Zacchaeus didn't think so and Jesus offered him a way out by coming to him, encountering him. By wanting to be with him.

Jesus has come to us today on the altar. What is he offering us a way out of?

Is there anyone we can encounter and offer them forgiveness and a way out of their mess?

Action – God's Forgiveness

Option 01

Things needed: *A sugar cube for each person, bowl containing warm water, a wooden spoon.*

Aim: *To understand the depth of God's forgiveness.*

On the floor in front of the altar place a bowl containing warm water. The leader leads the congregation in an examination of conscience. (Page 23) and could be based on the Commandments or on the Beatitudes.

While the examination of conscience is read, think of the things that they might have done that have hurt their relationship with God and others.

The sugar cube represents our sins. Sometimes we can choose to do wrong things as they seem the more fun, when in fact they cause us harm. This is like sugar. Sugary foods may seem fun but if we just have these then we will be ill as they hurt our bodies and cause our teeth to rot rather than helping them.

When ready, invite the congregation to walk up to the bowl and place their sugar cube in the water. The warm water represents our desire for forgiveness, our apology. The water will start to dissolve the sugar cube. However, our sorrow is not enough; we need God to do the hard work. This is where the wooden spoon comes in. The wooden spoon represents the wood of the cross. It is through Jesus' death on the cross that we receive forgiveness (stir the water with the spoon and the sugar will dissolve). This reminds us that Jesus takes away our sins.

It is highly recommended that a priest is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This action only symbolises our sins being forgiven; the Sacrament of Reconciliation is where our sins are actually forgiven.

Option 02

Things needed: *A piece of string for each person, a large piece of paper with a cross on it.*

Aim: *To understand the depth of God's forgiveness.*

On the floor in front of the altar is the large piece of paper with the cross drawn on it. The leader leads an examination of conscience. (page 23) and could be based on the Commandments or on the Beatitudes.

While the examination of conscience is read, think of the things that they might have done that have hurt their relationship with God and others. As they hear something they might have done, tie a knot in the string. This symbolises that sins are like knots in our lives; they stop us from running smoothly.

When ready, they will walk up to the piece of paper and place their string along the outline of the cross. This represents our sins being taken from us and placed on the cross with Jesus, who is with us on the altar.

After a few moments of reflection, it may be appropriate to play or sing a worship song or hymn as they go and find a knotted piece of string that is not their own. They are then invited to untie the knots. This action reminds us that as Jesus has taken away our sins by forgiving us, so we should forgive those who hurt us.

*** Don't tie the knots too tightly or they can't be undone!***

It is highly recommended that a priest is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This action only symbolises our sins being forgiven; the Sacrament of Reconciliation is where our sins are actually forgiven.

Suggested Worship Songs

Alive Again – Matt Maher; *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross/Thank you for the Cross* – Tim Hughes; *Christ has set me free* – Rend Collective; *Give us clean hands* – Chris Tomlin; *Lord I lift your name on high*; *Open the Eyes of my Heart* – Chris Bowater.

Suggested Hymns

Amazing Grace – John Newton; *Freely, Freely* – Carl Owens; *Make me a channel of your peace* – Sebastian Temple; *Let us build a house* – Marty Haugen; *O the Love of my Lord* – Estelle White.



Encounter His Calling

Scripture: The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!"

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"

Mary said to the angel, "I am unmarried. How, then, can this be?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason, the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do."

"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

Mary lived an ordinary life at home with her parents. Imagine her surprise when she is chosen by God to be the mother of His Son Jesus. This is a story we have heard many times before so it can lose its shock value; so we will go through it again slowly.

Mary is at home as normal and then an angel appeared. An angel appeared. Just picture the scene in your own house; you are there as normal and then an angel appears. No wonder Gabriel said to her "Do not be afraid". She must have been terrified. Things get more shocking. She is told that she is going to have a baby. Being an unmarried mother in her culture was very dangerous and many would have wanted to kill her. Even crazier still, this baby wasn't going to be any ordinary baby; this baby was the Son of God. This baby is God. How unprepared, unworthy and confused must she have felt. We can guess she wasn't standing anymore! This was a first in history; no one has ever had this said to them before. The amazing thing is that faced with all this fear, excitement, shock and confusion, Mary trusts. Mary loves God. She knows that God will never put anything bad in her path, so she agrees. She responds by saying "let this happen"; by saying "I want what God wants".

Mary, like many others in the Bible, received a calling. We call this a "vocation", and her calling was to be the very first person to encounter Jesus when she became pregnant with him. Her vocation was to be the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God. Her calling was so important to God's plan to save all of us. Without Mary's important vocation Jesus would not have been born. It didn't end just there though. Mary nurtured Jesus, taught him, made him the man he was called to be; she followed him, cared for him and his disciples; stayed by Jesus when no

Encounter His Help

Scripture: The Healing of the Paralysed Man (Mark 2:1-12)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

Jesus went back to Capernaum, and the news spread that he was at home. So many people came together that there was no room left, not even out in front of the door. Jesus was preaching the message to them when four men arrived, carrying a paralysed man to Jesus. Because of the crowd, however, they could not get the man to him. So they made a hole in the roof right above the place where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they let the man down, lying on his mat. Seeing how much faith they had, Jesus said to the paralysed man, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Some teachers of the Law who were sitting there thought to themselves, "How does he dare talk like this? This is blasphemy! God is the only one who can forgive sins!"

At once Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he said to them, "Why do you think such things? Is it easier to say to this paralysed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, pick up your mat, and walk'? I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralysed man, "I tell you, get up, pick up your mat, and go home!" While they all watched, the man got up, picked up his mat, and hurried away. They were all completely amazed and praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

The ill man in this story has some determined friends. We don't know if he asked them for help or if they offered it to him but they were determined that he would meet Jesus. It is amazing when we receive help from friends, when they do things for us without any moaning or grumbling. Well, imagine how this man felt when they carried him all the way to Jesus, then carried him on to the roof, made a hole in the roof and then lowered him to Jesus. These are good friends, caring and loving friends. However, they couldn't give him the help he really needed. Only Jesus could do that.

Do you ever feel that you could do with a helping hand? Sometimes someone can come and offer help and it turns out to make no difference; sometimes it makes it worse. For this man, his friends could carry him about, lift him up but they couldn't make him do it for himself. He needed a greater form of help. How shocked must they have been when Jesus doesn't immediately heal him. Jesus doesn't even try to heal the man. They weren't expecting this; they were expecting Jesus to rest his hands on their friend, or maybe just say a word, or even just look at him, and the man would spring off the bed. What were those friends thinking? 'What kind of help is this Jesus?'

Now imagine all the people in the house who have heard such amazing things about Jesus. He's teaching now and you think it is amazing. Suddenly there's noise above as the roof disappears above your head and a man on a stretcher is lowered down. This is it; Jesus is going to heal him. But he doesn't; he just says "your sins are forgiven".

Everyone is looking at the man's illness and thinks that is what he needs help with, except Jesus. Jesus is looking at the man's heart and the kind of help the man really needs. He needs his sins forgiven, and then he needs to be cured. The sins are the bigger problem. Jesus also

knows that if he does this, he is making himself known as God, and that some people would not believe; they would be angered by such a thing. It is at this point that the scribes and the Pharisees turn against Jesus; they start to plan to kill him. Jesus isn't scared. He is more concerned with helping the man with both problems; Jesus is risking his life to help!

We think the man's friends did great things to help him, but Jesus did greater. There are two things we can take from this. If Jesus was prepared to risk his life to give the man the help he needed, it means nothing would stop him helping you. Secondly, Jesus is going to help us in the way we really need. This might not be what other people think we need help with; it might even be different to what we think! Jesus knows what you need help with and he is just waiting for you to ask him for help. So, what is stopping you?

Action – Take what you need

Things needed: Lots of post-it notes or pieces of card, with words from page 23 on (approximately 3 times the number attending,

Aim: To understand that God provides us with everything we need.

Post-it notes/card are stuck on or near the altar. These are written in advance. This could be done by putting them on the altar, on the floor in front of the altar, on a wall or display board behind the altar, or another appropriate place. After the reading and a reflection, they are reminded that God is always waiting for us to ask him for his help. That is the reason he is in the tabernacle; he is waiting for us to come to him and ask him for help. Then invite them to go up and take a couple of post-it notes/cards of what they need. When they have done this, they need to return to their place and focus on each word individually. Why did they pick that word? Why do they need this from God? How will it help them? Invite them to spend a few minutes in prayer to Jesus here on the altar and ask Him to give them this gift, and everything he knows they need help with.

Suggested Worship Songs

Everlasting God – Brenton Brown; *Here as in Heaven* – Elevation Worship; *Lord of Lords* – Hillsong Live; *Forever* – Chris Tomlin; *Your Grace is Enough* – Matt Maher; *You are my vision* – Rend Collective.

Suggested Hymns

From heaven you came – Graham Kendrick; *Be thou my vision* – Traditional; *My Soul is filled with joy* – Traditional; *Jesus, Name above all names* – Nadia Heran; *O let all who thirst* – John B. Foley.



Encounter His Mission

Scripture: The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Matthew

The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him, even though some of them doubted. Jesus drew near and said to them, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age."

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection

This Bible reading comes from the end of St Matthew's Gospel. It is the last thing Jesus says to the apostles before he goes back to heaven. Though short, this tells us all what we are supposed to do as Christians; it is the mission of the Church.

First, let us think about going to 'all peoples everywhere'. There is no person on earth in the past, present or future who is not supposed to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is a message for every person, in every place, at every time. The Good News needs messengers to carry it there. The Apostles went to everywhere in the known world at the time. St James went as far west as he could, right to the Atlantic Ocean on the coast of Spain; St Peter and Paul went to the heart of the power that had killed Jesus – Rome; while St Thomas went south all the way to India. It is amazing to think the events of a group of people on a hill in Palestine nearly 2000 years ago are heard right here, right now. We must continue to tell and show people the Good News that Jesus came to heal us, forgive us; to bring them into our Church family so they too can know Jesus' friendship and be part of God's family. He died for us and rose again that we might have eternal life. This is the central message. However, it is not just about the last few days of Jesus life; he told them to teach everything he commanded. The second part of our mission is to teach by living out all of Jesus' teaching. This is all about "mercy". We must reach those in most need; the poor, the homeless, the rejected, the forgotten, the hungry, the thirsty, the sick and all who are in need. We are called to reach every person and serve them as Jesus wants us to; this is putting our faith into action. God needs us to carry on His work; to help people, especially those we don't want to, those who can't help us back, or even those we don't like.

The third part of this reading is reassuring. We do not need to worry. Jesus promised to never leave us; that he would be with us to the end of time. So where is he to help us? He is on the altar. Jesus has never left the Church to work alone; he has remained with them in Holy Communion. The more time we spend with Jesus, present in the Eucharist, the more we become like him and the more we can act like him. If we want to make our school/town/world better, we need to spend more time doing what we are doing now, being with Jesus. Praying in front of Jesus' presence changes us; makes us better people; slowly takes away all that is stopping us being like Him, and boosts all our good characteristics. So we will read this Bible passage again and imagine Jesus is saying this to you now. Your mission is to let people encounter Jesus through you. How will you live this out?

Action – Mission Possible

Things needed: Pieces of card (with different task written on, from page 23) in a bowl or basket (approximately 3 times the number of people)

Aim: To understand ways we can live out Jesus' mission.

The cards need to show different challenges with a space for who/how they will carry it out and by when. These could be prepared before the service. The cards are placed in a basket or bowl at the foot of the altar. The congregation is invited to come up and take two or three without looking. They must then return to their places and decide for whom or how they are going to carry out the particular mission on the card and by when. This will hopefully encourage them to see how they can carry out God's work. After a few minutes of reflection, invite them to ask God for his help in prayer; to pray for each situation, and that through it the people who are helped will come to know Jesus' love and friendship.

Suggested Worship Songs

We Believe – Newsboys; *We are One Body* – Dana; *Living for Your Glory* – Tim Hughes; *Take My Life (And Let it Be)* – Chris Tomlin; *I will offer my Life* – Matt Redman; *Build your kingdom here* – Rend Collective.

Suggested Hymns

Here in this place – Marty Haugen; *I will be with you* – Gerard Markland; *Longing for light* – Bernadette Farrell; *This is My Body* – Peter Jacobs; *We come to share our stories* – David Haas.



Encounter Him

Scripture: The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

On that same day that Jesus had risen two of His followers were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself drew near and walked along with them; they saw him, but somehow did not recognize him. Jesus said to them, "What are you talking about to each other, as you walk along?" They stood still, with sad faces. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have been happening there these last few days?"

"What things?" he asked. "The things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "This man was a prophet and was considered by God and by all the people to be powerful in everything he said and did. Our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and he was crucified. And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to set Israel free! Besides all that, this is now the third day since it happened. Some of the women of our group surprised us; they went at dawn to the tomb, but could not find his body. They came back saying they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. Some of our group went to the tomb and found it exactly as the women had said, but they did not see him."

Then Jesus said to them, "How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and then to enter his glory?"

And Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets.

As they came near the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther; but they held him back, saying, "Stay with us; the day is almost over and it is getting dark." So he went in to stay with them. He sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, "Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" They got up at once and went back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven disciples gathered together with the others and saying, "The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!" The two then explained to them what had happened on the road, and how they had recognised the Lord when he broke the bread.

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Reflection

There is only one reason why the two disciples were heading to Emmaus away from Jerusalem; they had given up on Jesus. Emmaus is on the way back to Galilee, where they had come from. These disciples could not believe that Jesus could be alive. He died on a cross; he had been buried for three days, and there was no way he was coming back from that! They had placed so much hope in him and he had died. That is not what they had wanted. When Jesus appears, he wants to encourage them to understand that this was all part of

God's plan; that he is actually alive. The structure of the story is a lot like Mass. We come with our concerns and worries; we hear God's word from the Bible; it is explained; the breaking of bread shows Jesus is here; we go out to spread the Good News. This is what makes this a good story to help us understand that Jesus is alive and present here in the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist.

Jesus loves his disciples and rather than appearing in front of them in all his glory, and telling them off for deserting him, he walks with them where they are going. He goes at their pace and listens to them. Jesus loves us; he wants us to know his love but he doesn't force us to love him. He walks with us where we are in life, and doesn't expect us to go his way straight away. Today Jesus has come to us, where we are, meeting us with all our concerns and worries. He isn't going to ignore these worries; he's going to listen to them and guide us in the right way.

The strangest part of the story is that the disciples did not recognise Jesus. Had he disguised himself? Or were they so focused on what they were going through that they weren't bothered about anyone else? A third thought could be that they never really knew Jesus; what Jesus was really like and what he was called to do. They saw him more as a political hero, a warrior, so that's why they couldn't recognise him. They were looking for the wrong Jesus. Today we are here with Jesus. He does not look how he looked when he was preaching and healing. He is not acting or looking as maybe we would want him to look. We may not even realise it really is him, but it is him.

Jesus is here with us as he was with the disciples. It was actually the breaking of bread that helped them to realise that it was Jesus, when he re-enacted the Last Supper for them. Before this, though, they invite him in. Jesus acted as if he was carrying on but they stopped him and made him stay for dinner. This act of kindness changes their hearts and opens their eyes so that they realise he is there with them. The realisation brings great happiness, pure joy. They couldn't keep it for themselves; they turned around and went back to where Jesus wanted them to be.

The same joy awaits us. We must let go of any selfishness and reach out to others. Then we will be ready to encounter him anew today.

Action – Encounter Him

Things needed: Time and an open heart

Aim: To encounter Jesus in the Eucharist.

The action for this service is very simple; to discover that Jesus is fully present in the Eucharist. Invite each person (when they are ready) to stand or kneel right in front of the altar staring at Jesus, gazing upon him and allowing him to gaze upon them. There are some questions following that might help their reflection but the greatest thing is for them to ask Jesus, in the silence of their hearts, if the Eucharist really is him. It can be amazing, the response that comes.

The desired result of this action is them looking at Jesus and not a piece of paper! This time can be of great personal prayer and for them to speak heart to heart with Jesus, and give themselves in love to him. Therefore it is recommended that this service is done with smaller numbers or that their time in front of the Eucharist is short. The important thing is that they don't feel rushed so they can actually form a relationship with him.

Suggested Worship Songs

Waiting here for you – Christy Nockels; *Set a fire* – Jesus Culture; *Here I am to Worship* – Tim Hughes; *Behold the Lamb* – Stuart Townend; *Better is one Day* – Matt Maher; *The Stand* – Hillsong United (Short or Long Version).

Suggested Hymns

Bread of Life Truth Eternal – CJM; *Servant King* – Graham Kendrick; *A New Commandment* – Unknown; *Abba, Abba Father* – Carey Landry; *Do not be afraid* – Gerard Markland.

Encounter Him

What does Jesus mean to me?

What do I believe about faith?

Do I believe that Jesus is really here?

Do I believe that Jesus loves me?



Preparing to receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Examination of Conscience

These thoughts are just to help you in what you need to bring to confession. Sit openly and think your life through, your relationship with God, with others and with yourself.

God

Do I choose myself before God?
Do I neglect prayer time?
Do I neglect Mass?
Do I speak his will?
Do I spread his word?
Do I show his love and care in my life and actions?
Do I deny him, doubt him, blaspheme against him?
Do I live like Christ in my faithfulness to God?
Do I love him?

Neighbour

Do I know my neighbour...or want to know him?
Do I seek out the poor and help them?
Am I concerned about the Third World Issues?
Do I visit the sick, those in prison?
Do I take part in groups or parish

activities?

Am I concerned about local or national political issues?
Do I help the young people in clubs, the old and lonely?
Do I respect my neighbour?
Do I love my neighbour appropriately?

Myself

Do I give God enough of myself?
Do I give time to think out where I am going?
Do I try to learn more about God by reading, listening to talks and discussions?
Do I discipline myself in my all self-indulgences?
Do I listen?
Do I give in to pride, anger, lying and deceit?

If you go to Confession, start by saying 'Forgive me father for I have sinned, I have...' and tell the priest the things that you are sorry for. He won't judge you, he'll just forgive you. He'll give you some advice and may ask you to do something or say a prayer to help you do better next time. Then he'll ask you to say an act of contrition say the following:

'Oh My God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, and by the help of your grace, I will try not to sin again. Amen.'

You are now forgiven of everything!

After the Rite of Penance:

This is the time when you will make your act of penance. If your penance takes the form of prayer you may like to kneel at a side altar or near to the front of the church.

Prayer

Lord God, in humility of heart, I ask to feel your presence in my life this day. Help me to be kind and considerate, generous and open to those around me.

Through my prayer and faith help me grow closer to you and awaken in me your love and peace. This prayer I make in the name of Jesus your Son, who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

HELP	FRIENDSHIP	JESUS
GUIDANCE	JOY	HOLY SPIRIT
LOVE	KINDNESS	GOODNESS
FORGIVENESS	FAITH	REVERENCE
TRUST	HOPE	RIGHT JUDGEMENT
HEALTH	NEW START	SUPPORT
HEALING	PEACE	FAMILY
COURAGE	GENTLENESS	SPACE
KNOWLEDGE	FREEDOM	GRACE
A SECOND CHANCE	SELF-CONTROL	SALVATION
WISDOM	GOD	PATIENCE

SAY SORRY AS SOON AS YOU UPSET SOMEONE
 FORGIVE SOMEONE WHO HAS HURT YOU
 TELL SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR FAITH
 DO SOMETHING STRAIGHT AWAY WHEN ASKED
 THANK SOMEONE WHO HELPED YOU
 OFFER HELP BEFORE YOU ARE ASKED
 SUPPORT A CHARITY REGULARLY
 PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NO ONE TO PRAY FOR THEM
 REACH OUT TO THOSE WHO ARE LONELY
 DON'T SPEAK BADLY ABOUT ANYONE
 GO TO CONFESSION REGULARLY
 MAKE MORE TIME IN YOUR DAY FOR PRAYER
 DO SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEONE WHEN THEY AREN'T EXPECTING IT
 LISTEN TO SOMEONE WHEN THEY HAVE A PROBLEM
 ASK SOMEONE HOW THEIR DAY IS
 PRAY FOR THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW JESUS
 INVITE FRIENDS TO CHURCH OR TO PRAY WITH YOU
 DON'T GOSSIP
 STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, ESPECIALLY IF IT IS HARD



*Produced by Joe Hopkins and the Chaplaincy of Christ the King CVA, Arnold, Nottingham.
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formation@nrcdt.org.uk