

Liturgy of hope in times of disaster

You can use this liturgy to pray for those people affected in times of disaster.

What you need:

- Table and table cloth
- Bible
- Candles (several votive candles or a pillar candle)
- A cross
- Water containers and rice
- Broken bamboo / garden sticks or similar
- Liturgy of Hope PowerPoint

Liturgy

Welcome and introduction:

Welcome, today we gather to remember and pray for the people who have lost their lives and those who have been injured in recent natural disasters.

When disaster strikes, it is easy to ask: Where is God? We light the candle/s to remind ourselves that Jesus is a light for us in the darkness of despair and suffering. (Light candle/s)

The cross reminds us of the suffering and death of Jesus. In his life, Jesus found comfort from the care and solidarity of other human beings. Today we pray for the grace to recognise the pain of other people and the strength and courage to take action on their behalf.

The water and the rice remind us of the people around the world struggling to meet their most basic needs. The food and water are also reminders of life returning to normal.

The broken bamboo reminds us that lives, communities and homes have been destroyed. We pray that people will find hope to rebuild their communities and lives.

Song suggestions:

- When I Needed a Neighbour (Sydney Carter)
- With a Prayer (Love Incarnate) – (Stuart Townend)

Opening prayer:

God of mercy and compassion, we ask for your blessing on those whose lives have been affected by disasters. Comfort them in their loss of family, friends and community. Give them the gift of hope to see beyond their pain and loss.

Give strength to those who work with them to rebuild their families and communities. Bless them for their compassion and willingness to be with the grieving, the injured and the homeless.

We ask you to open our hearts to the suffering and needs of those with whom we share this world. Sometimes it is easy just to see them as a statistic or a face on a TV screen. Give us the grace to see our sisters and brothers as real people and to respond to them with generosity of spirit and action.

Lord, hear us.

Scripture readings:

In the psalm we are reminded that, in times of trouble, people turn to God for help and hope.

Psalm 40:1-2, 11, 17

Refrain: How blessed are those who put their trust in the Lord

I waited, I waited for the Lord,
then he stooped to me
and heard my cry for help.

He pulled me up from the seething chasm,
from the mud of the mire.
He set my feet on rock,
and made my footsteps firm.

You, Lord, have not withheld
your tenderness from me;
your faithful and steadfast love
will always guard me.

Poor and needy as I am,
the Lord has me in mind.
You, my helper, my Saviour,
my God, do not delay.

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund

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Gospel: Luke 14: 12-14.

A reading from the Gospel of Luke:

Then he said to his host, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relations or rich neighbours, in case they invite you back and so repay you. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; then you will be blessed, for they have no means to repay you and so you will be repaid when the upright rise again.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Gospel Reflection:

In this passage from Luke's Gospel, Jesus teaches us about solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. His words are one of the foundations of the Church's teaching about preference for the poor. They speak to us about the need to pass on to others the good things in our lives.

Closing prayer:

Our Father meditation (use the 'Liturgy of Hope' PowerPoint)

A meditation on solidarity with those who are suffering. Invite everyone to recite the lines of the Lord's Prayer from the PowerPoint while reader/s read the reflection.

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name (pause)

Reader: God, we ask you to walk with those whose lives have been broken by natural disasters. In the darkness and suffering that they experience, give them reason to hope.
Lord hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Thy kingdom come (pause)

Reader: God, we do not understand suffering and devastation in our world but we see your kingdom in the small miracles of people caring for others. We ask that you bless aid workers and first responders, who make your kingdom present through their care for the individuals and communities affected by disaster. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (pause)

Reader: God, you call us to share the resources of the earth and be stewards of your creation. Give us the generosity of spirit to be your hands on earth, to share these gifts justly and to help others to rebuild their lives and communities. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord hear our prayer (pause)

All: Give us this day our daily bread (pause)

Reader: God, your gifts to us go beyond the essentials we need for our daily lives. As we reflect on the comfort that food, clean air and water, shelter and safety bring to our lives, we give thanks for all that we have received and realise that they are not gifts for us alone. Teach us to share and pass these gifts on to others in ways that show compassion and respect their dignity. *Lord hear us.*

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All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us

Reader: God, too often we see others as undeserving. Forgive us for the times we have let selfish thoughts and actions rule our minds and our hearts. Give us the grace to see people as you see them – as individuals with feelings, hopes and dreams who deserve our help and respect. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil (pause)

Reader: God, we often close our eyes and ears to the suffering of others, especially those far away from here. It is tempting for us to turn the TV channel or the page of the newspaper so as not to see others grief and loss. We ask you to deliver us from our own selfishness and apathy. Open our hearts to your call to walk with the broken, the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Amen

Reader: 'Amen' means saying 'yes' to you. In saying this, we believe that you empower us to be a force for change and justice in the world.

Sign of peace

Invite everyone to offer each other the sign of peace.

Closing song - suggestions:

- I, the Lord of sea and sky (Dan Schutte)
- Make me a channel of your peace (Sebastian Temple)

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Liturgy	Reader
Welcome and introduction	
Opening prayer	
Scripture readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psalm• Gospel• Gospel Reflection	
Closing prayer – Our Father meditation	
Sign of peace	

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