

Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse in the Catholic Church 2024

The Irish Bishops have designated the first Friday of Lent each year as a special day of prayer for victims and survivors of abuse in the Church. This year that day will happen next Friday 16 th February. All Churches across Ireland are invited to offer prayers on that day for all those who have been impacted by the terrible sins and crimes of abuse in the Church. In many churches a Candle of Atonement will be lit, and the Prayer of Atonement offered as we acknowledge the wrongs of the past and pray for the assistance and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we work to ensure they cannot be repeated. This initiative and the prayer were instigated by a survivor of abuse in the Church, and I ask that everyone remembers victims of abuse in their personal and family prayers, and most especially in this coming Friday.

Archbishop Eamon Martin

Apostolic Administrator, Diocese of Dromore

Blessing and Dedication of the Candle of Atonement for the Cathedrals and Churches of Ireland:

Introduction by Celebrant

On this Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse, we acknowledge our sins and pause to prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

During the Penitential Rite at the closing Mass for World Meeting of the Families, and reflecting on what survivors of abuse had told him, Pope Francis implored the Lord's mercy for the crimes of abuse and asked forgiveness, as follows:

Pause for silent prayer.

We ask forgiveness for the cases of abuse in Ireland,

the abuse of power,

the abuse of conscience

and sexual abuse on the part of representatives of the Church.

In a special way,

we ask forgiveness for all those abuses that took place in different kinds of institutions directed by men and women religious and other members of the Church.

We also ask

forgiveness for cases in which many minors were exploited for their labour.

Lord have mercy; Lord have mercy.

We ask forgiveness for all those times when, as a Church, we did not offer to the survivors of an

y type of abuse, compassion and the pursuit of justice and truth by concrete actions.

We ask forgiveness for some members of the hierarchy who took no responsibility for these painful situations and kept silent.

We ask forgiveness.

Christ have mercy; Christ have mercy.

We ask forgiveness for those children who were taken away from their mothers and for all those times when so many single mothers who tried to find their children that had been taken away, or those children who tried to find their mothers, were told that this was a mortal sin. It is not a mortal sin; it is the fourth commandment! We ask forgiveness.

Lord have mercy; Lord have mercy.

May the Lord preserve and increase this sense of shame and repentance and grant us the strength to ensure that it never happens again, and that justice is done. Amen.

Lighting of the Candle of Atonement

We light this Candle of Atonement which shall burn in this Church with the prayer:

CANDLE OF ATONEMENT

Lord, forgive us our many sins.

We grieve and repent with all our hearts for having offended you, for our great failings and

neglect of the young and vulnerable.

We place all of those who have been hurt by the Church in any way into your loving hands

and under the protection of Our Blessed Mother.

Lord, bring peace to their broken lives and show us all the way out of darkness and into the light of your Word.

May we as the people of God be more fully human, more fully Christ-like and more fully your people, that we may see the errors of the past and go forward with renewed hope and

faith in Christ and in our Church.

Amen.