

ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF A VICTIM OF CRIME OR OPPRESSION

**Excerpts from the Books of Blessings*

The personal experience of a crime, political oppression, or social oppression can be traumatic and not easily forgotten. A victim often needs the assistance of others, and no less that of God, dealing with this experience.

This blessing is intended to assist the victim and help him or her come to a state of tranquility and peace. It is best if it is led by the parish priest, deacon, or youth minister.

Dim the lights. Put on prayerful, instrumental music. Instruct the teens to light their candles. Then, lead the teens in praying the following, together.

Introductory Rites -----

Begin:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and reply:

R. Amen.

A minister who is a priest or deacon greets those present in the following or other suitable words, taken mainly from Sacred Scripture:

May the grace and peace of Christ be with you.

And all reply:

R. And with your spirit.

A lay minister greets those present in the following words:

May the Lord grant us peace, now and forever.

And all reply:

R. Amen.

In the following or similar words, the minister prepares those present for the blessing:

*Throughout history, God has manifested His love and care for those who have suffered from violence, hatred, and oppression. We commend **“insert individual names and/or name of community”** to the healing mercy of God who binds up all our wounds and enfolds us in His gentle care.*

Reading of the Word of God -----

A Core Member or teen leader reads a passage from Sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:28-33.

Do Not Fear

Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father.”

Praying of a Psalm -----

Another Core Member or teen leader leads the congregation in praying Psalm 140.

R. The Lord is my strength and my salvation.

Deliver me, O LORD, from evil men; preserve me from violent men, from those who devise evil in their hearts, and stir up wars every day.

R. The Lord is my strength and my salvation.

Save me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men who plan to trip up my feet — the proud who have hidden a trap for me; they have spread cords for a net; by the wayside they have laid snares for me.

R. The Lord is my strength and my salvation.

Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; further not their plans. Those who surround me lift up their heads; may the mischief which they threaten overwhelm them.

R. The Lord is my strength and my salvation.

I know that the LORD renders justice to the afflicted, judgment to the poor. Surely the just shall give thanks to your name; the upright shall dwell in your presence.

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Intercessions -----

The intercessions are then said. Those best suited to the occasion may be used or adapted from the following, or other intentions that apply to the particular circumstances may be composed.

The minister says:

Let us pray to the Lord God, the defender of the weak and powerless, who delivered our ancestors from harm.

Minister:

*For “**insert individual names or community**” name that he or she or they may be freed from pain and fear, we pray to the Lord.*

R. Deliver us from evil, O’ Lord.

Minister:

For all who are victims of crime and oppression, we pray to the Lord.

R. Deliver us from evil, O’ Lord.

Minister:

For an end to all acts of violence and hatred, we pray to the Lord.

R. Deliver us from evil, O’ Lord.

Minister:

For those who harm others, that they may change their lives and turn to God, we pray to the Lord.

R. Deliver us from evil, O’ Lord.

Minister:

The Lord heals our wounds and strengthens us in our weakness; let us pray as Christ has taught us:

R. Our Father...

Closing Rite -----

A minister who is a priest or deacon concludes the rite by saying:

May God bless you with His mercy, strengthen you with His love, and enable you to walk in charity and peace.

R. Amen.

Then he blesses all present.

And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May God bless us with His mercy, strengthen us with His love, and enable us to walk in charity and peace.

R. Amen.