

A photograph of a beach at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the sky and the water. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The ocean waves are gentle, washing onto a sandy beach. In the background, there are large, dark, jagged rock formations. In the foreground, a series of footprints are visible in the sand, leading from the water towards the rocks.

Remembering

Our Beloved Departed

Sisters of Mercy

*“Lives of great people all remind us we
can make our lives sublime.
And departing, leave behind us footprints
on the sand of time.” (Longfellow)*

Ritual for Remembering our Dead



Prayer Space
with appropriate symbols and music

Soft music
lighting of the candle

Focus for a few moments on the candle
and on the symbols in the centrepiece



We come to this sacred place this evening to remember and to celebrate the lives of our community members, family members, friends and relations who have died especially those who have died since this time last year. All of us here have experienced the death of loved ones. Some of us gathered here may be in the midst of recent bereavements. At times like this our pain can be very raw as we wait for healing. This evening we pray that the healing that is already happening may continue to bring us peace.

Mantra

*Breathe on us O Breath of God.
In the silence of our hearts fill us with your peace*

Pause

We enter into this time of prayer remembering and celebrating the lives of our loves ones and also what our lives have become because of life shared with them. They have died, but they have also passed on to us the hope that we are not separated from them. Together we are in God. We are held within the mystery of God, a compassionate God who holds all of life. We are interdependent and interconnected in the community of all life.

Reading Poem In Memoriam

When all the others were away at Mass
I was all hers as we peeled potatoes.
They broke the silence, let fall one by one
Like solder weeping off the soldering iron:
Cold comforts set between us, things to share
Gleaming in a bucket of clean water.
And again let fall. Little pleasant splashes
From each other's work would bring us to our senses.

So while the parish priest at her bedside
Went hammer and tongs at the prayers for the dying
And some were responding and some crying
I remembered her head bent towards my head,
Her breath in mine, our fluent dipping knives--
Never closer the whole rest of our lives.

(Seamus Heaney)



Quiet time for reflection on memories
of our loved ones who have died

Reflection

Everyone loves to be remembered.
But if we want to be remembered
We have a duty also to remember.

Memory is a powerful thing.
Wrongly used it can bring death rather than life.
Rightly used it is a form of immortality.
It keeps the past alive.

Those we remember never die.
They continue to walk and talk with us.
Their influence is still felt among us.
There is nothing stronger or more helpful
than a good remembrance.

*Let us now remember the sisters from
our congregation
who died since last November.*

*Prayerfully read the names of the sisters
who died since last November.*

Let us pray



As Sisters of Mercy, they shared Catherine's commitment
to the poor, the suffering and the uneducated.

We praise their faith,
their hope and their devotion to God's people.

May the legacy of their compassionate
presence be our inspiration.

May the depth of their diversity deepen our
understanding of the diversity that is among us.

May our connection with them allow our place in the
interdependent and interconnected community
of all life to influence us.



*On the centrepiece sisters may have placed their own
memorial cards, photographs or symbols of remembrance
of a community member, a family member, a friend or a relative.*

*Invite sisters to take some time to name and pray for their community
members, family members, friends and relatives who have died.*

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for our world leaders.

Pause

May the Christian vision of peace and justice for all, be respected. Lord, hear us.

We pray for all our Sisters who have died especially those who died during this past year.

Pause

In gratitude we remember them as they experience the light of God's eternal presence. Lord, hear us.

At this time we remember the family members of our sisters who have died.

Pause

May their love continue to nurture comfort, peace and life in us. Lord, hear us.

We pray for all who care for the sick and the dying.

Pause

May they be blessed with commitment and enthusiasm. Lord, hear us.

We remember one another this evening. We pause for a moment to re-commit ourselves to discerning our mission in our evolving universe.

Pause

May we respond anew, in hope to our call at this time. Lord, hear us.

May our community and our congregation be that place of interconnectedness where we experience eternally the compassion of God.

Pause

Lord, hear us.

Pray together the Lord's Prayer



Concluding Prayer

God of Mercy, you have given us the gift of the memory of these our loved ones.

We give thanks for the way they lived lives true to the heart of who they were....

We give thanks for how they were a compassionate presence to those they encountered.....
and for the lasting connection they made with us during their time on earth.

Through the example of their lives may we be inspired to be centred in you and to extend your compassionate presence everywhere.

This we ask in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Concluding hymn



Death invites us to live life in such a way
that every night there's something
for which to be grateful
and every morning there is
something for which to live

