

Gareth Leyshon

Resource for an unbaptised child which has died.

Including cases of miscarriage

From ISCH 143-151 / OCF 503-509

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, O Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful,
and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

✠ Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created.

✠ And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who taught the hearts of the faithful
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit
we may always be truly wise
and ever rejoice in his consolation.
Through Christ our Lord.

✠ **Amen.**

INTRODUCTORY RITE

After speaking informally with those who mourn the child, and finding out what name is to be given to the child, if any, the minister speaks in these or similar words:

**Let's turn to God in prayer,
in the name of the Father, ✠
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

If appropriate, you might ritually ask:
***By what name do you wish to commend
your child to the Lord?***

**Dear friends,
in the face of death,
all human wisdom fails.**

**Yet the Lord Jesus teaches us,
by the three days he spent in the tomb,
that death has no hold over us.
Christ has conquered death;
his dying and rising have redeemed us.
Even in our sorrow for the loss of N.**

[this little child]

**we believe that, one short sleep past,
s/he will wake eternally.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

**The Lord speaks to us now of our hope
for this child in these words of
consolation:**

***A family member or someone else present
preferably does the reading.***

Either Rom 5:5:

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans:

Hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Or 1 Jn 3:2:

A reading from the first letter of St John:

My dear people, we are already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed. All we know is, when it is revealed, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Or another suitable text.

An ad lib prayer of the faithful may follow.

BLESSING OF THE BODY

When the body of the child is present:

**Trusting in Jesus, the loving Saviour,
who gathered children into his arms
and blessed the little ones,
we now commend this infant [N.]
to that same embrace of love,
in the hope that s/he will rejoice
and be happy in the presence of Christ.**

All present join in saying:

***May the angels and saints lead him/her
to the place of light and peace
where one day
we will be brought together again.***

The minister continues:

**Lord Jesus,
lovingly receive this child;
bless him/her
and take him/her to your Father.
We ask this in hope, and we pray:**

℣ Lord, have mercy. ℞ Lord, have mercy.

℣ Christ, have mercy. ℞ Christ, have mercy.

℣ Lord, have mercy. ℞ Lord, have mercy.

***It may be appropriate to sign the child's body with
the Cross at this point, and ask those present to do
likewise.***

ALTERNATIVE PRAYERS FOR MOURNERS

When the body of the child is not present:

Either:

**O Lord,
whose ways are beyond understanding,
listen to the prayers
of your faithful people:
that those weighed down by grief
at the loss of this [little] child
may find reassurance
in your infinite goodness.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

℟ Amen.

Or:

**God of all consolation,
searcher of mind and heart,
the faith of these parents [N. & N.]
is known to you.
Comfort them with the knowledge
that the child for whom they grieve
is entrusted now to your loving care.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

℟ Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

In the following or other suitable words,
introduce the Lord's prayer:

C As sons and daughters of a loving God,
we pray in the confident words of his Son:

Our Father...

PRAYER OF COMMENDATION

Either of the following prayers of
commendation may be used, the optional
section in **B** is designed for naming a stillborn
or miscarried child.

A Tender shepherd of the flock,
N. now lies cradled in your love.
Soothe the hearts of his/her parents
and bring peace to their lives.
Enlighten their faith
and give hope to their hearts.

Loving God,
grant mercy to your entire family
in this time of suffering.
Comfort us with the hope that
this infant / baby / **[N.]**
lives with you and your Son, Jesus Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

R *Amen.*

B Lord God, ever caring and gentle,
we commit to your love this little one,
who brought joy to our lives
for so short a time.
Enfold him/her in eternal life.

[Lord, you formed this child in the womb;
you have known it by name
before time began.

We now wish to name this little one N.:
a name we shall treasure
in our hearts for ever.]

**We pray for these parents who are
saddened by the loss of their baby.
Give them courage
and help them in their pain and grief.
May they all meet one day
in the joy and peace of your kingdom
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

℟ Amen.

BLESSING OF THE MOURNERS

Ordained minister's form of blessing:

**May the God of all consolation
bring you comfort and peace,
in the name of the Father, ✠
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

℟ Amen.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

1. TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

See front cover.

2. CELTIC BLESSING

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

3. THE MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that any one who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help or sought thy
intercession,
was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence,
I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins my Mother;
to thee do I come,
before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful;
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in thy clemency hear and answer me.

CERTIFICATE OF BLESSING

Baby _____

the child of

was blessed according to the
rites of the Catholic Church

by _____
MINISTER

at _____
PLACE

on _____
DATE

Signed: _____

Parish Information

If you would like to speak with someone who understands what it is like to lose a child, you may find it helpful to contact SANDS, the Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Society: 020 7436 5881

Record of the Blessing of a Child who Died before Baptism

Child's Name: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Date of Blessing: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Minister: _____

Contact Details (would family would like to be invited to prayer service for the bereaved?)
