

Resource for Parish Pilgrimage

Preparations

- Walk out the route for the pilgrimage – be conscious that your group will be young and old, some fleet of foot, others less mobile.
- Decide how many stations you are going to have...this will also depend on the length of your pilgrimage, and what you want to include in your pilgrimage journey. Please amend this outline for your use.
- Mark the stations that you have chosen e.g. holy well, cemetery, Mass Rock, church...use a cross to mark the stations so that they are obvious to everyone.
- Heap of small stones – invite pilgrims to carry a stone with them on the journey.
- Have a postcard for each person with the words of the prayer **Be with us, Lord, as we journey...**and the Closing Prayer on them.
- Gather at parish church or other central place where people can leave their cars.

Station 1 – Carrying our burden

Leader We gather to make a pilgrimage together.

Going on pilgrimage has a long tradition in the Christian tradition. We remember the boy Jesus travelled with his family to Jerusalem for the Holy Days. During his public ministry, Jesus walked from place, encountering the people of Galilee along the road. It was as the two disciples walked down from Jerusalem after their pilgrimage that they encountered the Risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus. All of us are gathered here today in the tradition of the biblical figures who made pilgrimages...and also our ancestors in the faith, who gathered at Mass rocks and holy wells.

All We gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Leader We come on this pilgrimage bringing the bits and pieces of our lives. We bring with us on pilgrimage our families and friends, our neighbours and communities. We carry with us all those for whom we wish to pray during this time of pilgrimage.....and we carry with us our own needs at this time.

An ancient custom is to carry a stone with us as we journey. The stone symbolises what we are praying for during this time of pilgrimage...

All come forward to take their stone....

Reader 1 **Scripture Reading – Jeremiah 6:16a**
Yahweh says this,
'Stand at the crossroads and look, ask for the ancient paths:

which was the good way? Take it and you will find rest for yourselves.

Leader As we begin, we take a moment just to pause....to look around us at the community gathered here.....we also take a moment just to think about all the crossroads in our lives....all the roads we have walked since our birth.....we recall those who have shown us the good way....

PAUSE

Leader Together we pray...

**All Be with us, Lord, as we journey.
Be with those we carry with us on this pilgrimage.
Guide us as we journey forward together.**

Pilgrims start off on their journey.....

Station 2 - Water

Leader Water is essential to our lives...we cannot live without water. There would be no trees, no flowers, no animals.....we would not exist. It is a source of life for us....without it, the earth would not exist.

Scripture Reading – John 4:7 - 17

Reader 2 *When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me something to drink.' His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew. How is it that you ask me, a Samaritan, for something to drink?' -- Jews, of course, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied to her: If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me something to drink,' you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water. 'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered, 'and the well is deep: how do you get this living water? Jesus replied: Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again; but no one who drinks the water that I shall give will ever be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will become a spring of water within, welling up for eternal life.*

Leader We take a moment to look around us at all that would not exist if it were not for water. We notice the plants, the trees, the land.....we look at the animals and birds.....we think of ourselves – without water, we would die.

For a moment we reflect on what we are thirsty for in life?...what or who will slake our thirst?.....when have we known God as a source of life for us?....Jesus promises to be a spring of water within us...

PAUSE

Leader Together we pray...

**All Be with us, Lord, as we journey.
Be with those we carry with us on this pilgrimage.
Guide us as we journey forward together.**

Pilgrims continue on their journey.....

Station 3 – Cross

Scripture Reading – Matt 11:28-30

Reader 3 *'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'*

Leader None of us walks through life empty handed. We carry the struggles and the pains of our own lives, and those of others....at times perhaps we may feel overburdened and overwhelmed. To each of us, Jesus says, Come to me and find rest from your burden.

We take a moment to become aware of the struggles or burdens that we experience...what are the things in life that I find hard?...what weighs me down?...what do I want to find rest from?.....For a moment, we hear in our hearts, Jesus' invitation to come to him and to find rest with him.....

PAUSE

Leader Together we pray...

**All Be with us, Lord, as we journey.
Be with those we carry with us on this pilgrimage.
Guide us as we journey forward together.**

Pilgrims continue on their journey.....

Station 4 – Community

Scripture Reading – Matthew 25:34 – 36

Reader 4 *Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me."*

PAUSE

Leader Gathered as a parish community, we place our needs before the Lord:

Reader 5 For the Church, that it may always seek to be at service of the Gospel.... *Lord, hear us*

Reader 5 For all who give of themselves to build up our parish community *Lord, hear us*

Reader 5 For all who give of themselves to improve the lives of others..... *Lord, hear us*

Reader 5 For Christians everywhere, that they may see the call to serve others as an expression of their Christian calling..... *Lord, hear us*

Reader 5 For the courage to share our time, our talents, our treasures with others...*Lord, hear us*

Leader Gracious God, you hear the prayers of those who call to you:
be with us and help us to live the new life you give us to the fullest.
We ask this through that same Son, Jesus Christ the Lord.

All Amen

Leader Together we pray...

**All Be with us, Lord, as we journey.
Be with those we carry with us on this pilgrimage.
Guide us as we journey forward together.**

Pilgrims continue on their journey.....

Station 5 – Being witnesses to Faith, Hope and Love

Scripture Reading: Matt 28:18 - 20

Reader 6 *Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'*

Leader We gather as a Christian people, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, called to share the Good News of God with all whom we meet....and to trust that he is with us until the end of time.....

We take a moment to reflect on what it means for us to know that Jesus is with us, at all times....always walking beside us....always close to us...always wanting to be a loving support in our lives....and a guide for our path.....

PAUSE

Leader: Together we pray...

**All Be with us, Lord, as we journey.
Be with those we carry with us on this pilgrimage.
Guide us as we journey forward together.**

Leader We have made this pilgrimage as disciples of Jesus in our time,
aware that he also experienced challenging times:

Jesus was scorned for his friendship with sinners and prostitutes
Jesus was confronted by the religious authorities of his times
Jesus was noted for his equal treatment of women

This same Jesus sought out the lost and the lame
This Jesus shared meals with the powerful and the powerless
This Jesus remained true to his relationship with Abba, Father.

Because of how he lived the challenges of his times,
His life ended on the cross, a place of desperation...
But his cross became a tree of hope for each one of us –
because his cross became the place of resurrection, of new life

As followers of Jesus Christ,
we too will encounter the cross in our lives
– in our relationships, in our communities, in our world today

I invite you now to place your stone
[decide where would be appropriate to build a cairn of stones]
May this cairn of stones remind us that we do not journey alone,
that we carry one another on the journey of life,
and that it is together that we overcome the struggles
and find the peace and joy that God wants for us.

People process forward and create a cairn with their stones.

Responsory

Reader	Jesus, companion of sinners
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, healer of the sick
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader:	Jesus, challenger of the ‘system’
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, outspoken for the poor
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, true to your life’s calling
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, upsetter of the status quo
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, brother of all
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, advocate of peace
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, befriender of the marginalised
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, shepherd of the lost
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus
Reader	Jesus, come to us today
All	Be with us, Lord Jesus

Sign of Peace

Presider Today we are reminded
that we are called to be people of hope in the face of challenge.

And now I invite you
to offer a hand of peace and of friendship
to one another as we offer each other a sign of peace:

Closing Prayer

Leader Lord Jesus, it is in your way of living the ordinary
that the extraordinary happened.
May we learn from you
to face the challenges of our time with hope:

Open us to live according to your example
in all the moments of our day.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Concluding Prayer

Leader As brothers and sisters of Jesus here in the Diocese of Kerry, we pray together:

All Lord,
as disciples,
help us to live like Jesus
with you, with each other and with all of creation.
Keep us alert in faith
to the signs of our times
and eager to accept the challenge of your Gospel.

Heal us with your love,
nourish us with your Word,
and feed us at your table.
Open our eyes to appreciate and use the gifts of all,
signs of your Spirit among us.

May we be living witnesses
to truth and freedom, to justice and peace,
in our homes, in our workplaces and in our communities. AMEN