



# Reconciliation Service – Leader’s Guide

## A Time for Hope

### What you will need:

- Script for readers
- Pen (1 per person)
- A6 sheet (1 per person)
- Reconciliation PowerPoint (with sound available)
- Quiet background music
- Optional Prayer Stations that could be used.

### Room set-up:

- Create a simple focal point in the room
- In the best possible way allow space between chairs for young people
- If the Sacrament of Reconciliation is available, set up a space where young people can celebrate the sacrament in line with your school/college/parish safeguarding practices

### OPENING PRAYER

*(Continue playing music in the background if you wish)*

#### READER 1:

*Welcome to our Service of Reconciliation, a time to draw closer to God, reflect on the times we have fallen short, and ask for Gods forgiveness.*

#### (Slide 2) READER 2:

*We come together in this place as a community, united on a journey of hope.*

#### (SLIDE 3) READER 1:

*We gather, knowing that when we open the door to one another, you are present with us.*

#### (SLIDE 4) READER 2:

*We come together, recognising that despite our potential for good, we have often closed the door on our best self and that we we have failed to see beyond our first impression of the person standing on our doorstep.*

#### (SLIDE 5) READER 1:

*Let us Pray.*

*Loving God, You are the door to peace, forgiveness, and new life.*

*As we gather today, help us recognise Your presence in each moment.*

*Open our hearts to Your grace, and teach us to forgive as You forgive.*

*In the busyness of life, remind us to pause and reflect on Your love.*

*Draw us closer to You, and help us use our time wisely to grow in faith and build Your kingdom.*

*May this time together strengthen us to become more like You.*

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





**(SLIDE 6) READER 3:**

A reading from the book of Jeremiah

**Jeremiah 29:11-14**

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

**(SLIDE 7) READER 4:**

Jeremiah was a prophet who delivered tough messages that weren't always popular to the people of Israel, and they didn't always want to listen. He faced rejection and isolation, but God promised hope for the future.

*(Slide 8)* Jeremiah believed in this hope even though it wasn't always easy.

**(Slide 10) READER 3:**

In this letter from Jeremiah we are reminded that God has a special plan for our lives (Slide 11) but that we might not always be able to see the big picture.

**(Slide 12) READER 4:**

God's promise to bring His people back didn't happen right away, but it did happen! Sometimes, healing and growth take time, and we may have to wait for things to get better. (Slide 13) Lent is a time when we choose to slow down and to become more aware of the time we give to God in our lives.

**(Slide 14) READER 3:**

In Jeremiah's time the people of Israel were frustrated and impatient of what the future would hold. For many people in our world today time is incredibly precious. There are still people who are being forced to leave their homes and have nowhere to go.

*(Slide 15)* (Tariku's Story)

**(Slide 16) READER 5:**

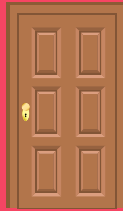
It's great news that politicians have listened and are trialling extending the time refugees have to find their feet! We can help by campaigning for more time to get settled, offering patience and support as they rebuild their lives. Just as God listens when we seek Him, we can listen to refugees and help them find hope and a new beginning.

**(Slide 17) READER 6:**

This Lent, the SVP want us to use our voices to thank our local MPs for this step and ask them to make it permanent. As pilgrims of hope, we can continue to work for positive change for our brothers and sisters, trusting that God is guiding everything for our good.

**(Slide 18) READER 5:**

This moment of prayer today is our chance to take some time to reflect on our relationships with others, with God and with ourselves, bringing all our thoughts to the one who loved us before anyone else and wants the best for us.



### **(SLIDE 19) READER 6:**

As the questions are read reflect on your answers.

*(Give space between the questions in this examination of conscience for time to think. There are A5 printouts at the end of this resource that could be used by participants to write some notes and support them in celebrating the sacrament)*

### **(Slide 20) READER 6:**

#### **My relationship with God**

- Do I make time in my day to acknowledge God's presence?
- Do I open the door of my heart to invite God into my everyday life?
- Are there areas of my life where I resist opening the door to God?
- How can I make time this week to welcome God more fully into my life?

### **(Slide 21) READER 7:**

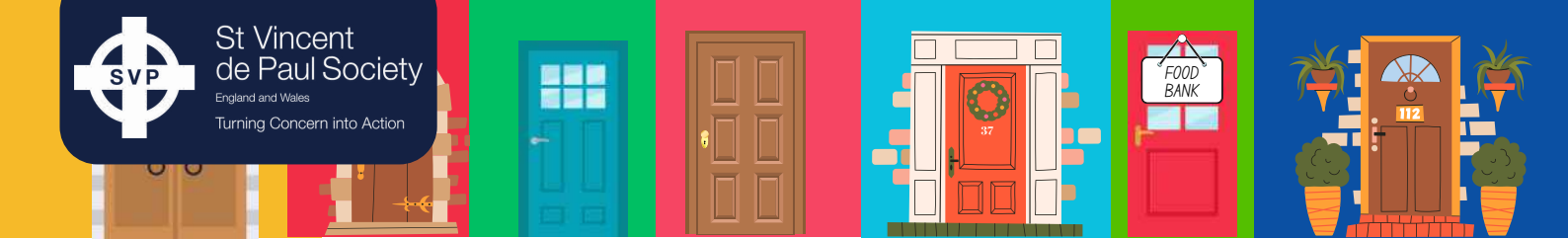
#### **My relationship with others**

- Do I open my heart to welcome others, especially those in need?
- How could I use my time better to serve others with kindness and patience?
- Are there people I keep "out" by making judgments or because of my pride?
- How can I create more time to help someone in need this week?
- Do I use my time to speak out for justice and mercy in the lives of others?
- Are there people I need to forgive to unlock the door to healing?

### **(Slide 22) READER 8:**

#### **My relationship with myself**

- Do I resist forgiving because I don't want to appear weak or I worry it will be too hard?
- Is there a friendship I need to invest time in beginning to repair?
- In my relationships with others do I respect and care for myself?
- Can others have a bad influence on me?
- Is there anything that is on your conscience that you are worried about?



## (SLIDE 24) IF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS AVAILABLE:

**Leader:** We are now going to have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation a time when we can share what is in our hearts with God and be forgiven for the things that are weighing us down.

### **Explain the process to the participants or give them the walk through sheet to support them in going:**

- When you enter confession or reconciliation, you will begin by saying hello to the priest and being invited to make the **sign of the cross**.
- Tell the priest your sins honestly. He might offer advice or guidance. (Remember the seal of confession means anything you say in confession is kept secret. The priest cannot share it with anyone. This means you can be honest and feel safe. It's a way to experience God's forgiveness without fear of judgment.)
- The priest will give you a **penance** this is something to do, like a prayer, to show you're sorry.
- The priest will ask you to say an **act of contrition** this is a prayer to show you're sorry and want to change.

*Father, I'm sorry for the things I've done wrong.  
Please help me to do better and be the person You want me to be.  
Amen.*

- The priest will then give you **absolution**. This is a beautiful prayer of forgiveness as he prays it bow your head and listen to the words.
- At the end you can say thankyou and leave. Sit quietly for a few moments after confession and think about how you will do your penance.

## (SLIDE 23) IF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS NOT AVAILABLE:

**Leader:** Now that you've had a moment to reflect, take a few minutes to open the door of your heart to God. Write a prayer asking Him for help in making the right choices going forward. You might ask for patience with your family or friends, or for guidance in helping those in need. Ask God how you can bring hope to others. Keep this prayer with you to say at home, and when you're ready to go to confession, look over your notes from your Examination of Conscience and bring them to Jesus in that moment.

## **CLOSING REFLECTION:**

### **(SLIDE 25) READER 7:**

As we draw this time we've had to be with God lets listen to this final reflection.

## **DOOR PARABLE**

### **(SLIDE 26) READER 8:**

So lets pray...

Loving God,

Thank You for Your plan for each of us,

Thankyou that it is filled with hope and healing.

Thank You for opening doors of peace, forgiveness, and new beginnings.

Help us to walk through these doors with courage and make us ready to share Your mercy with others.

Guide us to trust in Your plan,

Allow us to leave the past behind,

and give us strength to live with kindness so that we may share Your love with everyone we meet.

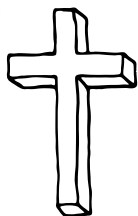
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



**During the sacrament of reconciliation,  
this is what will happen.**

**Sign of the Cross**

After making the sign of the cross, the Priest will invite you to share your sins.



**Advice and Penance**

This is where the Priest will give you some advice and an action about what you could do to show you are sorry.



**Contrition**

This is the prayer you will say to say you are sorry.

*Father, I'm sorry for the things I've done wrong. Please help me to do better and be the person You want me to be. Amen.*



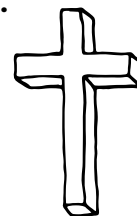
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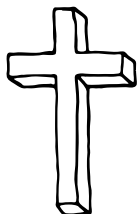
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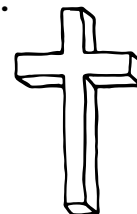
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God

Others

Ourselves

God

Others

Ourselves

God

Others

Ourselves

God

Others

Ourselves