

**A Celtic Healing Service**

**From**

**The Order of Jacob's Well**

## Introduction

The question might be asked whether a 'Celtic Healing Service' consisting of ancient texts is of any use or relevance in today's world.

It is not the intention, however, to imitate some newly discovered ancient service, but to link our historical, cultural experience into the living tradition of the Church.

It is intended that this order of service should be a resource of prayer inspired by that tradition. Liturgy exists in the here and now, and is only good if it is in line with scriptural revelation, and helps to provide a setting within which corporate prayer, praise, worship and ministry can take place.

This healing service has been created simply by following the practice of many a Celtic scribe, collecting together the prayers and texts which are useful for this particular Celtic Service.

The prayerful climax of this service is built around a circle of kneelers or cushions, up to eight in number, placed in a central position for all to see, and laid out before the healing service. A reasonable gap is to be left between each cushion, to allow for personal space. The overall size of the circle should be sufficient to allow the comfortable moving around of three ministers within it: the leader and two circle attendants.

Hymns and choruses are not essential for the service, but background music may enhance the work of ministry around the circle. Lighting should, if possible, be softly done - candlelight may be helpful.

A REFLECTION ON GOD'S WORD is optional, depending on the numbers attending and the level of expectancy of God's love and miraculous power (both in the speaker and in the congregation).

Immediately the INVITATION is given, two pre-selected circle attendants quietly approach the circle and demonstrate the intercession activity. The leader and one attendant place a shawl (intended as a reminder of the robe of Christ's righteousness) around the shoulders of the other attendant (who may kneel or stand, or demonstrate both postures in turn) then anoint with oil while the leader leads the congregation in the HEALING INTERCESSIONS Prayer for each individual.

"May the Spirit of the living God,  
Flow into this beloved child,  
Healing where there has been harm,  
Strengthening where there is weakness,  
And lifting the heart to reflect his glory.  
Amen"

The two attendants should then change places for a second demonstration. The attendants then both stand and enter the circle, one with the shawl and one with the oil, and the same process of ministering and receiving is then offered to the congregation. It should be explained that any posture is acceptable; supplicants are welcome to stand if they are more comfortable with that, or a chair can be provided where necessary.

The HEALING INTERCESSIONS prayer is to be said by the congregation over each supplicant as they are covered and anointed in turn by the circle attendants.

Each supplicant is encouraged to remain at prayer at the circle for as long as they wish. Supplicants should not be encouraged to describe the condition needing healing.

The leader may continue to walk around inside the circle and bless quietly those remaining after prayer, while other supplicants may leave the circle and be replaced.

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## **INTRODUCTION AND OPENING RESPONSES**

Leader: - We welcome you in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. We begin by saying together the Lord's Prayer.

All: - Our Father.

***All stand.***

Leader continues: - O God, who created the heavens and stretched them out,

All: - We praise you.

Leader: - You fashioned the earth and all that lives there,

All: - We praise you.

Leader: - You give breath to the people upon it, and Spirit to those who walk on it.

All: - We praise you.

Leader: - That the eyes of the blind be opened,  
The broken hearted be healed,  
The poor hear the Good News,  
The captive be brought out of darkness,

All: - Your kingdom come, O Lord, your will be done.

Leader: - So shall we sing a new song, O Lord.

All: - And praise your name for ever.

***All sit.***

## **PSALM OR CANTICLE**

Reader: -  
Psalm 103 or Psalm 139: - 1-12  
Or a Canticle -  
Isaiah 61 or Exodus 15: - 1-11

## **PRAYER**

Leader: - Let us pray.

As if it were not enough,  
To bring sound from silence,  
Light from darkness,  
Order from confusion;  
As if it were not enough,  
To make the world excellent and intricate -  
You gave the kiss of life to the dust of the earth,  
You made male and female,  
Me and us.

All: - So we bless you.

Leader: - As if it were not enough,  
To watch the world you had created,  
To admire your handwork from eternity;  
As if it were not enough,  
To care and be kind at a distance -  
You sent your Son to be flesh of our flesh,  
Bone of our bone,  
To live and walk beside,  
Me and us.

All: - So we bless you.

Leader: - As if it were not enough,  
To be looked at and listened to,  
criticised and complimented,  
Feted and forsaken -  
You stretched out your arm,  
And held out your hand,  
To heal and to help,  
Me and us.

All: - So we bless you.

Leader: - As if it were not enough,  
To do all this,  
And return, triumphant, to glory -  
You still hear our cries in the courts of high heaven,  
And promise your Spirit for the healing of the nations,  
And for me and for us.

All: - So we bless you.  
God of all power,  
Lord over our weakness,  
Spirit bringing Salvation.  
Amen

## **READING**

Matthew 12: - 9 - 15

Or

Luke 5: - 12 - 15

Or

Luke 6: - 12 - 19

## **A REFLECTION ON GOD'S WORD OR TESTIMONIES**

### **INVITATION**

Leader: - The circle before you is a reminder of the everlasting nature of God and his love, never beginning and never ending. Come and receive the healing mercy of God, symbolised by this healing anointing with oil, covered by the righteousness of Christ.

### **HEALING INTERCESSIONS**

*This prayer is to be said by all over each supplicant in the circle.*

All:  
May the Spirit of the living God,  
Flow into this beloved child,  
Healing where there has been harm,  
Strengthening where there is weakness,  
And lifting the heart to reflect his glory.  
Amen

### **A SILENT TIME FOR REFLECTION**

#### **WORSHIP**

Leader: I marvel at the present wounds and the blood long spilt at Calvary,  
All: That heal the failing of our bodies.

Leader: I marvel at the present wounds and the blood long spilt at Calvary,  
All: That heal the frailty of our souls.

Leader: I marvel at the present wounds and the blood long spilt at Calvary,  
All: That heal the weakness of our spirits.  
Leader: For whoever believes and trusts in the power of Jesus, nothing is impossible.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Conquering all the powers that seek to oppress us, vanquishing every strike of the enemy.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Protecting us from all the crafty attacks of the enemy.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: That covers our repented sins so that they are no longer seen in heaven.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Having the power to free us from all the chains and bondages of sin.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Cleansing us from all unrighteousness and making us as white as snow.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Re-making us and preparing us to be the bride of God.

All: I marvel at his blood spilt so long ago at Calvary,  
Leader: Still making everything new,  
All: Alleluia! Amen

## **ALTERNATIVE DISMISSAL PRAYERS**

Leader: -

Let us go forth,  
In the goodness of our merciful Father,  
In the gentleness of our brother Jesus,  
In the radiance of his Holy Spirit,  
In the faith of the apostles,  
In the joyful praise of the angels,  
In the holiness of the saints,  
In the courage of the martyrs.  
(Celtic)

or

I beseech you, Jesus, loving Saviour, to show yourself to all who seek you so that we may know you and love you. May we love you alone, desire you alone, and keep you always in our thoughts.  
May love for you possess our hearts,  
May affection for you fill our senses, so that we may love all else in you.  
Jesus, King of Glory,  
You know how to give greatly  
And you have promised great things.  
Nothing is greater than yourself.  
We ask nothing else of you but yourself.  
You are our life, our light, our food and our drink, our God and our all.  
(from an ancient Irish Prayer)

## **ALTERNATIVE DISMISSAL BLESSINGS**

Leader: -

Blessing and brightness,  
Wisdom, thanksgiving,  
Great power and might  
To the King who rules over all.

Glory and honour and goodwill,  
Praise and the sublime song of minstrels,  
Overflowing love from every heart  
To the King of Heaven and Earth.

To the Holy Trinity in being  
Before all, after all, universal  
Blessing and everlasting blessing,  
Blessing everlasting and blessing.  
(Irish, ninth century)

or

May the grace of the Lord Jesus sanctify us and keep us from all evil; may he drive far from us all hurtful things, and purify both our souls and bodies; may he bind us to himself by the bond of love, and may his peace abound in our hearts.  
(Gregorian Sacramentary, sixth century)

or

May the King shield you in the valleys,  
May Christ aid you on the mountains,  
May the Spirit bathe you on the slopes,

In hollow, on hill, on plain,  
On mountain, valley and plain,  
May the Three in One bless you .  
(Hebridean)

### **FINAL DISMISSAL**

Leader: -  
Go in health and peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: - In the name of Christ. Amen