

SPIRITUAL CARE FOR THE DYING

A MEDIEVAL RECONSTRUCTION: 9th - 11th Century

Primary Source: Christianizing Death, Fredrick Paxton, Rhinau [Fintan] Sacramentary,
Celtic Sources, Engelberg & Montserrat Monastic Libraries, Richard Groves

STAGES	PSALM/ ANTIPHONS	RITUAL
During serious illness in the home	Psalm 130 Psalm 41	See Celtic Prayer [end of document]
Rites for Caregivers	Psalm 32	Intercessory Prayer for caregivers Blessing of bread and water for fast
Deathbed Reconciliation	Psalm 51 Antiphon: Deus Misericors [1]	Penitential garment
Blessing of Oil [2]		Anointing: James 5:13-16 [3]
Rite of Exorcism [3 cont.]		
Vigil	Litany of Release [4]	
Sacred Light	Antiphon: Lumen [5]	Vigil Candles lit
Rites for Final Agony	Psalm 130 Psalm 32 Psalm 111:10 Psalm 74:19 Psalm 115:17-18 Psalm 143:2	
Moving toward final hours	Psalm 51:3-13	Sprinkling of house [6]
Baptismal Remembrance [7]		
Offering of Cross and Light [8/9]	Psalm 41	
Viaticum Post Viaticum	Psalm 23 Psalm 51:14-21 Antiphon: Requiem [10]	Remove penitential garment
Final Vigil	Antiphon: Extingue [11]	

During final breaths	Antiphon: Memento Mei [12] Litany of Hope [13] Benediction [14]	
At the moment of death	Antiphon: Subvenite [12]	Bell is tolled
Migratio Animae [Transition of soul]	Antiphon: Deus Apud Quem [13] Antiphon: Suscipe Domine-part 1 [14]	
Prayer of Mourners	Psalm 113 Prayer: Pio Recordationis [15]	
Cleansing of Head	Psalm 115 Prayer: Te Domine [16]	
Washing of the Body	Psalm 92 and 93 Antiphon: Suscipe Domine-parts 2/3 [17]	
Body is perfumed	John 19:38-42	
Cleansing of the Space		Exorcism [18] Incensing
As body is removed from home	Psalm 32	
Procession to Church	Psalm 51	Wake and Funeral Rites [separate]
Exiting Church	Antiphon: In Paradisuum [19]	
Procession to grave	Psalm 64 Antiphon: Requiem	
Blessing of grave	Antiphon: De terra formasti me [20] Sprinkling	
At grave	Antiphon: Lux Aeterna	Vigil Lamp
While placed in tomb	Psalm 117:19-20 Prayers: Debitum humani corporis [21]	

While shoveling dirt	Psalm 117: 6 Antiphon: Aperite Mihi Portes [22]	
While leaving cemetery	Antiphon: Tibi Domine Commendamus	
Bereavement Period	Psalm 51	Special Rites for Days-3, 7, 13 [5 daily Psalms for the living and the dead] Alms for Poor

ANTIPHONS AND PRAYERS

1) DEUS MISERICORS

Merciful God, gentle God, you who restrain the multitude of your mercies through no law of time, and do not turn away those who knock at the door of your compassion, even at the very end of life, look down favorably on your servant, _____, begging in the full confession of the heart remission of all his/her sins. Renew in him/her most Holy Father, whatever has been violated through evil deceit and restore the member, perfected through forgiveness, to the unity of the body of your Church.

Responses: O God you give to the penitent courage to face the darkness of sin.

You are Lord and there is no other.

We pray for this whole family that they may be cleansed from all form of sickness and evil.

2) EMITTE DOMINE

Lord, send down from heaven the Holy Spirit, your Divine Paraclete into this pure olive oil which you have seen fit to produce from living wood for the restoration of the body, so that through your holy benediction it may be a defender of the body to all using it as an ointment, drinking or touching it, for the ridding of all pains, all weaknesses, and every sickness of the body; your holy Chrism, Lord, blessed by you, from which you anointed prophets, kings and martyrs, remaining in our inmost parts.

[The Lord's Prayer follows: Knowing, Lord, that you are joined with us even in times of tears, hear us now as we pray. "Our Father..."]

3) SI QUISQUIS

If anyone among you is suffering hardship let them pray. If a person is in good spirits, he should sing a hymn of praise. Is there anyone sick among you? They should ask for the elders of the church. They in turn are to pray over them, anointing them with oil in the Name of the Lord. This prayer uttered in faith will reclaim the one who is ill and the Lord will restore him to health. If they have committed any sins, they will be likewise forgiven. Hence, declare your sins to one another and pray for one another that you may find healing. The fervent petition of the holy person is powerful indeed.

Prayer of Exorcism

Penitent: Heal me, O Lord, for my body is in torment, my very bones are racked with pain. Rescue my soul.

Celebrant: The Lord said to his disciples, receive the Holy Spirit. In my name you shall cast out demons and in their place you shall lay your hands on the sick and they shall get well.

Community: Let us pray for your sick brother/sister that they may be relieved from all illness of body and spirit.

All: Jesus, our Savior, our true health and medicine. Hear us now, we pray!

4) LITANY AT THE MOMENT OF RELEASE

Because you have been a faithful servant of God, we now release you and pray that your spirit may be cleansed by the fire and vision of Eternal Love. Trust the promise given to all who confess the mercy of Christ that, “this day you will be with me in paradise.” May the Holy Deipara intercede for you as you journey into Life Everlasting.

[Anoint the crown of the head]

May you no longer seek to control your fate or destiny but yield to the just Plan of the Creator.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint mouth]

May you be delivered from the tides of impatience that rip at both body and soul.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint ears]

May you be delivered from the stain of sinful pride which caused the demons to fall.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint between the shoulders]

May you no longer know the pangs of envy and covetousness.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint the eyes]

May you release all that moth can eat and rust can corrode.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint the forehead]

May your appetites now be quieted so that you only desire the true and living water.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

[Anoint hands and feet]

May you be found awake and keeping vigil so that when the bridegroom comes you may be found waiting.
Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.

Deliver the soul of your child from all falsehood and fear, bring him/her to the true home of heaven with the courts of saints who having been tried by fire have been found worthy.

5) LUMEN DOMINI: The Lord is a Light of revelation to all people and the glory of your people, Israel!

6) ASPERGES: Cleanse this place of sin that all who dwell here may be purified. Wash us and we shall become whiter than the snows.

7) BAPTISMATI: [Recited during washing with blessed water]

You have already been washed in the bath of regeneration.
No one can see the reign of God unless they are begotten from above,
without being reborn of water and the spirit. Flesh begets flesh but spirit
begets spirit. [Cf. John 3]

- 8) AVE CRUX: May I never boast of anything save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world. [Gal 6:14]
- 9) PASTOR BONUS: Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.
- 10) REQUIEM AETERNAM: Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let your perpetual light shine on them.
- 11) EXTINGUE: Extinguish in him/her, Lord, the heat of lusts and fevers, destroy the torture of vices and sting of pains, dissolve the torment of desire and sickness, suppress the swelling of pride and tumors, empty the rottenness of vanity and ulcers, calm the inside of the entrails and the heart, remove the scars of conscience and wounds, put in order the works of the flesh and the material of the blood and grant him/her forgiveness of sins.
- 12) SUBVENITE: Come down now saints of God, run towards him/her, angels of the Lord. Taking his/her soul and offering it in the sight of the Most High.
- 13) DEUS APUD QUEM: God in whom all mortal things live, to whom our bodies do not perish by dying but are changed into something better, as supplicants we entreat You to order the soul of your servant, _____, to be gathered up through the hands of the blessed angels, led into the bosom of your friend Abraham, the patriarch, and resuscitated on the last day of the Great Judgment. Through the indulgence of Your piety, wash away whatever under the sway of the devil, may have done in this world contrary to You.
- 14) SUSCIPE: [part 1] Receive the soul of your servant, clothe it in heavenly vestments and wash it in the holy font of eternal life.
- 15) PIO RECORDATIONIS AFFECTU: In the pious activity of remembrance, most dear brethren, let us commemorate our dear brother/sister, _____, whom the Lord has called from the temptations of the world, begging the mercy of our God, so that He himself may deign to grant him/her a quiet and pleasant dwelling, that He may remit all the offenses of momentary thoughtlessness, that having been granted the grace of full indulgence for whatsoever his/her own.
- 16) TE DOMINE: We pray for the soul of your servant whom you have ordered to be brought from the abyss of this world. Raise him/her up with your saints and elected ones, erase his/her crimes down to the last penny. Raise his/her soul up with you in immortality, O Lord!
- 17) SUSCIPE: [parts 2/3] Receive, Lord, the soul of your servant, _____, in his/her eternal home and grant peace in the celestial city, Jerusalem. Grant him/her a place in the first resurrection, let him/her rise to receive a new body and come with the blessed into eternal life.
- 18) EXORCISM: Depart from this place, powers of darkness and troublemakers of the soul. Cleanse us with water and light. Depart spirits of death and illness; come to purify us with the mantle of eternal holiness. May this place be restored to your Peace, O Eternal Friend of our Soul.

- 19) IN PARADISUUM: May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs welcome you to the new and holy city, Jerusalem. May a chorus of angels lift you up with Lazarus, who once was poor, into the holy city, Jerusalem, and may you together enjoy eternal rest.
- 20) DE TERRA FORMASTI ME: You ordered me to be born O Lord and out of the earth you formed me. Do not forget your servant now in his/her poverty. [Book of Job]
- 21) DEBITUM CONDITIONIS HUMANI: The debt of our human condition has now been paid. Having suffered the fate of illness, weakness and death, just as the Lord himself knew in his human body, may he/she now be given the Holy Spirit in hope of resurrection with the entire society of the Holy Ones who now reign with God.
- 22) APERITE MIHI PORTAS: Open now the gates of justice and let me in. For I have confessed the name of the Lord. The just ones will enter by the everlasting gate.

A BLESSING FOR DEATH
Contemporary Prayer based on Ancient Celtic Text

I pray that you will have the blessing of being consoled and sure about your own death.
 May you know in your soul that there is no need to be afraid.
 When your time comes, may you be given every blessing and shelter that you need.
 May there be a beautiful welcome for you in the home that you are going to.
 You are not going somewhere strange. You are going back to the home you never left.
 May you have a wonderful urgency in your life to the full.
 May you live compassionately and creatively to transfigure
 everything that is negative within you and about you.
 When you come to die may it be after a long life.
 May you be peaceful and happy in the presence of those who care for you.
 May your going be sheltered and your welcome be assured.
 May your soul smile in the embrace of your *anam cara*.