



PRIEST TOOL KIT ON PREGNANCY LOSS DURING THE MONTH OF MAY

Dear Priests,

May can be a hard month for some women who have had a pregnancy loss. Often Mother's Day can be a trigger and their grief over their abortion or miscarriage is a reminder of their pain. Their pain can be ignored and their value as a mother goes unnoticed. Isolation is a common response to suffering and more so in those who have had these losses because it is so difficult to openly talk about them. In these days of even more isolation due to the COVID-19 virus, there can be an added layer of isolation that can lead to feelings of being less loved, forgotten, ashamed, unforgiven, etc. So we invite you to use the following concepts and tips to try and incorporate in your homilies during this month, and any month. The pain of a pregnancy loss is ongoing. By bringing this topic up, you are embracing their loss. By not doing so, you embrace the stigma around it. We encourage you to be more sensitive and compassionate to those who may find this month challenging.

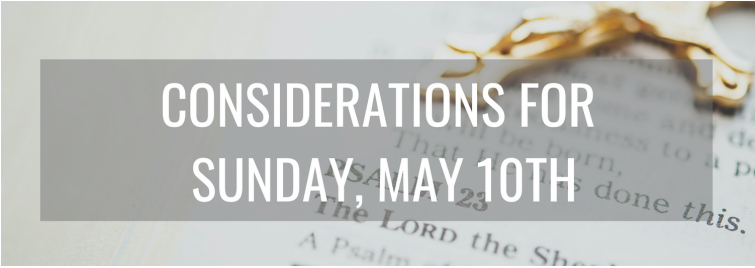
You will find new content every week at LACatholics.org/healing-retreats/

All the best,

Sharon St. Pierre MSW, LCSW
By Your Side LA Coordinator

OVERALL OBJECTIVES
TO INCLUDE IN ANY OF YOUR HOMILY/IES THIS MONTH:

- To acknowledge the silent grief of a woman's pregnancy loss through abortion, miscarriage, stillbirth (this can be not just the mother, but the grandmother, the aunt, a female coworker....
- To invite them to heal which is a process to remember they are forgiven and loved unconditionally, NOT judged for their sin (in case of abortion).
- To turn to Jesus for healing and tap into resources.



CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUNDAY, MAY 10TH

First Reading:

Main point: neglect.

Understand that women who have had a pregnancy loss carry a disenfranchised grief, meaning that their grief is not acknowledged by society and that being judged is a great fear that can prevent them from sharing.

-Recognize how as a church we may have neglected to embrace their suffering unintentionally, but welcome them into the House of the Lord to grieve.

Responsorial Psalm:

Main point: God's mercy

-Remind women of God's unconditional mercy and His open arms despite our sins, our weaknesses and failures. Most women already have regret for the decision made, and some were coerced to abort so although abortion is a sin, focus more on forgiveness.

Second Reading:

Main point: message of hope

-Understand that healing is not about forgetting. It is about accepting the reality of the loss and finding some level of peace that lets them move forward with life.
- It is Jesus who knows fully well the crosses bared by those with a pregnancy loss and who invites them "out of darkness into a wonderful light."

Gospel Reading:

Main point: dwelling with God

-Understand that for those with a pregnancy loss, dwelling can have a negative tone as in: lack of self forgiveness, loneliness, anger, self pity, unworthiness and other. Many may have dwelled in these places for a very long time and their pain has been carried over or buried over time.

-When one dwells with God it means that means they are not alone. If anyone understands them well is Jesus. The invitation from Jesus to all of us is to grow in relationship with Him and place ALL of our troubles, joys, etc in Him. Having faith in God does not mean no suffering. It means he is with us IN that suffering so we are never alone. Invite them to confession, spiritual guidance, (or resources such as ByYourSideLA.org to talk).



CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUNDAY, MAY 10TH

- For all mothers mourning the loss of their child through a pregnancy loss, that they may grieve and find healing and be reminded of the spiritual connection they will always have with their child.
- For married couples struggling to have a child, that the Lord grant them peace as they hope for the gift of one.
- For all those longing to welcome a child through adoption, may the Lord grant their journey to parenthood and peace along the way



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

- Spiritual Bouquet: invite your parishioners to write a prayer intention on a slip of paper and offer it along with a flower to our Lady, perhaps an icon or statue at home
- Invite parishioners during their Rosary time, to include an intention in their decade for those grieving a loss of a child through a pregnancy loss
- If you are praying the Rosary virtually with your parishioners, dedicate one decade for the healing of those with a pregnancy loss or invite them to add their intentions via the chat
- If doable, dedicate one of your outside statues of Mary as a location where parishioners can drop off a note and flower to Mary if they are grieving the loss of a child.
- Establish a time to Pray the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life



BY YOUR SIDE LA



**Office of Life,
Justice & Peace**
Archdiocese of Los Angeles