

Candle Vigil

(based on a candle vigil conducted by the QCT Joint Churches Domestic Violence Project Queensland held at St Francis' Theological College at 6pm on 1 May 2024)



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for gathering with us today to stand in solidarity with those who suffer violence and abuse in their own homes or, having left a violent relationship, live in fear of a former intimate partner.

Despite attempts by governments and agencies to reduce the incidence of Domestic Violence and abuse, women continue to be killed at a rate of more than one a week. This is the tip of the iceberg, with a significant number of people suffering abuse and coercive control each and every day.

Gather Outside

Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge and pay my respect to the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the land I walk, live and walk on and to all our ancestors for their wisdom and spiritual connection to country, sky and waters.

I also pay my respect to Elders, past and present, for sharing their stories, and teaching their traditions and cultural protocols that continue to guide me in my journey of reconciliation.

Sovereignty has never been ceded.

Introduction

PRESENTER Churches often believe that Domestic Violence does not happen within the families gathered each Sunday, but statistics show that church congregations experience DFV at the same rate as does the wider community. In fact it happens...

(voices from the assembled)

- Voice 1 'In our suburbs'
- Voice 2 'In our exclusive schools'
- Voice 3 'In our homes surviving on welfare'
- Voice 4 'In our well to do homes'
- Voice 5 'In our workplaces'
- Voice 6 'In our factories'
- Voice 7 'In our offices'
- Voice 8 'In our gyms'
- Voice 9 'In our sports clubs'
- Voice 10 'In our migrant communities'
- Voice 11 'In straight and gay relationships'
- Voice 12 'In the homes of older people'
- Voice 13 'In the homes of people with disability'

Opening Prayer:

God of compassion and justice, we call upon you to hear the cries of those in need of your strength, security and peace. Let not our cries go unheard as we turn to you in trust and helpless entreaty to deliver us from this scourge on our society. Help us to build homes of peace and security rather than violence and fear.

Song: (Suggested song - Christ Be our Light by Bernadette Farrell)

Lament

(Commitment 1 from the Anglican Church of Australia – 10 Commitments for preventing and responding to domestic and family violence.)

Our church acknowledges and laments the violence which has been suffered by some of our members and repents of the part we have played in allowing an environment where violence went unaddressed.

or

Psalm 22 – Lament

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
And by night, but find no rest.
Yet you are holy,
Enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our ancestors trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried, and were saved;
In you they trusted and were not put to shame.

Invitation to process into Church

Sung Mantra (Monica Brown)

**Come to me all you who are burdened and weary
And I shall give you rest
Come to me as you are and I shall tend to you. (Repeat)**

Process to the Chapel

Participants are handed an unlit taper as they arrive at the entrance to the church and continue to process down centre aisle to centrepiece consisting of a blue bowl with sand and a large blue/purple candle lit. Leader lights the taper and turns to light that of the person behind him/her, then places lit taper into the sand. Leader then processes to the pews and everyone follows lighting tapers, placing in sand and processing to pews.

Silence

Gospel: Matthew 11:28-30

Silence



Sermon of Hope and Action

Prayers

Our prayers today are for those who are impacted by violence and for those who use violence. Each prayer is followed by a time of silence for you to offer your own prayers. And so we pray

Prayers

1. As a community we lament our failures to end domestic and family violence.
(Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

2. for all people impacted by domestic and family violence; victim survivors, children, extended families, friends, neighbours and colleagues and those who live daily with threats and fear. (Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

3. that our Churches are safe havens (Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

4. for those who faithfully support, care for, and protect people affected by domestic and family violence (Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

5. for Clergy and other pastoral leaders (Rainstick)

6. God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

7. for relationships guided by your commitment to us (Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

8. and for those who use violence (Rainstick)

God of Grace **R. Hear our prayer**

Song (Suggested song Prayer of St Francis' - Make me a Channel of your Peace)

Closing

God of mercy and compassion whose Son is the Messiah of peace, be with us as we learn to be peacemakers in our families, workplaces, churches, sporting venues and other places of recreation. Go in the peace of Christ. Amen.

Depart in silence perhaps offering participants a sprig of rosemary.

