

A New Year of Leading and Serving

Good morning. As we begin this first Leadership Team meeting of the new calendar year, let us take a few moments to invite God to bless and guide our work in _____ (year).

OPENING SONG

Please join in our opening song: *Here I Am, Lord* No. 520 CBW III verses 1-2

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin our prayer with the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

And let us pray. Lord God, all that is good is your gift to us. At the dawn of this new year, we acknowledge our dependence on your grace to lead and serve as you call us. Open our hearts now to praise you and welcome your word. May it take root in us and bloom in all that we do. We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.

And now, let us be attentive to God's word.

SCRIPTURE READING

A reading from the First Book of Kings (1Kings 3, 3a, 5-15)

Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David. At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this, your great people?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honour all your life; no other king shall compare with you. If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life."

Then Solomon awoke; it had been a dream. He came to Jerusalem where he stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered up burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, and provided a feast for all his servants.

The word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

The following reflection was made by St. Augustine on his call to lead and serve the people of God.

The honors I receive are for me an ever present cause of uneasiness. Indeed, it terrifies me to think that I could take more pleasure in the honor attached to my office, which is where its danger lies, than in your salvation, which ought to be its fruit. This is why being set above you fills me with alarm, whereas being with you gives me comfort. Danger lies in the first; salvation in the second.

To be honest with you, my obligations involve me in so much turmoil that I feel as though I were tossed by storms on a great ocean. When I remember by whose blood I have been redeemed, this thought brings me peace, as though I were entering the safety of a harbor; and I am consoled, as I carry out the arduous duties of my own particular office, by the blessings which we all have in common. By finding myself therefore in the redemption, which I share with you, and not in my office, which has placed me over you, I shall the more truly be your servant; and so not only fulfill the Lord's command, but also show myself not ungrateful to him for making me your fellow servant. For my Redeemer has a claim upon my love, and I do not forget how he questioned Peter, and asked: Do you love me, Peter? Then feed my sheep. He asked this once, then again and then a third time. He inquired about his love, and then he gave him work to do; for the greater one's love is, the easier is the work.

How shall I repay the Lord for all the blessings he has given me? I could say perhaps that I repay him by feeding his sheep, but even though I do this, it is not really I who do it, but the grace of God within me. (Source: Liturgy of the Hours – Office of Readings)

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Let us pray for the Church. That all who share a common baptism might look to one another's needs as the Holy Spirit calls them. We pray to the Lord...*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for the world. That leaders everywhere will be guided by the higher authority of self-giving Love. We pray to the Lord...*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for those who suffer. That those able to alleviate their burdens will do so. We pray to the Lord...*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for our home-school-parish communities. That all will find the means and support to realize the giftedness, self-worth and potential to which they have been called in Christ. We pray to the Lord...*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for ourselves. That we might remain rooted and strengthened in Christ, who commissions us to serve and lead. We pray to the Lord...*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Additional intentions...

Let us gather our prayers spoken aloud and remaining in the silence of our hearts and unite them with the prayer of Jesus on our behalf, using the words he gave us. *Our Father...*

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we are humbled and filled with joy at the marvelous deeds you have chosen to accomplish through us in the ordinary events of our daily lives. Grant that we might be awakened to the wisdom and courage you have poured into our hearts at Baptism and Confirmation, that we might give you honour through our servant leadership among your people in this coming year. We make this prayer to you in the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

CLOSING SONG

Please join in our closing song: *Here I Am, Lord* No. 520 CBW III verse 3.

