

Servant Leadership Liturgy of the Word

Virtue Link: Faith, Love, Fortitude

Catholic Character Themes: Community, Compassion, Discipleship, Reverence, Solidarity, Stewardship

Greeting and Introduction

Good morning, and welcome to this morning's Liturgy of the Word. The theme of our prayer is *Servant Leadership*.

Through Baptism, we are united to Christ and made sharers in his risen life. As Christians, the way of servant leadership modeled by our Teacher and Lord becomes our own. All that is asked on our part is faithfulness to love of God and neighbour. Drawing strength from our union with Christ through his Church, we serve and lead, while encouraging others to grow and use their gifts for building up the body of believers. Let us begin this time of prayer with joy, knowing that our God is glorified in our efforts to lead and serve with Christ's love.

Please join in our Opening Song: ***Will You Come and Follow Me, verses 1-3***
(<http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/faith/wop2007/will-you-come.pdf>)

Opening Prayer:

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

Lord God, you call us to life in all its fullness, following the path set out by Jesus your Son. As we reflect on his leadership as *Servant*, we ask you to deepen our desire to imitate his example. May our exercise of the gifts you have given us be a faithful reflection of his presence at work in our lives. We make this prayer to you through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Reading: Isaiah 6, 1-8

Response:*

Leader: My people hunger for living signs of my love for them. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people are weary, and long for encouragement as they labour at tasks with few stopping to thank them. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people yearn to have their giftedness called forth in the service of love. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people live in an age which prizes individualism, and starves their need to contribute to something bigger than themselves. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people thirst for leaders who reveal me as a God of hope who accompanies them in their struggle and pain. Whom shall I send?

EOCCC: *Our Language, Our Story 1.0*, 2009.

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people long for leaders who have tasted their brokenness, and have learned to serve with humility and joy. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

Leader: My people's eyes and hearts search for role models who honour my presence in the poor, the hungry, the grieving, the peacemakers, and those wrongly persecuted for my sake. Whom shall I send?

All Here am I, send me!

* Based on a prayer by Les Miller, YCDSB

Gospel Reading: Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet, John 13, 4-17.

Reflection: "The Task: 'Feed My Sheep'" by Henri Nouwen.

Selections From: Nouwen, Henri. In the Name of Jesus. Reflections on Christian Leadership. New York: Crossroad, 1993; pp. 39-44.

Prayers of Intercession:

1. Let us pray for the Church. That all who share a common baptism might learn to use their gifts wisely, in the service of unity among Christians and peace among peoples of all faiths. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

2. Let us pray for the world. That leaders of nations might become servants of justice and defenders of the neediest and poorest among us. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

3. Let us pray for all those who suffer due to leadership without compassion. That the Spirit of our risen Lord might bring them the consolation of leaders with hearts warmed by Christ's love. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

4. Let us pray for our dioceses, school boards and educational communities of faith. That all their members might be strengthened with a greater appreciation for the gifts of leadership and service given to each one. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

5. Let us pray for ourselves. That we might recognize and learn from the wisdom each of us has drawn from our life experiences, and be open to the new possibilities for leadership and service to which the Spirit calls us. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

6. Let us pray for our presenters this day. That their words might be inspired to help us better embrace our call to lead and serve. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Other intentions:

Leader: Let us unite our prayers spoken in word, and those in our hearts, with the prayer of Jesus, using the words he taught us. *Our Father . . .*

Closing Prayer

Lord, as we discern the meaning of our call to servant leadership, help us recognize the ways you seek to minister through our lives. Inspired by the knowledge of your abiding presence, may we have the courage to reach out and support one another, to stand firm in what is true, to decrease when others should increase, and to lead with vision and compassion, as faithful followers of Jesus, your Son. We make this prayer to you in his name. Amen.

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

Please join in our closing song: ***Will You Come and Follow Me, vv. 4-5***