

SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

March 2014

“Serve with justice”

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our prayer service in preparation for Catholic Education Week in May of this year. Our theme for March is: *Serving in the Love of Christ – Serve With Justice.*

Optional: Please join in our opening song...

SUGGESTED OPENING SONGS:

Open my Eyes, Lord. (Jesse Manibusan #196 Spirit & Song); *We Are Called* (David Haas), *Sing A New Song* (Dan Schutte), *Whatever You Do* (Willard Jabusch), *All Are Welcome* (Marty Haugen).

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

OPENING PRAYER:

We thank you God for sending us Jesus.

He came to seek and save the lost –

setting the captives free;

feeding the hungry;

touching the sick with healing;

loving the unloved;

speaking out at injustice;

restoring life where there was death.

Help us Lord, to live as his disciples: to see as he sees, and to act on his word.

We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Adapted from *Prayers for Justice*. See <http://www.cuf.org.uk/pray/prayers-justice>

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

READING: Matthew 25:34-40

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the

eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

QUESTION FOR PERSONAL REFLECTON:

Who is God calling me to serve today – in my family, in my school, in my workplace?

OPTIONAL READING: Pope Francis Homily at World Youth Day, 2013

The opening words of the psalm that we proclaimed are: “Sing to the Lord a new song.” Psalm 95:1 What is this new song? It does not consist of words, it is not a melody, it is the song of your life, it is allowing our life to be identified with that of Jesus, it is sharing his sentiments, his thoughts, his actions. And the life of Jesus is a life for others. It is a life of service.

~http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2013/07/28/pope_francis:_go,_do_not_be_afraid,_and_serve/_en1-714699 of the Vatican Radio Website

OPTIONAL QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION:

How do we nurture a life of service in our Catholic school(s)?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Lord Jesus,
help us to follow your example
by looking out for those who feel marginalized,
who cannot find hope,
who believe that they have little to offer,
who are overcome by the challenges of poverty.

Help us to widen our horizons,
to make space for the stranger,
to watch out for those who feel invisible,
to give time to the outsider,
to talk to the person facing silence,
to restore justice and value.

Give us the courage to undertake this, the determination to join with others in seeing grace in every human face and the faith to embrace the opportunity to act justly in your name.

Amen. (Adapted from a prayer from the Church Urban Fund, Liverpool)

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

SUGGESTED CLOSING SONGS:

Peace Prayer (John Foley), *Prayer of St. Francis* (Sebastian Temple), *Go Make A Difference* (Steve Angrisano & Tom Tomaszek), *The Eyes and Hands of Christ* (Tom Kendzia), *There is A Longing* (Anne Quigley)