



## *Catholic Education Week, March, 2011 Prayer* *“The Spirit of Justice”*

(Adapted from OCSTA Catholic Education Week 2011 resources)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to our March prayer in preparation for Catholic Education Week 2011 – *Catholic Education: Celebrating the Spirit*. The theme for our prayer is *The Spirit of Justice*.

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

### **OPENING SONG:**

Sugg: *Go Make a Difference* (Steve Angrisano and Tom Tomasek), *We Are Called* – (David Haas), *The Servant Song* – (David Haas)

### **OPENING PRAYER:**

Loving God,  
Make the doors of this school be wide enough to receive all who need love and fellowship;  
Narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and strife.  
Make their threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling block for learners,  
Nor to straying feet,  
But rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter’s power.  
May Christ, the *way* to Your eternal Reign, be the true doors of this school,  
And may the justice and peace of His Gospel flourish here always.  
We make this prayer to You in the name of this same Jesus, the Lord.  
Amen.

### **READING:**

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah** (Is 61:1-9)

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit; you shall be called priests of the Lord, you shall be named ministers of our God ... you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations and in their riches you shall glory. For I, the Lord, love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be

known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION (OPTIONAL):**

Where have justice, peace and solidarity been present with God's help in my life over the past few days?

**REFLECTION: *The Way of Justice and Peace***

As we walk the path, we stay on track best by fixing our eyes on the nonviolent Jesus. Violence worsens every day, but we hold fast to the way of peace by focusing on the nonviolent Jesus. We read the Gospels daily, talk about Jesus morning, noon and night and invoke his spirit at every opportunity. We try to do what he did, speak as he spoke, think as he thought. We try to love as he loved, serve as he served, pray as he prayed. To live as he lived and die as he died. With an unarmed, sacred heart as wide as the world. With every gesture, a blessing of peace.

"I am the way", the nonviolent Jesus said. He is our reference point, our guidepost, our destination. He is the path. He is our peace, our one solid hope. With his example and light to guide us, we can boldly take the next step in peace. And with each step in peace, we know we have already arrived. From now on, we live in his realm of peace.

-John Dear S.J.

**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION/REFLECTION (OPTIONAL):**

What are the barriers to justice and peace within our community?  
How can we replace these barriers with the Gospel's law of love?

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Let us gather together the prayers of our hearts...

...for peace and justice in the Church, the world, for the suffering, our families, school communities and all whose lives connect in some way with our own...

Let us unite our prayers in one voice, with the prayer of Jesus, using the words He gave us:

*Our Father...*

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

Lord, we thank You for the Good News of Jesus that has shaped our lives.

May its message of justice and peace echo in everything we are and do.

May it make us a sign of the freedom and hope

That comes from Your saving Presence in our lives.

We make this prayer to You in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

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

**SUGGESTED CLOSING SONGS:**

*The Cry of the Poor* (John Foley S.J.), *Anthem* (Tom Conry), *Voices that Challenge* (David Haas)