



Leading with the Heart and Mind of Christ Prayer Service for Holy Week

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon. In this holiest of weeks, it is fitting that we begin this day with prayer and God's word – to put on the mind and heart of Christ, who gives purpose and meaning to our work as leaders in the Catholic educational community.

OPTIONAL: OPENING SONG

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin, marking ourselves by the sign of our redemption:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

And let us pray.

God our Father, we praise You for Your great gift of our redemption through Christ. Help us to grow in love for this gift as we listen to Your word. May it move us to more fully put on the mind of Christ in the mission to which you have called us in our Catholic schools, especially during this week, as we remember the events of His passion, death and resurrection. This we ask through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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

READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (Phil 2, 1-13)

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

St. Paul invites his readers to adopt the heart and mind of Christ by remembering what Jesus has done for them. Remembrance brings the saving events of our past into the present. It is at the heart of our Holy Week celebrations.

Remembrance reminds us of who we are as a people redeemed by the complete self-emptying love of Jesus. He came into the world to pay the price for Adam's sin with his own blood. Rather than cling to honour, power and majesty as God the Son, Jesus endured the humiliation of His passion and death as a criminal for our salvation. In so doing, he was raised by the Father, restored humanity's ruptured

communion with God and seated us with Him in the heavenly places (Eph 2,6) as His sisters and brothers – daughters and sons of the Father.

We remember Jesus' passion, death and resurrection as one single event – God's victory over the power of sin and evil. Our baptism into Christ's crucified and risen life makes us sharers in this victory. By putting on the mind of Christ, we acknowledge that we live and work in *His* strength and *His* authority as daughters and sons of God. We imitate *His* humility so that the goodness of our words and actions might lead others to exhalt and confess Him as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And so this week, we remember. With repentance and trembling, we humbly remember as He assumes the posture of a slave and washes his apostles' feet, gives us His flesh and blood to sustain us as His followers, is betrayed and condemned to a humiliating execution and hastily entombed among the dead.

We remember in unshakeable hope, knowing that the solemnity and sorrow of these days are the passageway to Easter's Resurrection.

We put on the mind of Christ and remember all these things in gratitude, for Christ has died on our behalf and risen so that we can live, work and lead others to find in Him fullness of life and joy.

REMEMBERING ONE ANOTHER'S NEEDS IN PRAYER

And now, let us take a moment to remember before our heavenly Father...

- ... the needs of the Church, that she might emerge speedily from this time of purification to shine as the radiant bride and body of Christ;
- ... the needs of the world, that Christ's peace may come quickly to reign in all human hearts and places;
- ... the needs of those who suffer in the persecuted Church, in the world, in our homes, schools, families and communities;
- ... the needs of our own parish-home-school communities;
- ... our own personal needs and intentions.

Let us gather all these intentions and unite them to the constant prayer of Jesus the crucified and Risen Lord before the Father on our behalf, using the words He gave us: ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, as we remember the saving events of this Holy Week, grant that the mind of Christ might become more fully our own, that we might lead and serve as shining witnesses to His death and resurrection. We make this prayer through this same Jesus Christ, who is Lord. Amen.

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

OPTIONAL: CLOSING SONG