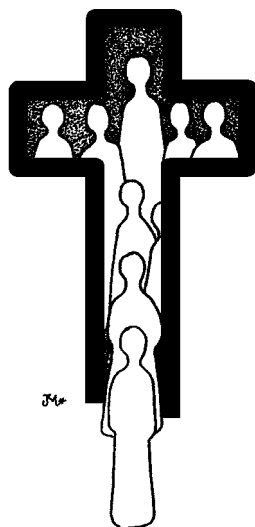


Pastoral Council Prayers and Faith Sharing

September – November 2018
Ordinary Time, Cycle B



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AN INVITATION TO PRAY WITH YOUR PASTORAL COUNCIL

Begin and end with prayer!! These opening and closing prayers have been prepared to help your pastoral council become what it is intended to be: a *leadership body* in *communion* with God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—focused on enabling the community to carry out the *mission* of the Church. As stated in the “Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines” of the Diocese of Rochester, the specific purposes of the pastoral council, in harmony with the goals of the Pastor, are:

- to develop a common vision and purpose, actively advocate for the poor and the powerless, and to extend Christian commitment to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities;
- to orchestrate a statement of mission for the parish community and become the reference point for activity in the parish;
- to provide recommendations for priorities, directions, and policies through pastoral planning for worship, evangelization, outreach, stewardship, etc.;
- to promote communication, understanding, and collaboration among parish organizations and between the parish, the diocese, and the universal Church.

In our enthusiasm to “get the business of the council done” we may forget that we are to role model spiritual leadership. As a pastoral council, we are challenged to ongoing renewal through prayer, study, listening, and dialogue. Because of our familiarity with secular boards of directors, we may forget that we are a body of church leaders engaged with our pastor or pastoral administrator in discerning the ways God is speaking to this community in this time and place. For our actions to be imbued with the wisdom of God, they must begin with prayer, with listening to one another in faith and love, followed by listening to the larger community of parishioners in similar faith and love.

We strongly encourage you to set aside time at the beginning and end of your pastoral council meetings to pray. These prayers are a tool used by many councils and other groups. We are confident that the quality of your decisions as well as your relationships with one another and the faith community at large will be enhanced as you take time for shared prayer in God’s presence.

Betsy McDermott
Liaison for Pastoral Councils
Pastoral Services, Diocese of Rochester

HINTS FOR THE PRAYER LEADER

We recommend designating a different person on your council to lead prayer for each meeting,

Preparation before the Pastoral Council meeting

1. Read through the prayer session for the Sunday following your meeting. Become familiar with it.
2. Make enough copies of the prayer for all you expect to attend the meeting. You may distribute these at the beginning of the meeting or send them out to members ahead of time along with the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting.
3. If a visual image is suggested for this particular prayer session, bring it to the meeting if possible. Having an image in the center of the gathering will help members remember throughout the evening that the meeting unfolds in God's presence.

A Walk through the Prayer Outline

Prayer at the beginning of the meeting (allow 10-15 minutes on your agenda):

1. Invite those present to become quiet and remember that they are in the presence of God. After a brief pause, begin the ***Invitation to Prayer***.
2. Either read the ***Scripture*** passage yourself or have someone else do so (ask them before the meeting begins).
3. Allow several minutes for ***silent reflection*** and consideration of the faith sharing questions.
4. Invite those present to respond (in groups of two or three or in the larger council group) to any of the suggested ***questions for faith sharing*** out loud. People may also choose to share how the reading spoke to them in general. All do not need to respond but allow silent pauses so that people can reflect comfortably.
5. Go on to the beginning of your meeting's agenda.

Prayer at the end of the meeting (allow 5 minutes on your agenda):

1. Begin the ***intercessory prayers*** as written in the prayer session.
2. Invite others to share their own prayers aloud.
3. When all who choose to share prayers are done, say "For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts."
4. Begin the ***closing prayer***.

Notes

1. The intercessory prayers may be moved to the end of the "prayer at the beginning of the meeting" or offered in the middle of the meeting—as well as at the end.
2. Some communities like to develop one intercessory prayer relative to the issues on which the pastoral council is working. This prayer is prayed by the entire community

at Sunday liturgies over the course of the month. This practice provides spiritual support for the parish's leadership, helps the entire congregation to be conscious of issues under consideration by the pastoral council, and helps all to focus on the God who leads the community into the future.

3. These prayer sessions, while designed for pastoral councils, can be used at the meetings of the parish staff, other parish committees, and the planning group council with minor adaptation.

Faith Sharing Guidelines

Each person is led by God on his or her personal spiritual journey. Faith sharing refers to shared reflections on the action of God in one's experience as related to Scripture and faith. Faith sharing is not discussion, problem solving, or scripture study. The purpose is an encounter, between a person in the concrete circumstances of life and the Word of God, which leads to a conversion of heart. The entire faith sharing process is seen as prayer, i.e. listening to the Word of God as revealed in scripture and in each other's experience.

1. Participants are given time to reflect before sharing begins, and a period of comfortable silence might occur between individuals sharing. Silence is a vital part of the total process of faith sharing.
2. Sharing is optional. Each person shares at the time and on the level where he or she feels comfortable.
3. There is no set order for sharing (you do not need to go in a circle around the group).
4. Listen respectfully and openly. If someone does not hear the sharing or does not understand, he or she can ask for clarification.
5. There is no discussion or commenting on what is shared. An appropriate response from the prayer leader or group might be a smile, a nod, or a "thank you."
6. The prayer leader and group are not there as "problem solvers" or "advice givers."
7. Participants are encouraged to share in the first person (I feel...I believe...etc.).
8. Anything that is shared in the group is confidential and does not leave the group. It is meant to be a gift for this group only.

Worship with Sincere Hearts
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
September 2, 2018



Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: God of wisdom,
You have asked us to worship you in Spirit and in truth.
Help us to keep our rituals and traditions life-giving and not a substitute
for the true worship of our hearts. Fill us with your kindness so that we do
not judge others and make demands on them that do not honor you.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading: Mark 7:1-8, 14, 15, 21-23

Now when the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands. (For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles [and beds].) So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, “Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?” He responded, “Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written:

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
In vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines human precepts.’

He summoned the crowd again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.”

From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile.”

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *In what ways do we hold tightly to our ideas of appropriate worship and tradition?*
2. *Can we think of times we have judged others in our faith communities?*
3. *How can we as leaders make sure that we do not demand of others what is not essential to the heart of our faith?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For our hearts that they might be filled with genuine love for God’s people.

All: Keep our hearts close to you, O Lord.

Leader: That our parish be welcoming of all who walk through the doors.

All: Keep our hearts close to you, O Lord.

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Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

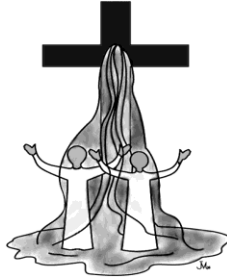
All: Keep our hearts close to you, O Lord.

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Closing Prayer **Micah 6: 8**

**All: You have been told, O mortal, what is good,
and what the LORD requires of you:
Only to do justice and to love goodness,
and to walk humbly with your God.**

A Call to Service
23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
September 9, 2018



Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: God of promise,
 you have created us out of love,
 and want only the best for your people:
 healing, wholeness, true peace.
 Help us to imitate you.
 Guide us in making decisions
 that will bring about good for the people we serve.
 We ask this in the name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35:4-7a

Thus says the Lord:
Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God, he comes with vindication;
with divine recompense he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the mute will sing.
Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe.
The burning sands will become pools and the thirsty ground, springs of water.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

4. *How has serving on the Pastoral Council been a way of opening your eyes and ears to the needs of our faith community?*
5. *Are there any fears we need to address with our people? Any areas of healing that our parish needs us to consider?*
6. *How can we, as Pastoral Council members, become springs of living water for our community?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For our church, that God might guide our leaders and our people to act boldly and without fear to bring healing and wholeness to our world.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

(The leader may add prayers that address the subjects/concerns dealt with in this evening's meeting.)

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: God of healing and promise,
you who give healing and wholeness,
nourishment for body and spirit,
protection and justice for those in need,
be with us as we make our way home.
Protect us each day of our lives,
guide us to do your will,
and bring us safely home to you
when this life is ended.
We ask this as we ask all things
+in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Identity
24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
September 16, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

All: Loving and gracious God, we gather in your presence as a community of believers. You are gracious and just, merciful and full of love. As we walk before you in the land of the living, give to us your guidance and wisdom, that we may be images of your love in both word and deed.

Scripture Reading: Mark 8:27-35

Jesus and his disciples set out for the village of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" They said in reply, "John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said to him in reply, "You are the Messiah." Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him. He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days. He spoke this openly. He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *Jesus is sharing his identity with his community. How do we share our identity as disciples of the good news in our community?*
2. *Where is God calling us to consider this scripture reading in our meeting tonight?*

As we continue through our meeting, let us remember that we are all called to put on the mind and heart of Christ, identifying ourselves with Christ.



Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

As disciples of Christ, may we always follow Christ, mirroring the image of Christ in our words and deeds, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: Gracious God:
You bring forth new life in us as we strive to do your will. Hear our prayers that we may always live in the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, and give of ourselves as our parish community becomes a reflection of your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Passion, Wisdom, Peace
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
September 23, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: We gather together in Jesus' name.
Abiding in his Spirit, as he abides in the Spirit of the Father, we pray...

**All: Open our hearts that we may hear your Living Word speaking to us,
at this time, in this place.**

Scripture Reading: James 3:16-4:3

Beloved:

Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice.
But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield,
full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity.
And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.

Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from?
Is it not from your passions that make war within your members?
You want something and do not have it: so you commit murder.
And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts.
You do not have, because you do not ask.
You ask but do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

(Pause in Silence)

Leader: Lord Jesus, we know you are present in the midst of this gathering.
What do you see? What do you want us to know?



(Continue in Silent Reflection)

Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two)

1. *Our passion can be the gift of fire from the Holy Spirit, energizing us to move God's desire into action. But our passion can be driven by cravings that take us away from God's desires. How do we discern?*
2. *In your experience what kills the spirit of creativity?*
3. *How can we as leaders in this community cultivate wisdom and peace?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Confident that God will lead us to ask rightly, let us pray:
May our desires be fitting in your eyes...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray...

(When all who choose are finished voicing prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: God our Father and Holy Creator,
in each one of us you have planted a seed of your passionate love.
Help us to see clearly the gifts you have planted within each of us
and to recognize the source of our passions.

Women: Christ Jesus, our Wisdom,
through the Mystery of your passionate life, death and resurrection
you brought us into right relationship with God.
Help us to know your pure desire.

Men: Holy Spirit,
forever you are tending the life of God in us.
Open us to receive the nourishment of your grace,
that our work today may bear good fruit
so that many will come to know the blessings of God.

All: Amen.

Support and Encouragement
26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
September 30, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Send forth your Spirit,
Lord.

**All: Send forth your Spirit,
Lord,**

Leader: that we might hear your
word of life.

**All: Send forth your Spirit,
Lord,**

Leader: that we might speak your
truth.

**All: Send forth your Spirit,
Lord,**

Leader: that we might do your good
works.

**All: Send forth your Spirit,
Lord.**



Scripture Reading: Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us."

Jesus replied, "Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us.

Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward.

Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'"

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two)

1. *How do we react when someone comes into our community and does things a little differently?*
2. *How do we as a parish encourage one another to use their gifts in the name of Christ?*
3. *How might we as a Pastoral Council encourage each other as we meet?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For the good people of this community, that through their good works we and others may recognize the presence of Jesus. We pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader Holy God,
Voice of Truth, Heart of Compassion,
bless the work of this community,
that your light may shine for all to see
as we work, rest and pray together in your name.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

United in Christ
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
October 7, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

All: Lord God, Creator of all living things,
help us to work together to become one in Christ your Son.
We can do nothing alone.
Only with your help can we accomplish your mission of peace and love.
Be with us always on our journey through life.

Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:18-24

The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *How deeply do we believe that God cares about our needs?*
2. *How do we as parish leaders go out of our way to learn about the needs of our parishioners ?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For peace in our world, in our nation, in our Church, in our homes and in our hearts, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: Lord God, as we leave this meeting may we leave not alone but as partners and helpers of one another, sharing our joys and our sorrows. May we walk with each other and with you in loving kindness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.





Calling Upon the Wisdom of
God
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time,
Year B
October 14, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer (based on Psalm 90)

All: Holy Wisdom, come into our midst.

Leader: Teach us to number our days aright
that we might gain wisdom of heart.

All: Holy Wisdom, come into our midst.

Leader: Fill us with your kindness
that we might shout for joy and gladness all our days.

All: Holy Wisdom, come into our midst.

Leader: Inspire and guide us. Prosper the work of our hands.
Prosper the work of our hands!

All: Holy Wisdom, come into our midst.

Scripture Reading: Wisdom 7:7-11

I prayed, and prudence was given me;
I pleaded and the spirit of Wisdom came to me.
I preferred her to scepter and throne,
and deemed riches nothing in comparison with her,
nor did I liken any priceless gem to her;
because all gold, in view of her, is a little sand,
and before her, silver is to be accounted mire.
Beyond health and comeliness I loved her,
And I chose to have her rather than the light,
because the splendor of her never yields to sleep.
Yet all good things together came to me in her company,
and countless riches at her hands.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing (*break into groups of three and choose one or two questions*)

1. *How has God's wisdom guided you in life? Share one or two examples.*
2. *How have you struggled between God's wisdom and the wisdom of the world?*
3. *What are some concrete ways we can help our parish and community grow in the wisdom of God?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That the church may always be guided by the Wisdom of God and, in turn, be a source of wisdom for the world, we pray...

All: Holy Wisdom, hear our prayer.

(The leader may add prayers that address the subjects/concerns dealt with in this evening's meeting.)

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Holy Wisdom, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: O God, you are the Source of all Wisdom.
Fill us with your understanding and insight
so that we might bring your kindness and compassion
to our parish community and our world.
Guide us with your Spirit
and help us to imitate Jesus, who is our Wisdom forever.

All: Amen.

Service
29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
October 21, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

All: Loving and gracious God, we gather in your presence as a community of believers. We place our trust in you as we discern your will in our parish community. Continue to shower us with your wisdom, mercy, and love. Be present to us throughout our meeting today so that we may continue to praise you in our words, decisions, and actions.

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:35-45

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish me to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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

Silent Reflection



Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *Jesus is teaching his disciples about greatness being rooted in service. Is our parish community one that roots itself in service to others? Do we put others first?*
2. *Where is God calling us to consider this scripture reading in our meeting tonight?*

As we continue through our meeting, let us remember that we are all called to be of service to one another, to let go of our egos and to put the other first.

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That our faith community will always be rooted in service that brings justice, peace and life to all in need, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: Gracious God, you bring forth new life in us as we strive to do your will. Hear our prayers that we may always live in the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, and give of ourselves as our parish community becomes a reflection of your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Help in Difficult Times
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
October 28, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
All: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
Leader: Lord, hear my voice!
All: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
Leader: Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleadings!
All: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
(from Psalm 130)

Scripture Reading : Mark 10:46-52

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging.

On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me."

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, he is calling you."

He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see."

Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

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

Silent Reflection



Questions for Faith Sharing
(choose one or two for sharing)

1. *Where, in my personal life or in our parish life, do we find ourselves crying out to Jesus for help?*
2. *What is our blindness? Where do we need to see more clearly?*
3. *How does today's meeting agenda help open up our eyes to areas of darkness and need in our community?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For those who live in the darkness of illness, depression or addiction; that they may come to know God's healing light...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Bless us this night, Lord.
As we enter the darkness of the evening,
may we remember your promise of light.
May we rise with joy and gratitude
as the new day greets us tomorrow.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Children of God
All Saints, Year B
November 4, 2018

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Blessed are the mourners in our midst,
All: **for they will be comforted.**

Leader: Blessed are the merciful in our midst,
All: **for they will be shown mercy.**

Leader: Blessed are the peacemakers in our midst,
All: **for they are children of God.**

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 6:2-6

(This then is the commandment, the statutes and the ordinances, which the LORD, your God, has commanded that you be taught to observe in the land you are about to cross into to possess,) so that you, that is, you, your child, and your grandchild, may fear the LORD, your God, by keeping, as long as you live, all his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you, and thus have long life. Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe them, that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly; for the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you a land flowing with milk and honey.

The Great Commandment. Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words which I command you today.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *How well do we teach our children this Great Commandment?*
2. *What difference does taking these words to heart make in our own lives?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For peace in our world, our neighborhoods, and our homes, we pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)

For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, we pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

All: My Lord God...

May our desire to follow your great command to love and serve you with all of our hearts, minds and strength grow so that it becomes who we are. Help us to faithfully teach this great commandment in our celebrations, in our homes and through our everyday interactions. You alone are God. You alone are our joy.

Amen.



Generous Stewards of our Time, Talent & Treasure
32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
November 11, 2018



Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

All: Loving and gracious God:

We gather in your presence as a community of believers. We place our trust in you as we discern your will in our parish community. You secure justice for us, give food to satisfy our hunger, and set us free. Be present to us throughout our meeting so that we may continue to praise you in our words, decisions, and actions.

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:41-44

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. *Jesus is teaching his disciples about generosity. Who in your own life reminds you of the generous widow?*
2. *Where have we seen this kind of generosity in our community? How does this Scripture reading challenge us?*

As we continue through our meeting, let us remember that we are all called to be good stewards of all that has been given to us.

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That our faith community will always be good and faithful stewards who give generously to help those who are in need. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: Gracious God:
You bring forth new life in us as we strive to do your will. Hear our prayers that we may always give our best in whatever way we are called. Help us to be more like the poor widow who reminds us to give from the very depths of our being, from our whole livelihood. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Change/Creation
33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
November 18, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
All: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
Leader: Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth.
All: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
Leader: Let the sea roar and all that fills it.
All: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
Leader: Let the hills sing together with joy.
All: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
Leader: For God will judge the people with fairness.
All: The Lord has done marvelous things. Praise God's name!
(from Psalm 98)

Scripture Reading: Mark 13:24-32

"But in those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

"And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory, and then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.

"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates. Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

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



Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two for sharing)

1. *What changes have we had to face over the past year as a community?*
2. *What have we lost and gained as a result of these changes?*
3. *Name an area of change that we have handled well. How can we celebrate that gift?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For those in our parish, community and world who live in fear of oppression, aggression or the forces of nature...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: **Praise you, Lord,
for the great signs of your power and goodness that surround us.
Our world is ever changing;
tides ebb and flow, night and day alternate.
The changes of colors with the seasons increase our sense of wonder
at your beautiful works.
Keep us focused on you as we move from familiar to unfamiliar, old to
new.
May the glory of your presence illuminate our way.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Challenges of Serving in the Kingdom of Christ
Our Lord Christ, King of the Universe, Cycle B
November 25, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: God of truth,
you challenge us to live lives that are faith-filled, genuine, and holy.
Open our minds and hearts to truth grounded in love.
Help us stand firm as your servants when our faith is challenged;
guide us in the ways we can serve you to bring about your kingdom on
this earth.
We ask this, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Christ who is
our King.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 18:33b-37

Pilate said to Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?"
Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?"
Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I?"
Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me.
What have you done?"
Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world.
If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting
to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.
But as it is, my kingdom is not here."
So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?"
Jesus answered, "You say I am a king.
For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.
Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

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

Silent Reflection



Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two for faith sharing)

1. *What challenges have you faced in your day-to-day life as you try to bring about the kingdom of God?*
2. *What challenges do you see our parish facing as we strive to serve Christ as our king?*
3. *What are some ways this parish family can testify to the truth and help bring about the kingdom of God in our midst?*

Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That our church may always testify to the truth of God's love for the world, we pray:

All: Christ our King, hear our prayer.

(The leader may add prayers that address the subjects/concerns dealt with in this evening's meeting.)

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Christ our King, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: Sovereign God,
grant us the strength and courage that we, your servants,
need in order to testify to the truth of your love.
Guide and inspire us
so that we might bring your loving kindness,
your Kingdom, to the world around us.
Grant this through the Savior who reigns forever.
Amen.**