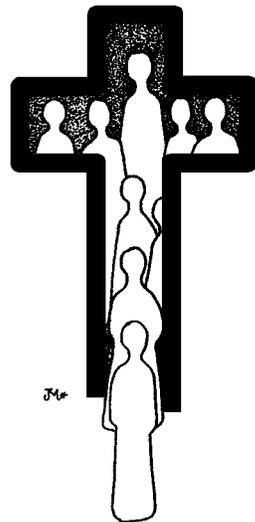


Pastoral Council Prayers and Faith Sharing

**Second Sunday of Easter – The
Nativity of Saint John the Baptist
(June 24, 2018)**

Cycle B



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.

An Easter People
2nd Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
April 8, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Let us pray...

**All: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
Enkindle in us the fire of your divine love.
Send forth your spirit and we shall be recreated,
and you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.**

Scripture Reading: John 20: 19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. How have we, like Thomas, been awed by Jesus' loving invitation to touch his hands in the past few weeks of Lent and during our Easter celebration?
2. In what areas do we as a parish council need to heed Jesus' message, "Do not doubt, but believe"?



Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Loving God, we ask that you lead us into a transformative knowledge of your Easter joy. Let us pray...

All: Breathe your Holy Spirit into us.

Leader: Lord, we believe, help our unbelief. Let us pray...

All: Breathe your Holy Spirit into us.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?

(When all who choose to do so are finished voicing their prayers)

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

All: Breathe your Holy Spirit into us.

Closing Prayer

Leader: I invite you to sit quietly again for a few minutes (pause)
Be aware of your breathing...
With every inhalation you take, imagine God is exhaling-
God is breathing life into you...
Breathing God's own Spirit into you...

Let us now offer each other a sign of Christ's peace.

The Body of Christ
3rd Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
April 15, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Jesus, our teacher,
 Open our eyes that we might see you standing in our midst.
 Open our hearts that we might be encouraged by your compassion.
 Open our minds that we might understand the word you have for us today.

All: Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 24: 35-48

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, “Have you anything here to eat?”

They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”

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



Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. Sometimes spirituality appears awfully ethereal. What gives a believer's faith flesh and bones?
2. In what ways does our faith community make the body of Christ real and touchable?
3. In what ways does our community need to grow in vitality?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: May we always remember that we were created in Love, let us pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: May we always remember that we were redeemed by Love, let us pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: May we always remember that we are called to be Love for one another, let us pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?

(When all who choose to do so are finished voicing their prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, let us pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us-

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

The Good Shepherd
4th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
April 22, 2018



Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Gracious God, we are gathered together in Jesus' name.
We are ready and willing to follow you wherever you lead us.
Open our hearts to hear your voice as we listen to your Word.

All: We are listening, O God, listening for your voice. Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 10: 11-18

Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

Few Americans today have any life experience of shepherds....

1. In what way does the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd touch you?
2. What is the image of Jesus that is most connected to your prayer life?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Gracious God, protect us from all harm. Amidst the tumult and noise in our lives, may we always recognize your voice, we pray to the Lord.

All: Caring Shepherd, hear the prayer of your flock.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?

(When all who choose to do so have voiced their prayers)

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

All: Caring Shepherd, hear the prayer of your flock.

Closing Prayer

Leader: *(Ask your group each to read one line, beginning with the person on your left then moving around the circle till the psalm is completed.)*

Let us pray...

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

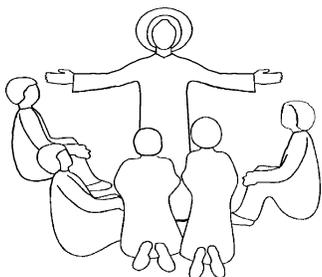
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

All: Amen.



Church
5th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
April 29, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Let us call to mind that we are gathered here in the name of Jesus and in his name, we pray...

All: **Gracious God, bless our meeting.
Guide us to your desires.
Open our hearts to receive your word.
Fill us with the Spirit to do your work. Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Acts 9: 26-31

Reader 1 When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took charge of him and brought him to the apostles, and he described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.

Reader 2 So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and debated with the Hellenists; but they tried to kill him. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

Reader 3 Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace. It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. How do you react to new people who want to join established groups, especially those people with strong, vocal personalities and big ideas like Paul?
2. Can you picture what the early church was like? How would you describe it?
3. Do you think our parish has anything in common with these early faith communities? If so, what?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: May church leaders be blessed with wisdom, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, receive our prayer.

Leader: May the church be blessed with bold and enthusiastic disciples who joyfully bring the good news of Jesus the Christ beyond the doors of our churches out into God's world, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, receive our prayer.

Leader: May our parish be blessed with the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and grow in faith and in numbers, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, receive our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?

(When all who choose to do so have voiced their prayers)

For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, receive our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Leader: St. Paul...

All: pray for us.

Leader: St. Barnabas...

All: pray for us.

Leader: Saints of Judea, of Galilee, of Samaria...

All: pray for us.

Leader: Holy disciples, our brothers and sisters through the ages...

All: pray for us.

Leader: Pray for us that we may walk in the love of God and continue to build the church in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

The Love of God
6th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
May 6, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Let us pray...

**All: Loving God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,
from the beginning of time to the ends of eternity
you open your heart to us; you pour out divine love upon us.
You forgive us when we fail to accept your love.
You show us how to grow in your love.
Instruct us by your holy word.
We are listening; we want to learn.
Amen.**

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4: 7-10

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God;
everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.
God's love was revealed among us in this way:
God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him.
In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us
and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

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

Suggestion for Faith Sharing

Leader: So often we who are involved in action items don't take time to rest
deeply in the love God has for us. I invite you to take some time now to
sit and rest with God and to open yourself to the movement of this
amazing Scripture within you.

I will proclaim a portion of the passage we just heard. A period of silence
will follow. We will repeat this sequence two more times- three times in
all.

Leader: ***Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God...***
Silent Reflection

Leader: *God's love was revealed among us in this way:
God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through
him...*

Silent Reflection

Leader: *In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us...*

Silent Reflection

Leader: I invite you to share one or two words that express your response to what
you have heard...

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: May God's love for us sink into the core of our being and ground us in
Christ's ineffable peace, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Loving God, we place our trust in you.

Leader: May God's love for us move us to know, love, and serve God with all our
hearts, let us pray to the Lord...

All: Loving God, we place our trust in you.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?

(When all who wish to do so have voiced their prayers)

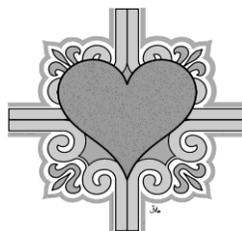
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, let us pray...

All: Loving God, we place our trust in you.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray in the words of Thomas Merton...

**All: Father God, we come into your presence so aware of our human
frailty and yet overwhelmed by your love. We thank you that there is
no human experience that we might walk through where your love
cannot reach us. If we climb the highest mountain you are there and
yet if we find ourselves in the darkest valley, you are there. Help us to
rest in that love that asks nothing more than the simple trusting heart
of a child. In the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we pray, Amen.**



Courage in the Spirit
7th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
May 13, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Let us sit in silence. Become aware of the Spirit of God within you. *(Pause)*

Become aware of the Spirit among you. *(Pause)*

Become aware of the Spirit in all of creation. *(Pause)*

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4: 11-16

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another.

No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world.

Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. When and how do we recognize the Spirit working among us and in us?
2. Which part of this Scripture passage gives you particular comfort or challenge?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: As people of the resurrection, we pray for our needs and the needs of the world...

That we may give thanks for our life in Jesus the Christ...

All: Risen Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: That we may call upon the Spirit for wisdom and courage...

All: Risen Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: That our community may witness to the indwelling Spirit...

All: Risen Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else do we pray ...
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Risen Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: May the peace of the risen Christ fill our hearts and may we share that peace with one another. Amen. Alleluia.



Come, Holy Spirit
Pentecost Sunday, Cycle B
May 20, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Lord, send out your Spirit,

All: and renew the face of the earth. Alleluia!

Scripture Reading: Acts 2: 1-4

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. What gift(s) of the Holy Spirit do you share with the community?
2. Are we mindful of the Spirit in our brothers and sisters? How, when?



Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: During this great feast let us pray for one another...

All: Spirit of God, fill us with love.

Leader: For the suffering in our community, let us reach out in compassion.

All: Spirit of God, fill us with love.

Leader: For leaders in our world and our local community, may they sincerely seek to act for the good of those under their leadership.

All: Spirit of God, fill us with love.

Leader: For each of us that we may give wise counsel.

All: Spirit of God, fill us with love.

Leader: For what else do we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts.

All: Spirit of God, fill us with love.

Closing Prayer:

**All: May the Holy Spirit guide us and give us light
to bring your word to our brothers and sisters.
Keep us faithful and give us peace. Amen.**

**Led by the Spirit of God
The Most Holy Trinity, Cycle B
May 27, 2018**

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

All: Ever Faithful Father, Jesus our Brother, Spirit of Love, let us boldly proclaim and praise you. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:19-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshipped, but they doubted.

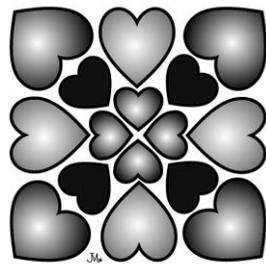
Then Jesus approached and said to them,
“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. How is our parish community a reflection of the community of love that is the Trinity?
2. What are some of the ways we as individuals and as a parish spread the Good News?



Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Loving God, receive our prayers...

For all nations, that we reflect the love God has for us
and for all of creation, we pray...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: For our parish community that it would be a beacon of faith and hope to
those who are seeking...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.**

A SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
June 3, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Humbly in your sight
we come together, Lord.

All: Grant us now the blessing of your presence here.
(Excerpt from a Malawi church song)

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:22-24

While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."

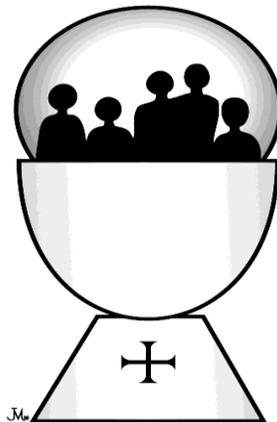
Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many."

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. Jesus says a blessing and then again gives thanks before sharing the bread and the cup. Do we see this deep-rooted attitude of thanksgiving in ourselves?
2. How can we cultivate this attitude more in ourselves and in the Body of believers?



Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Loving God, we bring our prayers to you...

For the poor and the homeless, may our love offer them hope...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For those newly baptized, may they grow in love through the Eucharist...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: May the Lord bless and keep us forever.
May the Lord grant us peace, perfect peace,
and courage in every moment. Amen.**



We are being renewed day by day
10th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B
June 10, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: For those who love you, O God, joys beyond understanding are waiting.

All: Fill our hearts with such a love that our desire for you in all things, and above all things, may lead us to what you have promised.

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:13-5-1

Since, then, we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we too believe and therefore speak, knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. How can we be more aware, on a daily basis, of the grace bestowed on us in such abundance?
2. What reason does St. Paul give us for not being discouraged? How aware are we of our inner self being renewed day by day?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Loving God, we bring our prayers to you...

For those facing discouragement and pain, we pray to the Lord...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For your special graces on the homeless, the sick, and all who seek You...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: Dear Lord God...

**Give us your grace to see your Holy Spirit at work in us day by day.
Help us to be so moved by your love that thanksgiving overflows in us
and spreads to all that we encounter and touches everything we do.
In your Name, we ask this.**

Lord, hear our prayer.



We walk by Faith, Not by Sight
11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B
June 17, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: For those who love you, O God, joys beyond understanding are waiting.

**All: Fill our hearts with such a love that our desire for you in all things,
and above all things, may lead us to what you have promised.**

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

Brothers and sisters:

We are always courageous,

although we know that while we are at home in the body

we are away from the Lord,

for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Yet we are courageous,

and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.

Therefore, we aspire to please him,

whether we are at home or away.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,

so that each may receive recompense,

according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

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

Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. When, in your own life, have you needed to walk by faith and not by sight?
2. In what ways does our parish community need to walk by faith and not by sight?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: Loving God, we bring our prayers to you...

For those facing pain and loss, we pray to the Lord...

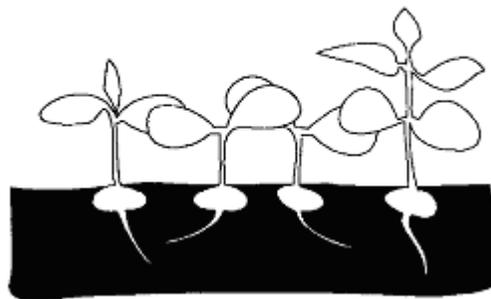
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

All: My Lord God...
I do not really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing.
And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road.
You are ever with me and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.
(Thomas Merton)



Open Our Ears
The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist
June 24, 2018

Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: Open our ears, Lord, that we may hear Your voice.

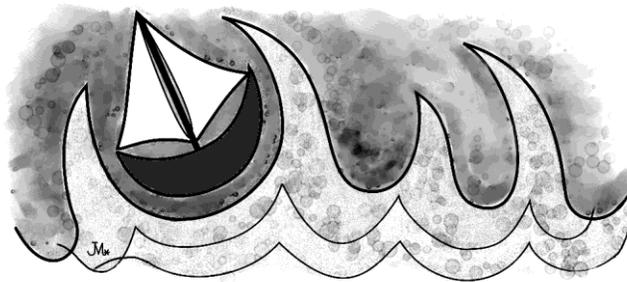
All: Open our ears, Lord, that we may hear Your voice.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:57-66

The Birth of John.

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John." But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name." So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God. Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, "What, then, will this child be?" For surely the hand of the Lord was with him.

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



Silent Reflection

Questions for Faith Sharing

1. Have we experienced a time when we felt God was calling us to do something that didn't make sense to others?

2. What is the reaction of the rest of the community to Zechariah's obedience? What hope does this give us in times of difficult decisions?

Prayer at the End of the Meeting

Intercessory Prayers

Leader: For the courage to listen to your voice in our decision-making...

All: We ask you Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For all those who suffer in any way...

All: We ask you Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For what else shall we pray?
(When all are finished offering prayers)
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

All: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

**All: Loving God, let your love and wisdom be with us.
We pray for your peace as we open our hearts and our ears to hear
your word. Let all creation praise you. Amen.**