



servants

into the presence



into the presence

a rhythm of prayer based on Servants' principles and values

servants

*This prayer resource has been written, compiled,
and prayerfully crafted by Lois Baldwin
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*As you journey through these liturgies
may your heart be enlarged
by God's grace and presence.*

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and enfolding of God,
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today....

Silence or open prayer

CLOSING PRAYER

Maker of all, you laboured over creation
And afterwards you rested.
It was enough, and it was good.
And we are creatures formed in your likeness,
Made more for intimacy than efficiency.
You know our limits, and you watch us tenderly
Like a parent, even as we sleep.

**In all our busyness today
Let there be moments of stillness, of quiet awareness.
Show us when we have done enough.
Where we have become too serious
Help us hear your invitation to play.
And when the day is over may we sleep soundly
In the peace of your embrace.**

In the toil for survival
And the struggle for justice
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

¹Michael Leunig, *A Common Prayer*

NOTES

- 1 **Bold text** indicates participants read these lines together.
- 2 Songs and responses to readings are suggestions only.
- 3 Three pairs of readings are presented – choose the pair you wish.
- 4 Two ways of praying with Bible passages are suggested: lectio divina, and gospel contemplation - see outlines below.
- 5 Participants are welcome to incorporate these liturgies into their usual patterns of worship and prayer.

LECTIO DIVINA (holy reading)

Preparation

quieten yourself for a few moments and then choose a short passage of Scripture or other spiritual reading

Lectio (attending)

trusting that the Holy Spirit is there to help you, read through the passage several times really SLOWLY. Some people find that reading aloud helps to slow them down. Let the words move deeply into your being, like nourishing rain into the soil. Allow a word or a phrase to touch you.

Meditatio (pondering)

reflect on the word or phrase that has touched you, exploring what it means to you here and now. Let the word or phrase speak to your personal situation; believe that through this process God is communicating with you, perhaps giving a word of encouragement or of challenge, or calling you to a deeper awareness of God's love for you.

Oratio (responding)

in this part of Lectio divina, you respond to God. You talk to God about what you have been thinking and what you have heard through the words of Scripture. You might pray your response or write in your journal, even sing or dance or paint your response ...pray as the Spirit moves you whether in gratitude, longing, repentance or intercession.

Contemplatio (being)

in this final and most important stage, sit quietly with God, at rest in the presence of the One who loves you. Do not worry that you may appear

to be doing ‘nothing’. Trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in the depths of your spirit, deepening your faith. Let the Word move from your head to your heart to dwell there in peace-full silence.

Lectio divina or holy reading is a simple and ancient way of praying with Scripture. It leads us naturally from a rational consideration of how a few verses of Scripture might connect with our current life, to a personal response in prayer and a gentle resting in the love of God, the beginnings of contemplation. This practice emerged in the early history of the Church, finding its way into European monasticism through Cassian and St Benedict. Now it is being reclaimed by Christians as another gift of grace and growth in Christ.

GOSPEL CONTEMPLATION (praying with your imagination)

Usually we approach Scripture with the expectation of reading its words and thinking about their meaning. Yet when we read anything that tells a story, or relates to life issues, we always use *more* than our intellects. In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola (16th C) encouraged people to bring their whole selves to God in meditation and prayer. He taught them especially to do this in meditating on the life of Christ, on gospel stories. Using our imaginations opens us to encounter Jesus more directly than our intellects allow. Here is a simplified version of what he taught.

Taking any incident from the life of Jesus in the Gospels, gently follow these steps ...

1. Pray beforehand

Settle and relax yourself. Deal with any distractions that become evident. Open your mind and heart to God, praying that you might be open and attentive to anything God might want to say to you. Ask that your heart will be receptive and your will ready to obey.

2. Set the scene

Read the passage through to remind yourself of the story.

Now use your imagination to set the scene as vividly as you can. Use as many of your senses as you can: what would you hear? what would you

We are empty, we grow calm, we are ready.
We wait quietly.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth

A small shy truth arrives.
Arrives from without and within.
Arrives and is born.
Simple, steady, clear.
Like a mirror, like a bell, like a flame.
Like rain in summer.
A precious truth arrives and is born within us.
Within our emptiness.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth

We accept it, we observe it, we absorb it.
We surrender to our bare truth.
We are nourished, we are changed.
We are blessed.
We rise up.¹

For this we give thanks. Amen

THE LIVING WORD

Ps. 127	or	Exod. 20:8-11	or	Luke 10:38-42
Matt. 11:28-30		Mark 4:26-29		Eph. 2:1-10

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: *meditation ~ either lectio divina or gospel contemplation of Luke passage*
: *give a cushion to each person and play restful music*
: *surrender an item being worn or carried and place it in the centre of your group to symbolise letting go of an attachment to schedules or busy-ness*
: *sing –“The Lord is My Light” - Tom Wuest*

INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Sing: Wait for the Lord whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart. (Taize)

"Come to me all you who are burdened and I will give you rest"
was the invitation of Jesus to those so harried around him.
Come... and rest...

Right now Jesus, friend, we're coming to You.
We unload our burdens and preoccupations.
And we rest... in your presence.

"My presence will go with you and I will give you rest"
was the promise God spoke to Moses as Moses explained
he couldn't go on unless he knew they were not alone.
Presence... and rest.

Here you are, my people.
I am present.
I give you rest.

Here we are, Holy One.
We are not alone.
We receive your rest... and we can go on.

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

Dear God, we struggle, we grow weary, we grow tired.
We are exhausted, we are distressed, we despair.
We give up, we fall down, we let go.
We cry.

see? what would you smell? who is in the scene? what are they doing?
what is in the background? what is the emotional atmosphere like? Take
time to let the scene unfold.

3. Enter into the story

Now let yourself become part of this scene. Without forcing anything,
what are you drawn to in the story? Perhaps you particularly identify with
one of the characters, and take that role.

Perhaps you are a bystander, watching what is taking place. When you
have found your place it is time to ...

4. Allow the story to unfold

Using the biblical story, allow the action to be played in your imagina-
tion. Now that you are part of the scene, notice how you find yourself
responding – your thoughts, actions and feelings. It may be that the story
unfolds a little differently to the biblical account. Notice what happens, as
it may be significant. Do you find yourself interacting with Jesus? Is there
anything you want to say to him, or ask him? Is there anything he seems
to want to say to

you, or ask you? Maybe a dialogue with Jesus, or another character, will
unfold.

5. Reflection and prayer

Ignatius encourages us to "savour the response." When your imaginary
journey through the story has come to an end, take time to think back
over what happened and how you found yourself responding. It might be
helpful to journal your reflections. Allow this to lead into prayer, as seems
appropriate.

REST

*God calls us to regular rhythms of work, rest and reflection
– weekly Sabbaths and regular holy-days (holidays).
We seek to obey God's command to rest in order to be refreshed,
to be still and to deepen our relationship
with him and one another.*



RESPONSE

- : invite the Holy Spirit to inspire a creative reading of one of the scriptures*
- : create a tune / clay model / parable / food / a message on p/point or slide show*
- : create a central worship focus from things present in the room*

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and peace of God
our Servants family worldwide, especially today...

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY THIS DAY

Life-giving Breath of God, you move
In the pattern and play of all that lives.
You stir the sap in every stem,
The beating of every heart,
Each cell dividing in the womb.
You spark the artist's vision and the poet's song,
The burning word on the prophet's lips.

**In the struggles and surprises of this day
Give us imagination to see fresh pathways.
Breathe in us your playfulness and curiosity.
Let our lives overflow with hope-filled stories,
With music and flavours of the new creation,
Your coming reign of peace.**

To tired eyes and closed minds,
In hearts dulled by poverty or wealth,
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

INCARNATION

*We live intentionally with the urban poor,
learning from them, building genuine relationships,
participating in their lives and struggles,
learning their language and their culture,
and working out how Jesus' love
can best be shown in their context.*



INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

God with us. Emmanuel. We pause and consider.
Me created in the image and likeness of God.
Jesus created in the image and likeness of human beings.

“Look, your Mary is pregnant with Emmanuel:
God is with us,” Joseph dreamed.
“How can this be?” struggled Mary.
“But here I am; let it be as you say.”

“It is no longer we who live but it is
Christ who lives in us,” Paul explains.
“How can this be?” we wonder.
“Can Christ be formed in us?”

Well, here we are. Emmanuel.
Let it be as you say...
be formed in us, be present to us.

Sing Let all mortal flesh keep silence and with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descended, our full homage to demand

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

Holy One, Human One, We admire your
downward mobility and forget to follow it.
Help us forgive ourselves.

to the innocent and the criminal.
Out of the depths we cry to you O God.
Lord, hear our voice!

We mourn our making do with mediocrity;
we are fed up with pedantic prose;
we are sick of colourless concrete;
we grieve the pragmatics of popularity.
Out of the depths we cry to you O God.
Lord, hear our voice!

We long for rainbow handcrafts and dramatic dances,
stirring stories and flamboyant garments,
fun food and gentle songs,
poignant poetry and crazy pottery.
Out of the depths we cry to you O God.
Lord, hear our voice!

Jesus, you came so that we may have life -
life in all its fullness.
What we long for is at hand.
Thank you.
Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called
the children of God

Sing: O Lord have mercy, O Lord have mercy,
O Lord have mercy; have mercy on us. (Wuest)

THE LIVING WORD

Ps. 104	or	Isa. 65:17-25	or	Mark 6:30-44
Matt. 13:34-35		Matt. 17:24-27		Eph. 5:19-20

Silence for reflecting on the readings

INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

The heavens are telling the glory of God
and the world shouts out God's handiwork.
In the presence of our loving Creator,
we join all that is being created and re-created
... **and become silent.**

In the presence of our loving Creator,
we look honestly at our living over recent days, the
highs, the lows and the level ground
... **and become still.**

In the presence of my loving Creator,
I surrender to life as it unfolds – creatively –
and let my heart become one with the Source.

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

We have such high hopes of our creativity, God.
We love it and neglect it;
we encourage it and abuse it;
we use it to make money,
and seldom to make peace.
**Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called
the children of God**

We grieve our violence and abuse,
physical and emotional,
seen and unseen,
to children and grown men,
to young girls and the elderly,

We notice other ways of incarnation
and are quick to judge them.
Help us forgive ourselves.

Thank you for letting yourself be made in our likeness,
in a body caught in time and space.
Human One, give us patience with ourselves.

Thank you for living in a simple neighbourhood
and waiting thirty years before you started 'doing stuff'.
Holy One, give us patience with ourselves.

We lament our need to be spoken well of,
to be included and to be understood.
**Blessed are those who are persecuted,
misunderstood and falsely accused on my account,
for great is their reward in heaven.**

We lament our short cuts in compassion.
We lament our readiness to resent.
**Blessed are those who are persecuted,
misunderstood and falsely accused on my account,
for great is their reward in heaven.**

Holy One, have mercy
Human One, have mercy
Holy Spirit, give peace. Amen

THE LIVING WORD

Psalm 132	or	Exod. 33: 7-11	or	John 14: 5-14
Luke 1: 26-38		Matt. 3: 13 - 4: 11		2Cor. 4: 1-12

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

- : *contemplate an icon or a painting (e.g. Botticelli's 'Annunciation') and share thoughts*
- : *meditation ~ either lectio divina or gospel contemplation*
- : *draw or sketch your own 'tent of meeting' and its proximity to your 'camp' (Ex. 33) - depicting how Christ is immanent in your life*

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and nearness of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today....

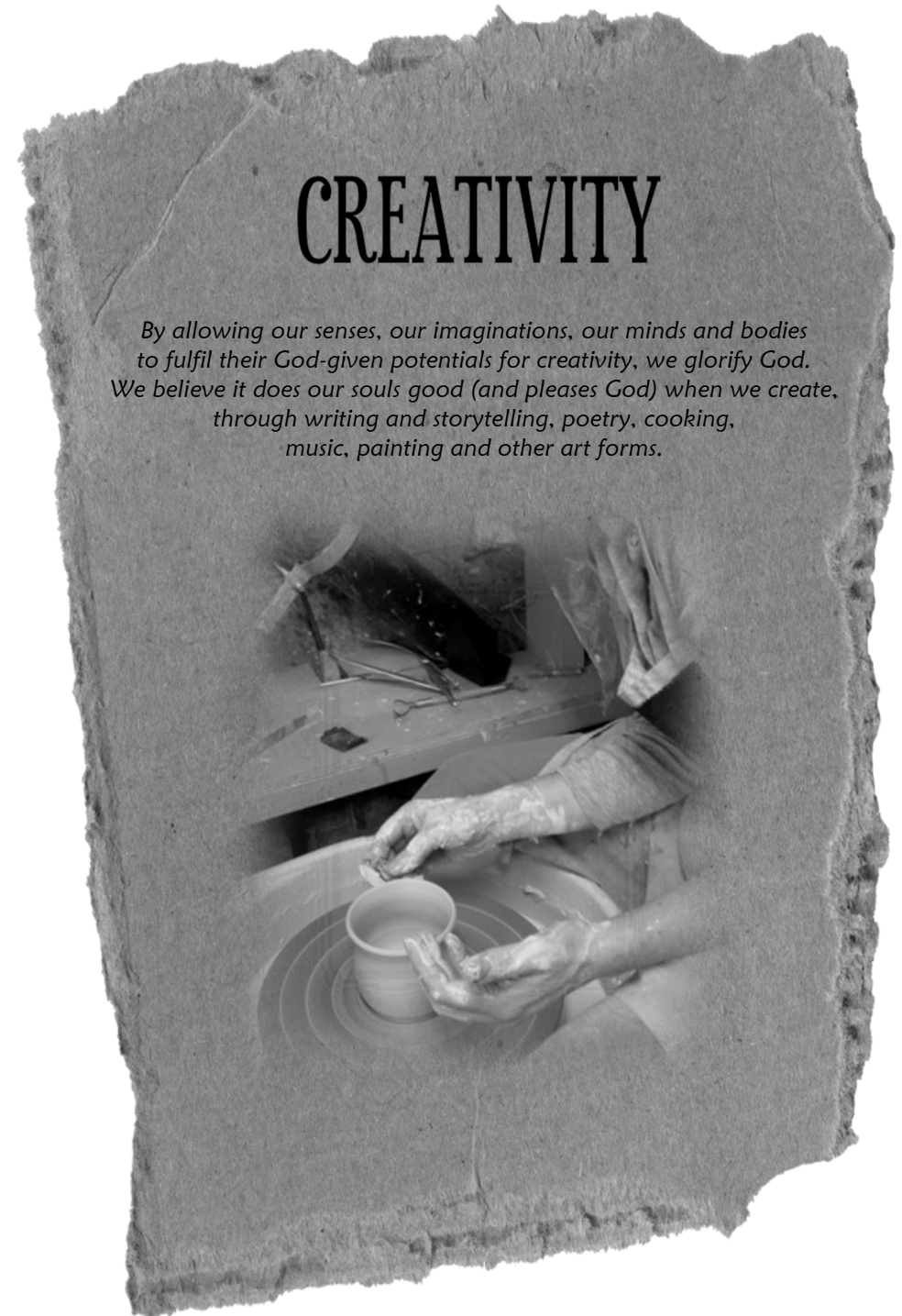
Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY, THIS DAY

Infinite and holy God,
No striving mind or will could hope to reach you.
Yet in Jesus you come to us,
Not just near, but *in*, for all time and eternity.
You choose our flesh, you bear its scars.
Our story is your story,
Your life is our light.

**Be at home in us today
And help us to live as your body.
Meet us in the rooms and the streets we inhabit today.
Give us the courage we need to say "yes"
To you, to our neighbours, to the earth
And to all that is ordinary and fragile in our own lives.**

When we walk in darkness,
Hungry for hope and aching for your presence,
**On earth as in heaven
Your kingdom come!
Amen**



THIS WAY THIS DAY

Holy Spirit of God
Your beauty is beyond seeing and telling
Yet it touches us at every turn,
Often unexpectedly,
In the warm light of a new day,
The loveliness of faces, the music of laughter.
And it shines through the life of Jesus,
So completely surrendered to you.

Open our eyes today, Holy Spirit
To beauty all around us,
In ourselves and in each other,
In every life, however bruised or disfigured.
Help us to nurture beauty wherever it will grow.
Let light spill into dark places, let colours glow,
Reawaken lost wonder and rekindle hope.

In this beautiful world marred by sin
On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen

¹Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*

COMMUNITY

*As well as a commitment to the communities we move into,
we have a passion to work together in supportive teams
that model the love, care and community that Jesus spoke of.
We work with people, not just for them.*



INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

We are in your presence O Holy One.
We take refuge in the loving community of the Trinity.

You are our protector in times of weakness
You are our freedom in seasons of strength
You are our companion in nights of sadness
You are our delight in days of joy
You are our vision in places of darkness
You are our still point in times of light

We are in your loving presence.
We bring our communities to take refuge in your embrace.
Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Sing The kingdom of God is justice and peace and joy in Holy Spirit
Come, Lord, and open in us, the gates of your kingdom. (Taizé)

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

We exist in a web of relationships -
with nature, people, God.
Let's trace out these links ...

Silence

Some links are growing or vibrant.
We feel delight, enthusiasm, hope.
We give thanks for the life that flows through them. *Pause*

Individuals speak out their own descriptive phrases ...

Three things are too wonderful for me,
four I do not understand:
the way of an eagle in the sky,
the way of a snake on a rock,
the way of a ship on the high seas,
and the way of a man with a woman.
Wonder, mystery, beauty ... God. Yes.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

THE LIVING WORD

Ps. 19	or	Job 39	or	John 20:10-18
Mark 9:2-8		John 12:1-8		Rev. 4

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: identify and share a thing of beauty in the room /walk outside together & enjoy
: contemplation of art work - pottery, a quilt, a deliciously presented meal
: read aloud a poem - Keats' Endymion: A thing of beauty is a joy forever - or Gerard Manley Hopkins': God's Grandeur.

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and tenderness of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today....

Silence or open prayer

INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Sing: Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise him above all heavenly hosts,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

The Lord is here. God's Spirit is present.

We can never *not* be in the presence of God:
We are totally surrounded.¹
We are surrounded by beauty.

The Lord is here. God's Spirit is present.

One thing I have asked of the Lord. This is what I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the Lord...

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

God, we mourn how much of your beauty we overlook ...

The water lily in a stagnant black pond
A smile creasing a scarred, broken face
The flesh of a simple green coconut
The warmth of a full-bodied hug
An orchid spraying from straggling bark
The freshness of transparent conversation
The lightness of silk
The delight of daring to dance
The tang of lemon grass

Some links are twisted or broken.
We feel regret, anger, disappointment.
We grieve, and pray for the gifts of acceptance and forgiveness. *Pause*

Grief, gratitude, forgiveness – we are a needy community.
**Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.**

THE LIVING WORD

Psalm 133	or	Ruth 1: 8-18	or	Luke 8: 1-3
Mark 2: 13-17		John 17: 20-26		1 John 4:7-21

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: *gospel contemplation*
: *group sculpture or community dance*
: *sing "Kingdom of Friends" (Dave Andrews)*

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and love of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today...

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY, THIS DAY

Our God, you are Trinity, Community,
Unbroken relationship,
Love without beginning or end.
And most wonderful of all, you make room for us,
Drawing us in out of the cold,
Calling us friends.

**As we come to you, you lead us to each other,
Into the security of belonging
And the risks of openness.
We will not attempt alone what we can do together.
With family and friends, team and neighbours,
With those we would prefer to avoid,
Help us live the reality of trust and forgiveness today.**

In a world of conflict and loneliness
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

BEAUTY

*In our lives, in our homes, In our communities
and in our world, we honour God and renew our souls
by recognising and creating beauty.
In particular, we want to see and celebrate the beauty
inherent in ourselves and in each other.*



RESPONSE

*: meditation ~ either lectio divina or gospel contemplation
: celebratory group dance e.g. Psalm 117 (Sons of Korah)
: a meal together / sharing a bottle of wine and loaf of bread*

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and joy of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today...

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY THIS DAY

Jesus our surprising Messiah,
Secret source of the finest wine,
Scandal of pious society,
You shared a table with Pharisee and outcast alike.
To you they brought their pain and passion,
Their perfume to pour on your feet.
And the angels partied in heaven.

**With you, Jesus, we want to celebrate
Every small sign of your Kingdom,
To be free with praise as well as protest.
Let there be festivity in our gatherings today,
A welcome for the hurting and the lonely
And a taste of the great feast to come.**

When the wine has run dry,
Where the poor are shut out,
**On earth as in Heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

WHOLISM

*We want to see the good news of Jesus
proclaimed in word, deed and power.
We have a God who is working to renew all things
and to restore wholeness of life to
individuals and communities, rich and poor alike.
We work for justice, proclaim God's grace,
and lift all things to Him in prayer.*



INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Sing Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. Naught be all else to me
save that thou art. Thou my best thought in the day and the night;
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

We await your healing and wholeness - individually and in community.

God to enfold me, **God to surround me**
God in my speaking, **God in my thinking**
God in my sleeping, **God in my waking**
God in my watching, **God in my hoping**
God in my life, **God in my lips**
God in my soul, **God in my heart**

We await your healing and wholeness – rich and poor alike.

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

O Lord of All Being, it is so challenging for us to bring
the whole Christ to the whole world.
We more often bring “a broken Christ,
a lame Christ, a crooked Christ deformed by us.”¹

Our world is fragmented:
creatures disconnected from creation,
nations torn by powerful interests,
families broken by arrogance and addiction,
nature spoiled by thoughtless consumption.
Come Lord Jesus

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

Many people are at this moment
suffering the agonies of war.
How can we presume to celebrate in the face of
such violence, devastation and horror?
How can we sing the Lord’s song
in this strange land, this strained world?
**Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted**

We stand with all losers and winners,
all aggressors and victims,
recognising these in ourselves....

Silence

**O suffering one, you have emptied yourself
and shown humanity how to embrace its darkness.
O loving spirit, you dwell with us,
your heart afire with hope and longing.
O mothering essence, you nourish us, deepen us,
and invite us to resurrection and delight.**

We bow our heads in humility and profound
thanksgiving for the many freedoms we enjoy....

Individuals speak out freedoms they are thankful for.

**Blessed are those who mourn
for they shall be comforted**

THE LIVING WORD

Ps. 148	or	Jer. 33:1-11	or	John 2:1-11
Mark 11:1-10		Luke 15:11-32		1 Pet. 1:3-9

Silence for reflecting on the readings

INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Sing: In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; in the Lord I will rejoice.
Look to God! Do not be afraid!
Lift up your voices the Lord is here! (Taize)

God of generosity and diversity, we praise you,
joining with all the universe,
with the earth and everything in it,
seen and unseen,
from West and East, South and North.
Together we celebrate your ongoing creation,
your endless renewal of this world you
so loved that you gave and gave and gave.
**In the silence, knowing that you love us to the death,
We have the courage to be honest about how we are
And to share ourselves openly with you,
Lover of our souls.**

Regardless of our feelings right now,
We choose to celebrate God's resilient love
and generous faithfulness.

Sing: Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father.
There is no shadow of turning with thee.
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not.
As thou hast been thou forever will be.
Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning thy mercies I see.
All I have needed thy hand has provided.
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

We are fragmented:
hearts divided,
prayers separated from actions,
justice isolated from love,
the holy distant from the human.
Come Lord Jesus

We long for integrity of word and deed,
to be wholly holy and wholly human,
to be healed and healing.
**Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled.**

We give thanks for opportunities to speak of Jesus,
for happenings that reveal God's grace,
for actions that redeem injustices.
**Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled.**

THE LIVING WORD

Psalm 146	or	Isaiah 58	or	Luke 24: 36-49
John 9		Mark 2: 1-12		Col 1: 15-20

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: A time of prayer and anointing for healing and wholeness
: Sing: "May our Kingdom Come" - Tom Wuest
: Gospel contemplation on one of the above encounters with Jesus

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and protection of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today....

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY, THIS DAY

Loving Creator and Father,
You are God of the miraculous and the mundane.
No detail escapes your attention,
No-one is excluded from your care.
You hold together suffering and celebration,
Work and rest, hope and struggle.
You put together what has come apart.

**Whatever is on your heart today
Let it be on ours, too.
The concerns of our communities and our neighbours,
Let them be ours, too.
Help us use every tool in our hands
And every gift of the Spirit
To serve your reign of justice, health and peace.**

In a broken and disordered world
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

¹ Mother Teresa, *Contemplative at the Heart of the World*, 122

CELEBRATION

*Directing our celebrations to God in worship,
we look for excuses to throw parties,
consciously marking every milestone
and achievement – no matter how small!
We want to be people of generosity,
who refuse to take ourselves too seriously.*



FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and freedom of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY THIS DAY

Jesus our healer and brother,
Your clear eyes pierced all deceit and hypocrisy
But never hardened in condemnation.
You shocked the proud and self-righteous
With your reckless forgiveness of sins.
Your grace is a quiet revolution within and among us,
Curse-lifting, history changing.

**Live in our hearts and our eyes, Jesus.
Show us this cracked and fragile world
In the generous light of your gaze.
Give us patience with all that resists or frustrates us,
And words of kindness and encouragement
For all whose lives touch ours today.**

Among the judging and the judged,
To the unforgiven and the unforgiving,
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

¹*Sacred Space* - a prayer site run by the Irish Jesuits

²Charles Ringma, *Wash the feet of the world with Mother Teresa*

SERVANTHOOD

*We follow Jesus who came in humility
not to be served but to serve', the path to true leadership.
We empower the poor by placing control in their hands and
not overpowering them with outside resources or expertise.
With courage, we embrace sacrifice and suffering,
and share faithfully in the life of Jesus and the poor.*



INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Our servant leader Jesus is with us.
Let his spirit be on us.

Let your spirit be on us your servants
whom you uphold,
whom you have chosen,
and in whom you delight.
**With you, we seek to bring justice to the nations.
Like you, we work quietly in the streets.
We will not break what is bruised,
or extinguish flickering candles.
We accept that we may faint and
be crushed in this birthing of justice. . .**

You are God. You take us by the hand and keep us.

Sing Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant too.

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

My grief is beyond healing,
my heart is broken.
Listen to the weeping of my people,
it can be heard all across the land.
**Has the Lord abandoned Jerusalem?
Is her King no longer there?
The harvest is finished and the summer is gone,
yet we are not saved!**

How long O Lord? Long enough my arrogant enemies
have looked down their noses at me.
Take a good look at me God, my God;
I want to look life in the eye.
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy

I've thrown myself headlong into your arms –
I'm celebrating your rescue.
I'm singing at the top of my lungs,
I'm so full of answered prayers.
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy

You serve a six course dinner right in front of my enemies.
You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.
Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.
I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life.
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy

In looking upon you, O Christ,
may I see myself more truly in my need
and you more fully in your grace.²
Amen

THE LIVING WORD

Ps. 103	or	Hos.11:1-11	or	John 8:2-11
Matt. 18:21-35		Mark 2:13-17		James 4:1-12

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: meditation ~ either *lectio divina* or *gospel contemplation*
: contemplation of painting e.g. *Rembrandt's Return of the Prodigal*
: watch the film "*Babette's Feast*"

INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Lord, we cannot find you in time past or time future;
Only in this present moment.
The now is all that we have.
It is a sacrament, a sign of inward grace.
It is only in this moment that we can come close to you.¹

**I wait for the Lord,
My soul waits and in his word I hope,
My soul waits for the Lord,
More than those who watch for the morning,
More than those who watch for the morning.**

O people wait and watch for God.
With God's arrival comes love.
With God's arrival comes generous redemption.

Sing: Amazing grace

LAMENT and THANKSGIVING

How long O Lord? Long enough,
God – you've ignored me long enough.
I've looked at the back of your head long enough.
Long enough I've carried a ton of trouble,
lived with a stomach full of pain.
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy

I hurt with the hurt of my people.
I mourn and am overcome with grief.
Why is there no healing
for the wounds of my people?
**Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses,
fellow servants who have gone before.
Let's listen, they are cheering us on.
Thanks be to God.

Let's throw off every attachment and distraction,
eyes fixed on the Servant who both began and will finish
forming a kingdom people from the margins.
**Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

THE LIVING WORD

Psalm 86	or	Isaiah 52: 13 – 53: 6	or	John 13: 1-17
Matt. 20: 20-28		Luke 1: 46-55		1Thess 1: 2-7

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: foot washing or hand massage
: meditation ~ lectio divina on Ps 86
: sing "The Servant King"

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and faithfulness of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today...

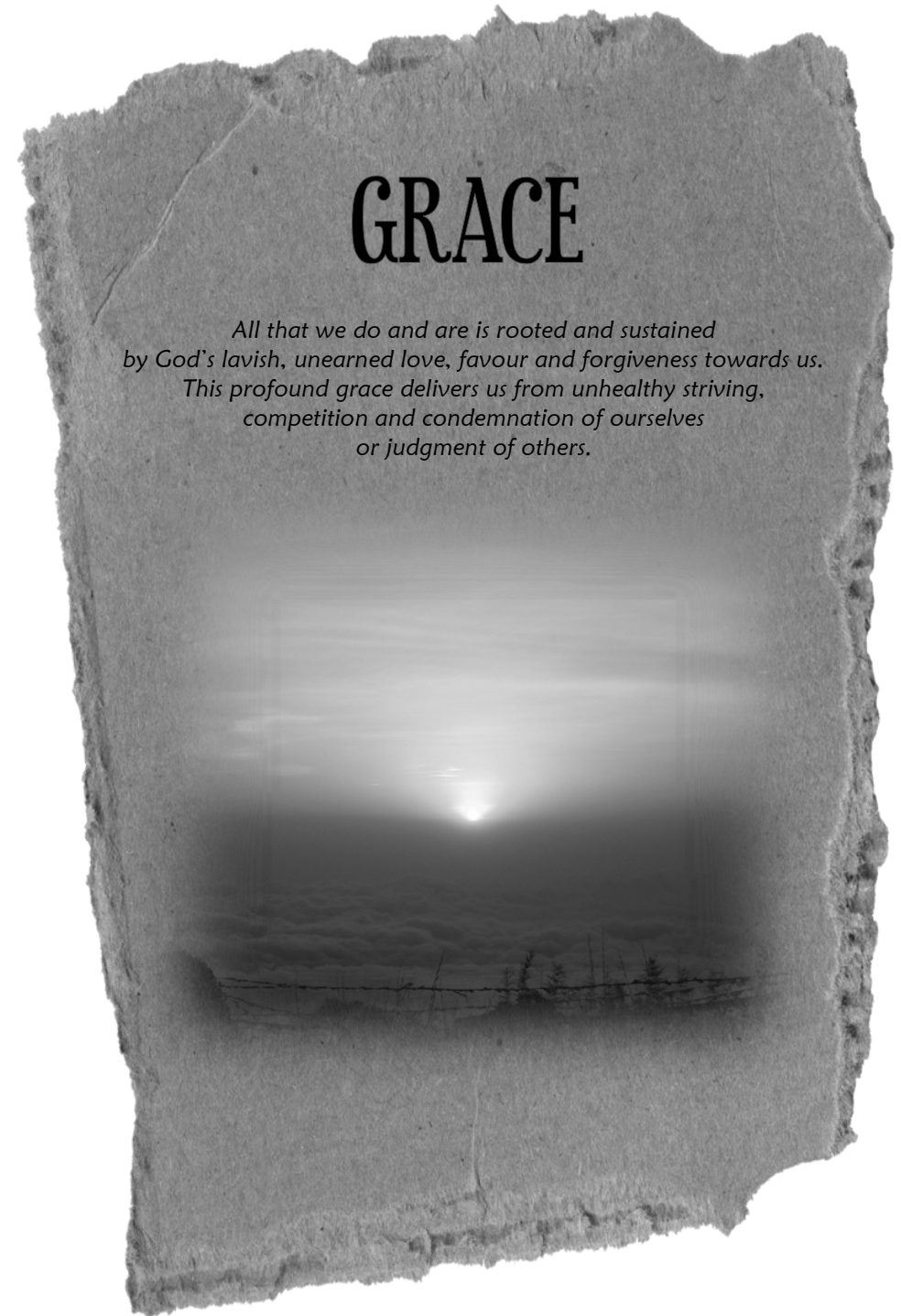
Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY, THIS DAY

Jesus, when you could have come in power
You came in humility and love.
You knelt down to wash the feet of your friends,
Even the one who betrayed you.
It was the cry of your spirit to be available to your Father,
Your joy to bring good news to the poor.

**After your example, Jesus,
We want to wash each others' feet today
Through touch that heals and words that restore.
Empty us of the need to control,
Free us to set others free.
Whatever it costs us in comfort or reputation
We give ourselves gladly to you today.**

Where fear has bound us
or power seduced us
**On earth as in heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**



Renouncing power and privilege.
You were at home among those overlooked by others,
Prizing faith above status or learning.
You always spoke the truth.

**Spirit of Jesus send us out today
To live in the world with open hands
And a passion for your Kingdom.
Come, heal our divided hearts,
Making room for love and joy,
For stillness to hear your voice
And freedom to respond.**

In a world of confusion and anxiety,
Poverty and excess,
**On earth as in Heaven
Your Kingdom come!
Amen**

SIMPLICITY

*We commit ourselves to inward and outward simplicity,
setting aside our 'right' to affluence
while there are still those who live in abject poverty.
We desire to be a relevant and prophetic voice
in a world preoccupied with self.*



INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Trust in God at all times, people.
Pour out your hearts to the Holy One.
For God alone my soul waits in silence.

Silence

Be still and know that I am God
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know
Be still
Be

In silence consider: How is it just 'being' right now? Light? Heavy?
Am I at peace? Happy to be here?
Frustrated? Worried? Angry? Sad? Lifeless?
Accepting how I am, it's the real me God loves.

Sing Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life. (Taize)

THANKSGIVING AND LAMENT

Jesus, you always welcomed little children
when you walked on this earth.
We want their purity of heart
so we can see you;
their singleness of mind
so we don't complicate things.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

We thank you for the many simple things
that have blessed us recently.

Name some of these now.
After each one **Thanks be to God**

We lament the many things we have made complicated
and have allowed to attach themselves to us.

Name some of these now
After each one **Christ, have mercy.**

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

THE LIVING WORD

Psalm 62	or	Deut. 8: 6-18	or	Luke 18: 15-17
Matt. 6: 25-34		Mark 6: 7-13		Phil. 4: 10-13

Silence for reflecting on the readings

RESPONSE

: a simple dance
: contemplation of simple items in centrepiece
: enjoy a simple tune well-played

FOR EACH OTHER

Let's hold in the light and nurturing of God
our Servants family worldwide, and especially today...

Silence or open prayer

THIS WAY, THIS DAY

Jesus, you came to us in humility,
Vulnerable and empty-handed.
You made your whole life an offering,