

Great is Your Faithfulness

Use this complete prayer service with the Chapter 5, section 4 of Your Christian Vocation. You may also choose to use only individual parts of the prayer service.

Needs:

- copies as needed or projection
- an internet connection and computer cued to play *Faithfulness* by Hillsong Worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8hhr1Oz0iw>

Prayer Introduction

Leader: In Chapter 5 you have been studying about the challenges to marriage: divorce, infidelity, cohabitation, etc. Perhaps you or someone you know has been affected by a troubled marriage or relationship. The pain from this is real, and often difficult to heal. While you should never over-spiritualize the need for emotional or psychological help, the truth is that God wants to be your faithful anchor especially in such difficulties. Today we are going to listen to God's reassurance over and over again in Scripture that he is a faithful, secure, loving Person who desires to be our comfort when human relationships fail.

Opening Prayer

Leader: (Have students stand and begin with the Sign of the Cross.)

All: We come before you today Lord, asking you to remind us of your faithfulness. We lift up our hearts and ask you to fill us with your love. When the world or people have let us down, you Jesus, are faithful.

Scripture Reading

Reader 1: A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy (Deut 7: 6-9),

For you are a people holy to the LORD, your God; the LORD, your God, has chosen you from all the peoples on the face of the earth to be a people specially his own. It was not

because you are more numerous than all the peoples that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you; for you are really the smallest of all peoples. It was because the LORD loved you and because of his fidelity to the oath he had sworn to your ancestors, that the LORD brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Know, then, that the LORD, your God, is God: the faithful God who keeps covenant mercy to the thousandth generation toward those who love him and keep his commandments.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 138: 1-3, 5-8)

Reader 2: I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness.

All: I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness.

Reader 2: I thank you, Lord, with all my heart; in the presence of the angels to you I sing. I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness. For you have exalted over all your name and your promise.

All: I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness.

Reader 2: On the day I cried out, you answered; you strengthened my spirit. I will sing of the ways of the LORD: "How great is the glory of the LORD!" The LORD is on high, but cares for the lowly and knows the proud from afar.

All: I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness.

Reader 2: Though I walk in the midst of dangers, you guard my life when my enemies rage. You stretch out your hand; your right hand saves me. The LORD is with me to the end. LORD, your mercy endures forever. Never forsake the work of your hands!

All: I praise your name for your mercy and faithfulness.

Scripture Reading

Reader 3: A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (1Thes 5: 14-18, 23-24),

We urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, cheer the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient with all. See that no one returns evil for evil; rather, always seek what is good [both] for each other and for all. Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

May the God of peace himself make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection from Pope Francis

Leader: As we reflect on God's faithfulness, let us listen to an address by Pope Francis about God's faithfulness with Adam. Pope Francis invites you to reflect on your own story in order to discover the beauty of the love of God, even in the midst of difficulties.

Reader 4: Pope Francis said, "**Abraham, a man of faith, knew by experience that God had not deceived him.** *Put to the test, after having had a child, a boy, a young child, he was asked to offer him in sacrifice: he obeyed, and went forward against all hope. And this is our father Abraham, who goes forward, forward, forward; and when Jesus says Abraham saw his day, saw Jesus, he was full of joy. He saw Him in promise, he saw that joy of seeing the fullness of the promise of the covenant, the joy of seeing that God had not deceived him, that God is always faithful to His covenant.*

"I invite you today to take five minutes, ten minutes, to sit down — without the radio, without the television — to sit down and reflect on your own story: the blessings and the troubles, everything. The graces and the sins, everything. And to see there the faithfulness of that God who remained faithful to His covenant, remained faithful to the promise He made to Abraham, remained faithful to the salvation He promised in His Son, Jesus. I'm certain that in the midst of all of the perhaps ugly things — because we all have them, so many ugly things in this life — if we do this today, we will discover the beauty of the love of God, the beauty of His mercy, the beauty of hope. And I am sure that we will all be full of joy."

Leader: Let us take a few moments to reflect on our own story and God's faithfulness, as Pope Francis has invited us to do. (Give students some quiet moments to reflect.)

(Ask rhetorically) What times of grace, and even times of sin, do you see God revealing his faithfulness? (Give students some quiet moments to reflect.) As we close our time of prayer, I invite you to continue to reflect on our God who is faithful, merciful, and loving. (Turn on *Faithfulness* by Hillsong Worship)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8hhr1Oz0iw>