

Lord, Increase Our Faith

This prayer service is best used at the conclusion of Chapters 1 and 2 of *Jesus Christ: His Mission and Ministry*.

Have taper candles available.

Responding to God's Word

Leader: Faithful God, stand firm by us. Walk beside us. Assure us of your deep faith in us. Lead us to deeper faith in you, in Jesus, and in one another.

Reader 1: Jesus said, "Have faith in God. Amen, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it shall be done for him. Therefore I tell you, all that you ask for in prayer, believe that you will receive it and it shall be yours" (Mark 11:22-24).

Leader: Aspiring to the faith that moves mountains, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: That our faith may be strong, O God. Help us keep faith with our families and faith with our friends. Hear us as we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: When we take ourselves too seriously and refuse to depend on you, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: In Jesus who was faithful to God, to himself, and to us, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: With gratitude for our ancestors in the faith, Abraham, the prophets, Mary, the Apostles, and all other women and men on whose faithful shoulders we stand, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Reader 2: Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me (John 12:44).

Leader: Seeking the faith that leads to greater faith, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: When we are tempted to turn away from you and turn into ourselves, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: When others mock us and tell us our faith is foolish, we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Leader: Every day of our lives, hear us as we pray . . .

All: Lord, increase our faith.

Reader 3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in Heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time. In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of [your] faith, the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:3-9).

Taper Blessing

Leader: Gracious God, at our Baptism, each of us received a candle whose flame symbolized our sharing in Christ's Paschal Mystery—his suffering, death, resurrection, and glorification.

The Leader presents each person a lighted candle, saying:

Leader: (Name), be a faithful light for others. Show them the way to the Light of the World.

After everyone has received a lighted candle, the Leader continues.

Leader: Let us give voice to our faith, and renew the promises of Baptism: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of Heaven and earth?

All: I do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: I do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

All: I do believe.

Leader: This is our faith, the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it and eager to live it.

All: Amen.

Leader: O God, you have called us to faith in you. See how this place glows with that faith. We give you thanks for taking a chance on us and sending us your Son, the Light of the World, Christ Jesus, who guides our steps and walks with us always on our journey of faith.

Concluding Hymn

Conclude with a hymn of faith such as "Faith of Our Fathers," "Without Seeing You," by David Haas, "We Walk by Faith," or "How Can I Keep from Singing."