

## Prayer Service for the Solidarity with the Poor

Use this complete prayer service with Chapter 10, Section 1 of *Your Life in Christ*. 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 *The Least of These* by Matt Maher on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgV5-gnnZG0>

### *Prayer Introduction*

One of the tenants of the Church's social teaching is solidarity. Solidarity is a view of both the dignity of each person, and the interdependence there is between all people on earth. You are not an isolated individual from the rest of society, but rather a member of circles of human society from your family and friends to being a global citizen.

Therefore, you have rights and responsibilities in these relationships of interdependence. This connects you deeply with not only those closest to you, but also to those who have less than you do. You have an obligation to do what you can to make these relationships as equal and just as possible so that all people can flourish. St. John Paul II said

[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all. (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38)

Today you will pray for a greater awareness and connection with all people. You will pray for justice and equality between people, and that you can have solidarity with the poor in how you live.

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Prayer Services

### *Opening Prayer*

**Leader:** (Have the students sit and begin with the Sign of the Cross.) Lord, we come together today to pray for a greater spirit of solidarity in our world and in our own hearts. Help us to be like you, Jesus, who though you were God, became one of us.

### *Song*

(Turn on *The Least of These* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgV5-gnnZG0>.)

### *Scripture Reading*

**Reader 1:** A reading from the Book of Genesis (Gn 4: 9).

Then the Lord asked Cain, Where is your brother Abel? He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

### *Reflection*

**Leader:** "Cain's question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' (Gn 4: 9), has global implications and is a special challenge for our time, touching not one brother but all our sisters and brothers. Are we responsible for the fate of the world's poor? Do we have duties to suffering people in far-off places? Must we respond to the needs of suffering refugees in distant nations? Are we keepers of the creation for future generations?"

For the followers of Jesus, the answer is yes. Indeed, we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers. As members of God's one human family, we acknowledge our duties to people in far-off places. We accept God's charge to care for all human life and for all creation. We have heard the Lord's command, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' In our linked and limited world, loving our neighbor has global implications. In faith, we know our neighbors live in Rwanda and Sudan, in East Timor and China, in Bosnia and Central America. Baptism, Confirmation, and continuing participation in the Body of Christ call

*Your Life in Christ: Foundations in Catholic Morality*

### *Prayer Services*

us to action for 'the least among us' without regard for boundaries or borders." (*Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U. S. Parishes, Unites States Catholic Conference*)

*Responsorial Verse*

**Reader 2:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

**All:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

**Reader 2:** A good name is more desirable than great riches, and high esteem, than gold and silver. Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is the maker of them all.

**All:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

**Reader 2:** The result of humility and fear of the Lord is riches, honor and life. The generous will be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

**All:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

**Reader 2:** Do not rob the poor because they are poor, nor crush the needy at the gate; For the Lord will defend their cause, and will plunder those who plunder them.

**All:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

**Reader 2:** The Lord loves the pure of heart; the person of winning speech has a king for a friend. The eyes of the Lord watch over the knowledgeable, but he defeats the projects of the faithless.

**All:** Rich and poor have a common bond: the Lord is maker of them all.

*Gospel Reading*

**Leader:** (Have the students stand.)

**Reader 3:** A reading from the Holy Gospel According to St. Luke (Lk 4: 16-21).  
*Your Life in Christ: Foundations in Catholic Morality*

Prayer Services

He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring glad tidings to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

#### *Intercessions*

**Leader:** As disciples of Christ, we now call upon these saints who are images of justice and solidarity. May they be in solidarity with us today. Please respond: pray for us!

**Reader 4:** St. Lawrence, who declared the poor, the sick, the widow and the orphan to be the true treasure of the Church, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

**Reader 5:** St. Francis and St. Clare, who saw the lures of power and wealth, and rejected it to be poor like Jesus, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

*Your Life in Christ: Foundations in Catholic Morality*

Prayer Services

**Reader 6:** St. Damien, whose solidarity with lepers ran so deep that it led him to live and die as one of them, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

**Reader 7:** St. Frances Cabrini, who tenderly loved the immigrant, reaching her care across America from the slums of New York to the dark mines of Colorado, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

**Reader 8:** St. Teresa of Calcutta, whose heart was moved with compassion to comfort and affirm the dignity of those cast aside, we ask,

**All:** pray for us!

**Reader 9:** St. Oscar Romero, who spoke out against the atrocities done to the poor of El Salvador and upon the body of Christ, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

**Reader 10:** Servant of God Dorothy Day, who challenged society to reach out to the stranger, to live in community with the poor and broken, we ask,

**All:** Pray for us!

**Leader:** All you saints, who walked in solidarity with all God's people, who brought the Gospel to our broken world, be with us in solidarity today,

**All:** Pray for us!

*Closing Prayer*

**Leader:** As we go forth, Lord, we take with us these intentions and a resolution to imitate your love of each person, especially the poor and forgotten. Help us to love as you have taught us.

**All:** Amen.

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Prayer Services