

## **Prayer For Those Who Most Need Our Support**

*(Pass out little hearts with "You are loved" on them)*

**Leader:** Grace and peace from our gracious God be yours. Let us take a moment to open the heart message before us and sit in silence with our God for a moment.

*Silence for a minute*

**Leader:** Let us pray. Lord God, you have called us to serve you in the midst of your people. We pray that we might serve with understanding hearts that we might know what is right. We pray that we might serve with a sense of being partners and pioneers in ministry that we might stand up with courage and creativity. Let us trust in your guidance as we vision the future, making visible your dream, respecting one another's gifts, moving forward with confidence in your presence that brings good even through our inadequacies. Strengthen us that we carry out your will. For this we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**All:** Amen.

### **Reading:**

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

(Matt:5:3-12)

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Response (All): Blessed are you, God of the Universe;**

**You have cast your fire on the earth.**

**Kindle it in our hearts, kindle it in our world.**

1. God of Justice, God of Struggle,  
through the resurrection of Jesus  
you delivered humankind

from the oppression of darkness,  
from death and from sin.  
You invite us to new life,  
to freedom and joy.

**Response (All): Blessed are you, God of the Universe;  
You have cast your fire on the earth.  
Kindle it in our hearts, kindle it in our world.**

2. As your Spirit in Jesus  
changed the course of salvation history,  
encourage us  
to transform those structures and institutions  
that demeans the dignity of your people,  
especially the homeless, the poor, the untouchables,  
those without power, without rights, without representation.

**Response (All): Blessed are you, God of the Universe;  
You have cast your fire on the earth.  
Kindle it in our hearts, kindle it in our world.**

3. Deliver us from our false selves,  
from our compulsions and unhealthy patterns,  
that keeps us from enjoying to the full  
the risen freedom that is our inheritance.  
Deliver us from fear, hate, prejudice, greed,  
and every desire to encroach upon our neighbor's life.  
As your daughters and sons,  
may we walk in the freedom of your light,  
free in all our relationships with each other.

**Response (All): Blessed are you, God of the Universe;  
You have cast your fire on the earth.  
Kindle it in our hearts, kindle it in our world.**

4. Liberating and Loving Friend,  
You sent Jesus to be our Just One and our Peace.  
Help our hearts to rest in him,  
especially when our peace is troubled by too many claims.  
Strengthen us to work for justice as prudently as we can  
and give us the humility to recognize our limitations.  
Should we grow weak and weary in the struggle,  
be at our side so that we may continue  
in the footsteps of your prophets  
who illumined the way to secure true justice.

**Response (All): Blessed are you, God of the Universe;  
You have cast your fire on the earth.  
Kindle it in our hearts, kindle it in our world.**

*(Response from: Canticles and Gathering Prayers)*

**Leader:** Let us now present our petitions to our God who calls us to care for the most vulnerable.

For our President and Congress, may they put partisan differences aside in order to quickly find wise and beneficial policies and practices to rebuild our economy, offering a path of recovery that does not forget the poorest among us, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For religious leaders, may they have the courage to bring us to a deep sense of solidarity and the wisdom to strengthen our bonds in community, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For financial experts, may they offer their expert advice and wisdom both to our country and to individuals so much in need of guidance, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the newly unemployed, may they find the support they need as they search for new jobs and may they find jobs that sustain and develop, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who have lost homes due to foreclosure, may they find housing and support that renews their dignity as well as provide a roof over them, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For single moms struggling to feed their children, may they find supportive communities and new means of making ends meet, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those in financial crisis, may they receive the guidance they need to put them on a path out of debt and may they gain the skills needed to manage in times of turmoil, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For retirees and all who have experienced losses in their retirement accounts, may they find ways of simplifying their lives and means of support for what they need, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our parish communities, may we be willing to sacrifice a little more in order to renew efforts to enhance the safety net of services we are able to offer to those in need in our larger community, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

May we have the courage to turn away from greed and self-interest and work for the common good, we pray...

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

**All:**

**O God, who made us in your image,  
You call us to live in community,  
Caring for all, but especially those in need.**

**Look with love on those of us  
    who are unemployed,  
    who are underemployed  
    who are called to be supportive community.**

**Help us to enjoy life together, realizing we are the Body of Christ.  
Help us to understand what kind of help we need to offer one another,  
    respecting the dignity of each person,  
    realizing the need of all to be full participants in society,**

**To find meaningful work that sustains life.**

**Guide the leaders of our country,  
that they may make wise decisions which will benefit us all.**

**We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord.**

**Amen.**