

Prayer Gathering for 30th Week of Ordinary Time

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**Creator of Every Person, Fashioner of the Universe,
your word tells us that your very identity is love
and that all you have made is dear to your heart.
Help us to share your love widely with all those you love.
May we love others, even those hard to love, simply because you do.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

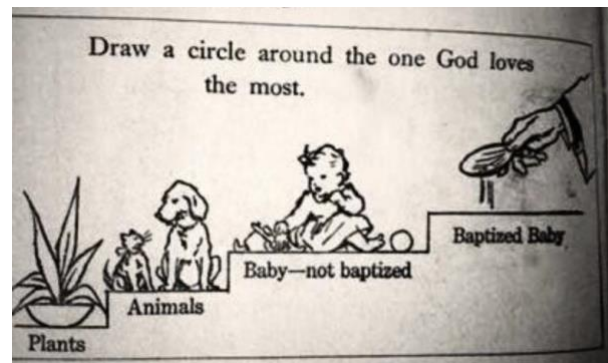
SHARING QUESTIONS

*"The LORD is a God of justice, who knows no favorites.
Though not unduly partial toward the weak, yet he hears the cry of the oppressed."*
**According to this, God has no favorites. How do you feel about that?
Have you ever believed God *did* have favorites? Were you a favorite? Why or why not?**

*"O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity -- greedy, dishonest,
adulterous -- or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my
whole income."*

**Do you think this man's prayer was sincere? Was he just bragging or did he truly
believe what he said? What's the problem with being proud of my spiritual successes?**

POSTED RECENTLY



(from a 1960s textbook in Ireland)

DISCUSSION

*"But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven
but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'"*

**Jewish tax collectors took money from their own people to pay their hostile
occupiers (the Romans) and were paid handsomely for it; a terrible sin.
Yet Jesus says the tax collector went home on good terms with God, while the
religious man displeased God. What does this tell you about God?**

What do you like about this story? What makes you uncomfortable?

LITANY

Why, God, did you create people whose inconsideration and selfishness angers me so?

God loves them and God loves me...

How, God, can you allow the cruel to keep living on without payback?

God loves them and God loves me...

Why, God, are some people blessed with more attractiveness and popularity than I have?

God loves them and God loves me...

How, God, can they get away with such dishonesty and greed?

God loves them and God loves me...

Why, God, did you give others gifts and talents I would kill for?

God loves them and God loves me...

How, God, can I be expected to respond to the needs of all the people who call out to me?

God loves them and God loves me...

Why, God, are some people born in places where there is so much want, when I am born here?

God loves them and God loves me...

How, God, can I know that my neighbor's prosperity doesn't lessen the blessings you intend for me?

God loves them and God loves me...

Why, God, do others have blessings that have always been out of my reach?

God loves them and God loves me...

How, God, can those who contribute little keep reaping the rewards I strive to hard to achieve?

God loves them and God loves me...

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already here, and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.

CLOSING PRAYER

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from a book of the prophet Sirach

The LORD is a God of justice,
who knows no favorites.

Though not unduly partial toward the weak,
yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.

The Lord is not deaf to the wail of the orphan,
nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint.

The one who serves God willingly is heard;
his petition reaches the heavens.

The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds;
it does not rest till it reaches its goal,
nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds,
judges justly and affirms the right,
and the Lord will not delay.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus addressed this parable
to those who were convinced of their own righteousness
and despised everyone else.

*"Two people went up to the temple area to pray;
one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.*

*The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to
himself,*

*'O God, I thank you
that I am not like the rest of humanity --
greedy, dishonest, adulterous --
or even like this tax collector.
I fast twice a week,
and I pay tithes on my whole income.'*

*But the tax collector stood off at a distance
and would not even raise his eyes to heaven
but beat his breast and prayed,
'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'*

I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former;

*for whoever exalts himself will be humbled,
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ

Luke, chapter 18