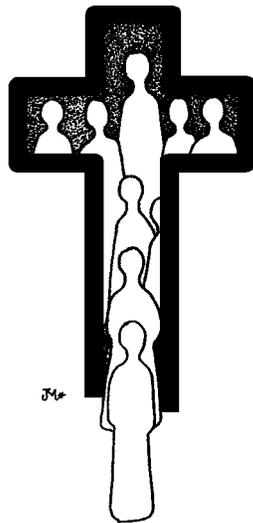


# Pastoral Council Prayers and Faith Sharing

**Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity**  
**– 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**2022**  
**Cycle C**



## AN INVITATION TO PRAY WITH YOUR PASTORAL COUNCIL

These opening and closing prayers have been prepared to help your pastoral council become what it is intended to be: a *leadership body* in *communion* with God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and focused on enabling the community to carry out the *mission* of the Church (to proclaim the Gospel, to worship God, to form community, and to serve especially those in need). As stated in the “Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines” of the Diocese of Rochester, the specific purposes of the pastoral council are:

- to develop a common vision and purpose, actively advocate for the poor and the powerless, and to extend Christian commitment to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities;
- to orchestrate a statement of mission for the parish community and become the reference point for activity in the parish;
- to provide recommendations for priorities, directions, and policies through pastoral planning for worship, evangelization, outreach, stewardship, etc.;
- to promote communication, understanding, and collaboration among parish organizations and between the parish, the diocese, and the universal Church.

In our rush to “get the business of the council done” we may forget that we are challenged to ongoing renewal through prayer, study, listening, and dialogue. Because of our familiarity with secular boards of directors, we may forget that we are a body of church leaders engaged with our pastor or pastoral administrator in discerning the ways God is speaking to this community in this time and place. For our actions to be imbued with the wisdom of God, they must begin with prayer, followed by listening to one another in faith and love and listening to the larger community of parishioners in similar faith and love, and end again in prayer.

And so you are invited and encouraged to set aside time at the beginning and end of your pastoral council meetings to use these prayers. The quality of your relationships with one another and the community at large and the quality of your decisions will be enhanced as you take time for shared prayer in God’s presence.

Peace and blessings,

Shannon Kilbridge, Ph.D.  
Associate Director  
Department of Pastoral Services

## Hints for the Prayer Leader

It may be helpful to designate a different person on your council to lead prayer for each meeting. In this way, more and more of the leaders of your community will gain experience with leading prayer in small groups.

### Preparation before the Pastoral Council meeting

1. Read through the prayer session for the Sunday following your meeting. Become familiar with it.
2. Make enough copies of the prayer for all you expect to attend the meeting. You may distribute these at the beginning of the meeting or send them out to members ahead of time along with the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting.
3. If a visual image is suggested for this particular prayer session, bring it to the meeting if possible. Having an image in the center of the gathering will help members remember throughout the evening that the meeting unfolds in God's presence.

### A Walk Through the Prayer Outline

*Prayer at the beginning of the meeting (allow 10-15 minutes on your agenda):*

1. Invite those present to become quiet and remember that they are in the presence of God. After a brief pause, begin the **Invitation to Prayer**.
2. Either read the **Scripture** passage yourself or have someone else do so (ask them before the meeting begins).
3. Allow several minutes for **silent reflection** and consideration of the faith sharing questions.
4. Invite those present to respond (in groups of two or three or in the larger council group) to any of the suggested **questions for faith sharing** out loud. People may also choose to share how the reading spoke to them in general. All do not need to respond but allow silent pauses so that people can reflect comfortably.
5. Go on to the beginning of your meeting's agenda.

*Prayer at the end of the meeting (allow 5 minutes on your agenda):*

1. Begin the **intercessory prayers** as written in the prayer session.
2. Invite others to share their own prayers aloud.
3. When all who choose to share prayers are done, say "For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts."
4. Begin the **closing prayer**.

## Notes

1. The intercessory prayers may be moved to the end of the “prayer at the beginning of the meeting” or offered in the middle of the meeting—as well as at the end as suggested in the prayer sessions.
2. These prayer sessions, while designed for pastoral councils, can be used at the meetings of the parish staff and other parish committees with minor adaptation.

### ***Faith Sharing Guidelines***

Each person is led by God on his or her personal spiritual journey. Faith sharing refers to shared reflections on the action of God in one’s experience as related to Scripture and faith. Faith sharing is not discussion, problem solving, or scripture study. The purpose is an encounter, between a person in the concrete circumstances of life and the Word of God, which leads to a conversion of heart. The entire faith sharing process is seen as prayer, i.e. listening to the Word of God as revealed in scripture and in each other’s experience.

1. Participants are given time to reflect before sharing begins, and a period of comfortable silence might occur between individuals sharing. Silence is a vital part of the total process of faith sharing.
2. Sharing is optional. Each person shares at the time and on the level where he or she feels comfortable.
3. There is no set order for sharing (you do not need to go in a circle around the group).
4. Listen respectfully and openly. If someone does not hear the sharing or does not understand, he or she can ask for clarification.
5. There is no discussion or commenting on what is shared. An appropriate response from the prayer leader or group might be a smile, a nod, or a “thank you.”
6. The prayer leader and group are not there as “problem solvers” or “advice givers.”
7. Participants are encouraged to share in the first person (I feel...I believe...etc.).
8. Anything that is shared in the group is confidential and does not leave the group. It is meant to be a gift for this group only.

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity  
June 12, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

**Invitation to Prayer**

Leader:        Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

**All:            to God who is, who was, and who is to come.  
                 Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Scripture Reading: Jn 16:12-15**

Jesus said to his disciples:  
"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.  
But when he comes, the Spirit of truth,  
he will guide you to all truth.  
He will not speak on his own,  
but he will speak what he hears,  
and will declare to you the things that are coming.  
He will glorify me,  
because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.  
Everything that the Father has is mine;  
for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine  
and declare it to you."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***Silent Reflection***

***Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two for faith sharing)***

1. *How do we live as a people who reflect the love of God?*
2. *How can we grow in the relationships in our families and our faith communities to better reflect God's love?*
3. *How can we as a faith community expand our love and care to all of creation?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### ***Intercessory Prayers***

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For wisdom and strength for our Pastoral Council, that when faced with challenging relationships or demands we are able to fully witness to the love of our Lord. We pray to the Lord...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### ***Closing Prayer***

**All: We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
Amen. Alleluia.**

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ  
June 19, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord;  
whoever eats this bread will live forever.

**All: We praise you, Jesus our Christ.**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 9:11b-17*

Jesus spoke to the crowds about the kingdom of God, and he healed those who needed to be cured.

As the day was drawing to a close, the Twelve approached him and said, "Dismiss the crowd so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms and find lodging and provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."

He said to them, "Give them some food yourselves." They replied, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have, unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people."

Now the men there numbered about five thousand. Then he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty." They did so and made them all sit down. Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

They all ate and were satisfied. And when the leftover fragments were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## *Silent Reflection*

### *Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two for faith sharing)*

1. *How does our faith community become what we eat, in the celebration of the Eucharist?*
2. *How can we better feed those who are hungry, physically or spiritually?*
3. *How does this gospel passage relate to the work we will do tonight?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For those who hunger for the Real Presence of Christ, that our community may be a place of welcome and witness, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Jesus, our Living Bread,  
you nourish your people by sharing your whole self with us.  
Teach us how to reach out to others in need in a life-giving,  
hope-filled way.  
Amen.**

**13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**June 26, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader:        Look after us, God, we take shelter in you.

**All:            You are our inheritance, O Lord.**

*Scripture Reading: Galatians 5:1, 13-18*

Brothers and sisters:

For freedom Christ set us free;

    so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery.

For you were called for freedom, brothers and sisters.

But do not use this freedom

    as an opportunity for the flesh;

    rather, serve one another through love.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement,

    namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

But if you go on biting and devouring one another,

    beware that you are not consumed by one another.

I say, then: live by the Spirit

    and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh has desires against the Spirit,

    and the Spirit against the flesh;

    these are opposed to each other,

    so that you may not do what you want.

But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Silent Reflection*

***Questions for Faith Sharing*** (choose one or two for faith sharing)

1. *What do you think St. Paul means by freedom in this passage? Is his understanding different from other definitions you've heard?*
2. *For St. Paul, "flesh" does not refer simply to sexual immorality but to any form of selfishness. How does selfishness challenge us as individuals and as a church community?*

**Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

***Intercessory Prayers***

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For all people of goodwill, that they continue to repent for wrongdoings and put their faith in the mercy of the Lord, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That we as individuals and as a church community grow in our desire and ability to follow God's will for our lives, we pray...

**All: God of love, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts ...

**All: God of love, hear our prayer.**

***Closing Prayer***

**All: Our Father...**

**14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**July 3, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

**All: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Leader: May the Spirit enlighten the eyes of our hearts,  
That we may know what is the hope that belongs to our call.

**All: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 10: 1-9*

At that time the Lord appointed seventy-two others  
whom he sent ahead of him in pairs  
to every town and place he intended to visit.  
He said to them,  
"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few;  
so ask the master of the harvest  
to send out laborers for his harvest.  
Go on your way;  
behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.  
Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals;  
and greet no one along the way.  
Into whatever house you enter, first say,  
'Peace to this household.'  
If a peaceful person lives there,  
your peace will rest on him;  
but if not, it will return to you.  
Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you,  
for the laborer deserves his payment.  
Do not move about from one house to another.  
Whatever town you enter and they welcome you,  
eat what is set before you,  
cure the sick in it and say to them,  
'The kingdom of God is at hand for you.'"

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

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## *Silent Reflection*

### *Questions for Faith Sharing*

1. *Why do you think Jesus ordered the apostles to take so little with them on their journey?*
2. *What partners has Jesus given us to assist us in our discipleship?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That we, as missionary disciples, have the courage to share the Good News far and wide, we pray:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

(The leader may add prayers that address subjects/concerns dealt with in this evening's meeting.)

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

Leader: May the peace of Christ fill our hearts, our homes, and our community.

**All: Amen.**

**15<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**July 10, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life: you have the words of everlasting life.

All: **Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 10:25 - 37*

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test Jesus and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

He said in reply, "*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*"

He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live." But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied,  
"A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.  
But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him.  
The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction,  
'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.'  
Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?"  
He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### ***Questions for Faith Sharing***

1. *As I listen to the parable of the Good Samaritan, with which character do I most connect today? How so?*
2. *What are the obstacles for us, individually and as a community, to being a Good Samaritan? How can we work to overcome those obstacles?*

### ***Intercessory Prayers***

Leader: Lord God, we thank you for all the times you challenged us to see those in need, even when we might struggle with responding well. Give us the strength to reach out to those in our midst, for this we pray to the Lord...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: For what else shall we pray...

(When all who choose are finished voicing prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

**All: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.**

**O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen. *(Peace Prayer of St. Francis)***

**16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**July 17, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: Blessed are they who, when they have heard the word, embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance.

All: **Alleluia.**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 10:38 - 42*

Jesus entered a village  
where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him.  
She had a sister named Mary  
who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak.  
Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said,  
"Lord, do you not care  
that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving?  
Tell her to help me."  
The Lord said to her in reply,  
"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things.  
There is need of only one thing.  
Mary has chosen the better part  
and it will not be taken from her."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Silent Reflection*

**Questions for Faith Sharing**

1. *Who are the "Marthas" and "Marys" in our lives? What can we learn from each?*
2. *Do we as a council spend time listening at the feet of Christ? Do we balance the work we are called to do with time for contemplation and reflection? If not, how can spend more time listening to our Lord?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For all who serve others in any capacity, that they do so humbly and with loving kindness. We pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Good and gracious God,  
it is through your Son Jesus that we learn  
the meaning of true love and service.  
May we always listen at the feet of Christ. Amen.**

**17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**July 24, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: Alleluia, give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!  
All: **Alleluia, give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!**

Leader: Make known God's deeds among the peoples.  
All: **Alleluia, give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!**

Leader: Sing to God! Sing praises to God!  
All: **Alleluia, give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!**

Leader: Glory in God's holy name.  
All: **Alleluia, give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name!**  
*(from Psalm 105)*

*Scripture Reading: Luke 11: 1 - 4*

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him,  
"Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say:  
Father, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come.  
Give us each day our daily bread  
and forgive us our sins  
for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us,  
and do not subject us to the final test."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Silent Reflection*

*Questions for Faith Sharing*

1. *What does it mean to me to call God "Father"?*
2. *How do we, individually and as a people of faith, show the forgiveness that God has shown us to others?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### ***Intercessory Prayers***

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.  
For those in leadership positions in our church, that they may continue to  
proclaim the mercy and compassion of our Father, we pray to the Lord...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### ***Closing Prayer***

Leader: Loving God,  
We come to you today and always with an open heart, hoping to do your  
will. Grant that we may come to know you more fully and share your  
mercy with others.

**All: Amen.**

**18<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**July 31, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts  
All: **Open my Ears to Your Word, Lord**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 12:13- 21*

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus,  
“Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me.”  
He replied to him,  
“Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?”  
Then he said to the crowd,  
“Take care to guard against all greed,  
for though one may be rich,  
one’s life does not consist of possessions.”

Then he told them a parable.  
“There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest.  
He asked himself, ‘What shall I do,  
for I do not have space to store my harvest?’  
And he said, ‘This is what I shall do:  
I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones.  
There I shall store all my grain and other goods  
and I shall say to myself, ‘Now as for you,  
you have so many good things stored up for many years,  
rest, eat, drink, be merry!’”  
But God said to him,  
‘You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you;  
and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?’  
Thus will it be for all who store up treasure for themselves  
but are not rich in what matters to God.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Silent Reflection*

### *Questions for Faith Sharing*

1. *What do we hold on to which we should let go so we may better serve God?*
2. *How can we better share our gifts and resources with those who are in need??*

### **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

#### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

For those who struggle to meet their basic needs, that we may see and respond to them, we pray.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...  
(When all those who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

#### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Good and gracious God,  
we ask you to increase our faith  
and help us to imitate Christ more closely  
so that others will be drawn to a life of faith and discipleship.  
We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**19<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**August 7, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

**Invitation to Prayer**

Leader:            Good and gracious God,  
                         Give us the courage and strength we need  
                         to bear the name “Christian”  
                         and to become the faithful example of Christ  
                         in our homes, schools, and workplaces each day.  
                         We ask this through the one who loved us to his death  
                         and brought us to new life.

**All:                Amen.**

***Scripture Reading: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-12***

Brothers and sisters:  
Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.  
Because of it the ancients were well attested.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; he went out, not knowing where he was to go.

By faith he sojourned in the promised land as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs of the same promise; for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and maker is God.

By faith he received power to generate, even though he was past the normal age - and Sarah herself was sterile - for he thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy. So it was that there came forth from one man, himself as good as dead, descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands on the seashore.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Silent Reflection***

***Questions for Faith Sharing*** (choose one or two for faith sharing)

1. *How do we express our understanding of faith? How boldly do we proclaim our faith colleagues and friends?*
2. *How could an outsider know that this pastoral council was about the work of Christ?*
3. *What are some of the ways, other than prayer, in which we can express our faith during our meeting tonight?*

**Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

***Intercessory Prayers***

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.  
That church leaders and all the baptized delve into our faith, that we may better share it with others, we pray:

**All: Christ, our Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them.  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Christ, our Lord, hear our prayer.**

***Closing Prayer***

**All: Compassionate God,  
send your Holy Spirit to enliven our faith, strengthen our resolve,  
and increase the fortitude we need to live your Word.  
Grant this through the One in whose name we live. Amen.**

**20<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**August 14, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*The format of this week's prayer combines silent reflection on the Scripture reading and faith sharing with intercessory prayers. The leader needs to make sure that it is clear to everyone how the flow of the prayer will progress.*

***Invitation to Prayer***

Leader: Lord Jesus,  
we thank you for gathering us together  
to listen to your Word, to listen to and with each other.

**All: Christ Jesus, guide us in our prayer.**

Leader: The flow of our prayer tonight will go like this:  
I will read the Scripture passage in its entirety. There will be a brief period of silence to rest in God's Word. Then I will repeat the reading, one sentence at a time. Each sentence will be followed by silence. Out of that silent reflection anyone who wishes to speak a comment or prayer of intercession is invited to do so.  
This pattern--the sentence from Scripture--silence--spoken prayer--is repeated until we complete the passage.

***Scripture Reading: Hebrews 12:1-4***

Brothers and sisters: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.

For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God.

Consider how he endured such opposition from sinners, in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood.

**Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting:**

**All: Lord Jesus,  
hold us safely in your care and sustain us that we may not lose heart.**

**Holy Spirit of Eternal Life, abide in us,  
now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**21<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**August 21, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: Christ Jesus, you are the Way, the Truth and the Life

All: **Guide our journey that we may live Your Word.**

*Scripture Reading: Luke 13:22-30*

Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?"

He answered them,

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has risen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying,

'Lord, open the door for us.'

He will say to you in reply,

'I do not know where you are from.'

And you will say,

'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.'

Then he will say to you,

'I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!'

And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out. And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.

For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Silent Reflection*

*Questions for Faith Sharing*

- 1) *How does this community show that we live as we believe? What are some challenges that we see in our community to being authentic disciples?*
- 2) *What can our council do to support our community as its members strive to more fully live lives of faith?*

## Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: In confidence we now offer God our prayers and our needs.

That we continue to reach out to those who are on the fringes of society and of our church by showing our loving kindness at all times, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts,  
we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Good and gracious God,  
we ask your blessing upon our efforts to integrate our faith into our  
everyday lives.  
Help us to live up to our baptismal call  
to spread the love of Christ to all those we encounter. Amen.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C**  
**August 28, 2022**

**Prayer at the Beginning of the Meeting**

***Invitation to Prayer***

Leader:        God of all,  
you have placed us in a position of trust,  
a position of service.  
Help us to welcome all people to your house.  
Help us to understand their needs  
so that we might serve them,  
and through them, serve you.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus.

**All:            Amen.**

***Scripture Reading: Luke 14:12-14***

Then he said to the host who invited him,  
"When you hold a lunch or a dinner,  
do not invite your friends or your brothers or sisters  
or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors,  
in case they may invite you back and you have repayment.  
Rather, when you hold a banquet,  
invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind;  
blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you.  
For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***Silent Reflection***

***Questions for Faith Sharing (choose one or two for faith sharing)***

- 1) *Who are the people who come to our church? What are the issues they are dealing with? What are their hopes? What are their fears?*
- 2) *Do we make everyone who comes feel welcome? What are some practical ways that we, as Pastoral Council members, can do this?*
- 3) *How can we, as Pastoral Council members, help our community reach out and invite those who are in need into our midst? How can we serve the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind?*

## **Prayer at the Conclusion of the Meeting**

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: God is the ultimate host—the one we can turn to in our need, the one who provides a banquet of love for us. Let us turn to our loving God with our hopes and concerns. Please reply “Lord, hear our prayer,” to our petitions.

For our church, that we might offer a warm welcome to all who long for the sacrament of love and life, we pray:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our nation, that we might care for those who are most vulnerable in our society and world, we pray:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

(The leader may add or invite prayers that address the concerns dealt with in this meeting.)

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...

(When all who choose to share are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts, we pray:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Loving God,  
having received the banquet of life  
through your gracious Son,  
we are called to offer its fruits,  
in turn, to all who come to our door.  
It is not an easy task.  
Grant us the vision to see you in the people who come to us,  
especially the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, and the difficult.  
Grant us the courage to love your people,  
and the grace to provide them what they need.  
We ask this as we ask all things  
+in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**