



# Liturgy & Prayer

## Liturgy and Prayer Suggestions

One of the most profound ways that we can welcome and embrace diversity in the Church is to include the cultural signs, symbols, music, and languages of immigrants, migrants, refugees, and other ethnic communities into our worship services.

By interacting with diverse people who make up our parish community, we are strengthened in our “catholicity” and are made more aware that we are one in Christ, who has called us “from every tribe and tongue, people and nation” (Rev 5:9).

Old Testament

New Testament

Sample Intersessions

Music Suggestions

Prayer Service

### READINGS FOR SPECIAL LITURGIES AND PRAYER SERVICES

#### OLD TESTAMENT

##### Exodus 23: 9

You must not oppress the stranger; you know how a stranger feels, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt.

##### Leviticus 19: 32-34

If a stranger lives with you in your land, do not molest him. You must count him as one of your own countrymen and love him as yourself—for you were once strangers yourselves in Egypt. I am Yahweh your God.

##### Tobit 4: 7-8

Set aside part of your goods for almsgiving. Never turn your face from any poor man and God will never turn his from you.

##### Psalms 82: 2-4

No more mockery of justice, no more favoring of the wicked! Let the weak and the orphan have justice, be fair to the wretched and destitute; rescue the weak and needy, save them from the clutches of the wicked!

##### Psalms 103: 6

Yahweh, who does what is right, is always on the side of the oppressed.

##### Proverbs 31: 8-9

Speak, yourself, on behalf of the dumb, on behalf of all the unwanted; speak, yourself, pronounce a just verdict, uphold the rights of the poor, of the needy.

##### Ecclesiasticus 4: 8-9

To the poor man lend an ear, and return his greeting courteously. Save the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor, and do not be mean-spirited in your judgements.

##### Isaiah 10: 1-2

Woe to the legislators of infamous laws, to those who issue tyrannical decrees, who refuse justice to the unfortunate and cheat the poor among my people of their rights, who make widows their prey, and rob the orphan.

##### Isaiah 61: 1-2

The spirit of the Lord Yahweh has been given to me, for Yahweh has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to the captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from Yahweh.

##### Jeremiah 22: 3-4

Yahweh says this: Practise honesty and integrity; rescue the man who has been wronged from the hands of his oppressor; do not exploit the stranger, the orphan, the widow; do no violence, shed no innocent blood in this place.

##### Micah 6: 8

What is good has been explained to you; this is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God.

##### Zechariah 7: 8-11

(The word of Yahweh was addressed to Zechariah as follows:) He said: Apply the law fairly, and practise kindness and compassion toward each other. Do not oppress the widow and the orphan, the settler and the poor man, and do not secretly plan evil against one another.



# JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS *a journey of hope*

## NEW TESTAMENT

### Matthew 25: 35-40

For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me; sick and you visited me; in prison and you came to see me.  
... I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.

### Mark 12: 30-31

This is the first [commandment]...you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

### Luke 4: 18-19

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.  
He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

### Galatians 3: 28

... there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

### Philippians 2: 5-8

In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:  
His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.

### Colossians 3: 12-13

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience.

### 1 John 4: 19-21

Anyone who says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, is a liar, since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen. So this is the commandment that he has given us, that anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

## SAMPLE INTERSESSIONS

The following intercessions may all be used together for a special liturgy, or particular intercessions may be chosen for use throughout the liturgical year.

- † For an end to the violence and poverty that displaces so many people from their homes and homelands, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer.
- † For our leaders, that they may implement policies that allow for safe migration, just migrant working conditions, and an end to the detention of asylum seekers, while protecting our national safety, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For migrant workers, that they may labor in safe and justice conditions, and that we who benefit from their labor may be truly grateful for what they provide, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For unaccompanied migrant children, that they may be protected from all harm and reunited with loving families, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For an end to human trafficking, that the dignity of all of God's children will be protected, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For migrants, refugees, and strangers in our midst, that they may find hope in our concern for justice and feel the warmth of our love, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For our community, gathered here today to celebrate our unity under the Lord and his mother, Mary, that we may come to greater understanding and acceptance of our differences, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For all those who are overwhelmed by loneliness, poverty, and despair, that they may be comforted through our help and kindness, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer
- † For those in special need, that the Lord in his divine mercy may heal the sick, comfort the dying, and keep travelers safe, we pray to the Lord.  
*Response:* Lord hear our prayer

## MUSIC SUGGESTIONS

- “In Christ There Is No East or West” *by John Oxenham*  
“One Spirit, One Church” *by Kevin Keil*  
“Pan de Vida” *by Bob Hurd*  
“Service” *by Buddy Ceaser (NARL)*  
“They’ll Know We Are Christians” *by Peter Scholtes*  
“E Na Lima Hana” *by David Haas and Joe Camacho*  
“We Are Many Parts” *by Marty Haugen*  
“Weave One Heart” *by Marty Haugen*  
“Diverse in Culture, Race and Nation” *by Ruth Duck*  
“We Are Called” *by David Haas*  
“Song of the Body of Christ” *by David Haas*  
“Let There Be Peace On Earth” *by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson*

## PRAYER SERVICE

“You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt.” (Lv 19:33-34)

### HYMN:

Add a suitable hymn, using suggestions from the preceding section.

### SCRIPTURAL READING:

Choose a scriptural passage from the preceding section (such as stories of Exodus, of the Holy Family in Bethlehem, or of their flight to Egypt, or Matthew’s Gospel.)

### AN ALIEN’S PRAYER

#### Leader:

I wear the mark of your disapproval  
and your often unspoken words  
pierce straight to my soul,  
“Why didn’t you stay where you belong?”

I feel the icy stare that says,  
“Keep your distance, you foreigner,  
with your different-colored skin  
and your strange-sounding speech,  
with your culture, food, religion, and clothing  
that are inferior to my own.”

I’m an immigrant, a wetback, an alien,  
an outsider operating a sweatshop sewing machine;  
cheap labor, unwanted or dirty jobs  
are mine for the taking;

I’m one of the countless invisible ones  
who puts fresh vegetables on your plate  
or stitches the fashion dresses and shirts  
that you buy in your stylish stores.

As Moses of old once said,  
“Remember, you were once aliens  
in the land of Egypt,”  
remember that your grandfathers and grandmothers  
were immigrant unwantedes,  
were exploited cheap labor,  
second-class citizens,  
uneducated and poor,  
used and abused,  
ignored or looked down upon  
for their foreign religion, speech, and food.



# JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS *a journey of hope*

The White House  
first house of this great land,  
says it well:  
White is this land of promise;  
no room for other colors or creeds.  
Someday we'll paint the first house  
in rainbow colors—  
someday, not long from now.

## **All:**

Dear God, help us to remember  
that when we speak of immigrants and refugees,  
we speak of Christ.  
In the One who had no place to lay his head,  
and in the least of his brothers and sisters,  
you come to us again, a stranger seeking refuge.  
We confess that we often turn away.

## **REFLECTION:**

The prayer leader or another designate may wish to provide a guided reflection or instruction on “An Alien’s Prayer” and the chosen scriptural reading (help can be found in the enclosed Suggestions for Homilists) or the leader may wish to engage the participants in a guided group discussion on the prayer and reading.

## **INTERSESSIONS:**

The prayer leader may wish to incorporate intercessions from the preceding section or to ask the participants to offer spontaneous prayers for their intentions.

## **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Our God, you have given us in your word  
the stories of persons who needed to leave  
their homelands—Abraham, Sarah, Ruth, Moses.

You have chosen that the life of Jesus be filled with  
events of unplanned travel and flight from enemies.  
You have shown us through the modeling of Jesus  
how we are called to relate to persons from  
different nations and cultures.

You have called us to be teachers of your word.  
We ask you, our God, to open our minds and hearts  
to the challenge and invitation to model  
your perfect example of love. Amen.

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