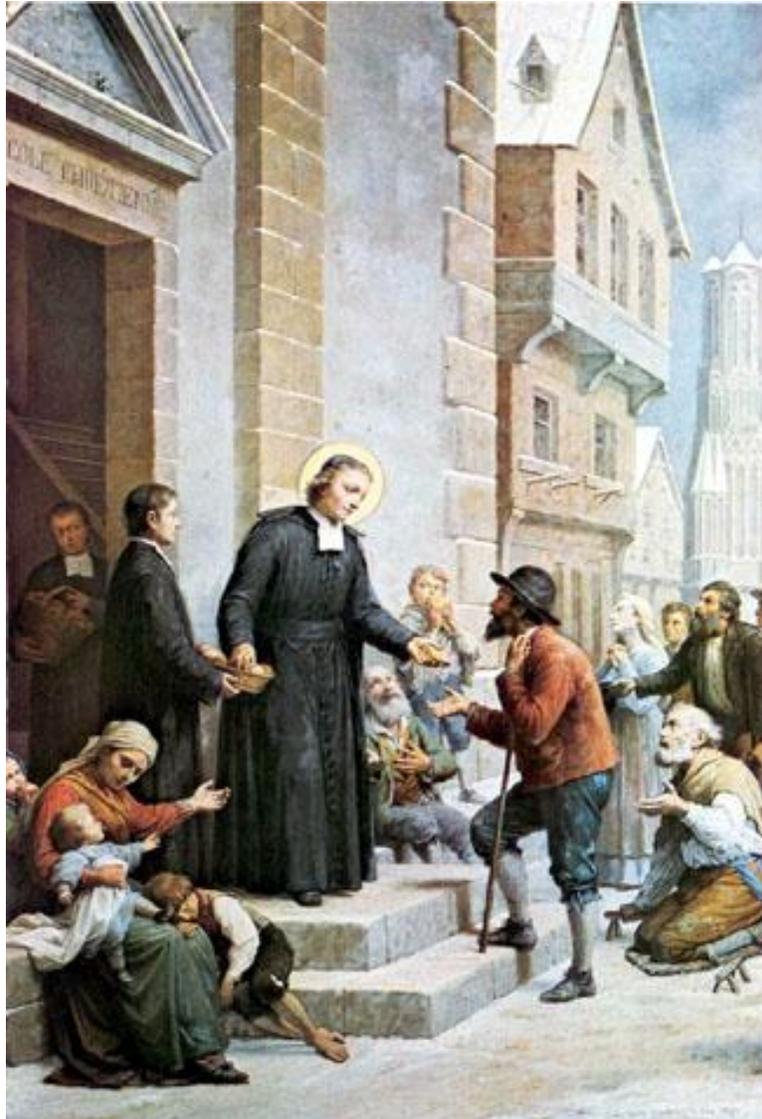


Community Prayer Services

Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies



Cycle Two

2012

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Introduction & Explanation

Morning Prayers

The ten Morning Prayer services that have been prepared for our use during the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies in 2012 are intentionally of a similar format, one that closely parallels **the triple movement of the method of Lasallian interior prayer**. For those who are interested, a brief explanation of this method has been included with these prayer services.

Each prayer service begins with a moment – **the first movement** – in which we spend some time “recalling the presence of God.” Ordinarily, we begin with a song, the words of which recall God’s presence, or with a brief sung Lasallian invocation.

Each prayer service then invites us to spend some time “reflecting on our Lasallian identity” – **the second movement**. Normally, two related readings are provided to assist in this reflection; and we recite together an antiphonal response between the two readings. An art image often accompanies one or other of the readings, and a brief pause for quiet reflection is proposed after the second reading.

Each prayer service concludes with some time – **the third movement** – spent “recommitting to Lasallian mission.” This movement begins with intercessory prayer; and here we are invited to share aloud our prayers of praise, thanksgiving, pardon, or petition after the reader invites: “For whom or for what else shall we pray?” Finally, we have the common recitation of a closing prayer; and each of these prayers, which we say together and by association with fellow Lasallians, asks for divine assistance and is an expression of our re-commitment to the Lasallian educational mission. A very slight pause at the end of each line of the prayer would keep the closing prayer from being rushed and add to a more prayerful and reflective conclusion of our time together as a community gathered in the presence of God.

Evening Prayers

The ten Evening Prayer services that have been prepared for our use during the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies in 2012 are, also, intentionally of a similar format.

Each begins with a **call to worship**, by using the same simple formula, and invites us to enter into a period of quiet reflection in God’s presence.

Then, we are invited to consider one or other aspect of discipleship by centering on a modern personage – **a reflection on a modern icon** – who embodies some aspect of gospel living. An image of the person accompanies the prayer service, as is a reading from the writings of that person. The reading is focused and not too long.

The prayers, which come at the end of a long day and after an evening spent in study and discussion, are intentionally reflective and meditative rather than wordy or interactive. Some recorded instrumental music will be played after the reading, and this quiet music will last for

about three to five minutes. A question is provided as a possible stimulus to personal reflection during the quiet that follows the reading.

Each concludes with the common recitation of a **closing prayer**; and each of these prayers, which we say together and by association with fellow Lasallians, asks for divine assistance and is an expression of our re-commitment to the Lasallian educational mission. A very slight pause at the end of each line of the prayer would keep the closing prayer from being rushed and add to a more prayerful and reflective conclusion of our time together as a community gathered in the presence of God.

Acknowledgements

These prayer services, which were prepared by Tina Bonacci, Brother William Mann, Susannah Nelson, and Lynn Streefland, will hopefully provide you with some usable or adaptable prayer resources when you return to your communities and ministries. Monique Gougeon kindly prepared the watercolor picture on the cover and the sketches that accompany the evening prayer services.

Please note that this is the second cycle of prayer services prepared for use at the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies and that these prayer services are a work-in-progress. Some consideration is being given to revise them and to prepare a third cycle of similar prayer services for use in 2013.

The Presence of God

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...

All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

2. Song "Open My Eyes"

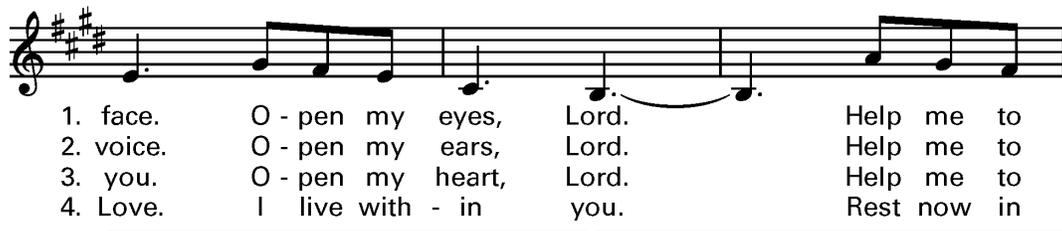
OPEN MY EYES

Jesse Manibusan

Verses



1. O - pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your
2. O - pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your
3. O - pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love like
4. I live with - in you. Deep in your heart, O



1. face. O - pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to
2. voice. O - pen my ears, Lord. Help me to
3. you. O - pen my heart, Lord. Help me to
4. Love. I live with - in you. Rest now in

1, 2, Final | 3 to Bridge



1. see. 3. love.
2. hear.
4. me.

Bridge



And the first shall be last, and our eyes are o - pened, and we'll



hear like nev-er be-fore. And we'll speak in new ways, and we'll

to Verse 4



see God's face in plac-es we've nev-er known.

Text: Based on Mark 8:22-25. Text and music © 1988, 1998, Jesse Manibusan.
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Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

3. Reading Luke 24:28-31

So they [the Emmaus disciples and Jesus] drew near to the village to which they were going. Jesus appeared to be going further; but they constrained him saying, "Stay with us for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight.

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response An "Emmaus Psalm" by Ed Hays in *Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim*

Side One: How easily, O Christ,
do I long for a firsthand touch from you,
my friend and Savior, risen and glorious, victorious over death,
radiant with luminous life.

Side Two: Oh, how easily does my yearning arise
to have been one of those in the upper room
when you returned in resurrected form.

Side One: I know that my faith would be strong
if, like Mary in the garden,
I had reached out to hug your living presence on Easter morning.

Side Two: I do not doubt the quality of my zeal
had I broken bread with you
at the sunset inn on the Emmaus road.

Side One: It's not easy to be among the living faithful
fed by second-hand accounts of your resurrection visits,
even though they have been passed on with loving care
for millenniums mouth-to-mouth.

Side Two: But I take hope today...
that I too can taste and feel
your fulfilled promise:
"I am with you always, even to the end."

Side One: Every time I break bread with friends or strangers
or encounter kindness on my daily by-roads,

when I am visited by you
even though my inner doors are locked in fear,
let my heart be as open as the horizon
for the feast of an Easter visit from you, my Risen Savior.

6. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
7. Reading from the writings of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (Unknown Source)

A girl came from outside India to join the Missionaries of Charity. We have a rule that the very next day the new arrivals must go to the Home for the Dying. So I told this girl: “You saw Father during Holy Mass, with what love and care he touched Jesus in the host. Do the same when you go to the Home for the Dying, because it is the same Jesus that you will find there in the broken bodies of the poor.” And she went. After three hours, the newcomer came back to me and said with a big smile – I have never seen a smile quite like that – “Mother, I have been touching the body of Christ for three hours.” And I said to her: “How – what did you do?” She replied: “When we arrived there, they brought a man who had fallen into a drain and been there for some time. He was covered with wounds and dirt and maggots, and I cleaned him; and I knew that I was touching the body of Christ.”

8. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

9. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: God of all life and truth, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: God of all kindness and gentleness, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: God of all honesty and goodness, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: God of all healing and compassion, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: God of all beauty and peace, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: God of all joy and love, we pray...
All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?
[Response: Hear our prayer.]

10. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

Side One: God of love, we ask for a greater awareness
of your continued presence here now in our midst
and in every place where we find ourselves
in the days and months ahead.

Side Two: Help us always to remember your presence
and to remain open to the possibility of meeting you
in every person that we encounter.

Side One: Fill us with the courage, despite our moments of uncertainty,
to remain focused on the mission of your kingdom
and to remain committed to the pursuit of your reign
and the accomplishment of your will.

Side Two: We re-dedicate ourselves to love one another
and to speak the truth in love to one another,
remembering the encounter on the Emmaus road
and daring to hope to meet you
among those with whom we journey.

All: Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Jean Vanier

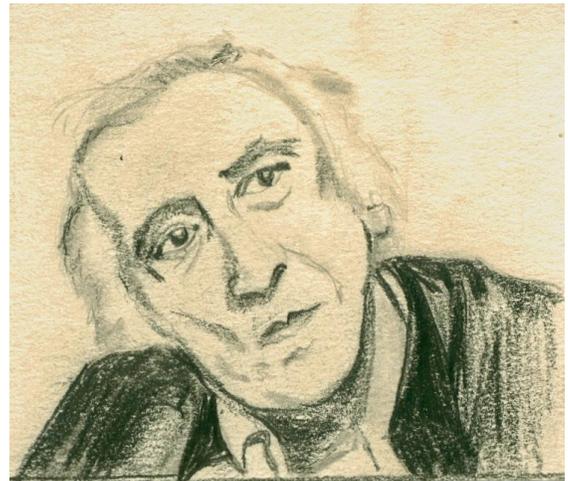
Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: The L'Arche movement, which
was founded in 1964 in France
by Jean Vanier, includes
dozens of communities around
the world where people with
physical and mental
disabilities, volunteers, and
staff members live together in
community. He wrote:



“In all of our communities, the
people with handicaps are
really at the heart. They are a
real gift. They evangelize us.

They change us ... [For example,] one of our communities in the north of
France took a weekend retreat not too long ago. One of the men who was
up there had been in my community – he's a very simple man. They were
talking about a text of the Apocalypse, where Jesus knocks on the door.
'And Jesus will dine with whoever opens the door.' This man said, 'I know
what I'll eat when Jesus comes to dine with me. We'll have pancakes.
We'll have muffins. We'll have cider.' And then he said, 'And Jesus will
say something. He'll take me in his arms; and he'll say, 'You are my
beloved child.'

“What seems to nourish the most is when there is a direct experience of the
presence of God, the presence of light, a prophetic utterance from people
who are so little and so broken. Although this doesn't happen on a daily
basis – perhaps once a year – it nonetheless happens. It is a very marked
and profound experience when people seem to experience that God is
present in another person who in so many ways appears devalued and is
driving us up the wall. Such moments bring deep conversions in people.”

- *In my experiences as a Lasallian educator, what have been my moments of deep conversion?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

A Celtic Blessing

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray

All: May God's Spirit guide us and lead us
to see in what we do
the beauty of our own souls.

May the work that we do
with the secret love and warmth of our heart
be blessed by God.
May it be God's work.

May the sacredness of God's work
bring healing, light, and renewal to those who work with us
and to those who see and receive our work.
May that work never weary us
but release within us wellsprings
of refreshment, inspiration, and excitement.

May the morning find us awake and alert,
approaching God's new day
with dreams, possibilities, and promises.

May evening find us gracious and fulfilled.
May we go into the night blessed, sheltered, and protected;
and may God's Spirit calm, console, and renew us. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Jean Vanier, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Bearers of the Light

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...

All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

2. Reading Source Unknown

The title of the painting, *The Light of the World*, Holman Hunt's (1827-1920) third version of the subject, is based on Christ's description of himself and his mission: "I am the light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).



Hunt explores the idea of Christ coming into the world as light through a variety of symbols. The lantern, which he holds, is meant to stand for Christ as the source of illumination. This analogy is rooted in biblical metaphor: "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). The lantern became an increasingly important part of the composition for Hunt. Whereas in his early sketches it is not very prominent, he later had an elaborate model manufactured so he could paint from it. Also, its patterning became more complex, so that the simple perforations of the lamp seen in the first two versions of the painting, here clearly include stars and crescents as a reference to the relevance of Christ's message to the whole world, including the Islamic east. Hunt deliberately set the scene at night, explaining ... that he wanted to "accentuate the point of its meaning by making it the time of darkness; and that brings us to the need of this lantern in Christ's hand, Jesus being the bearer of the light to the sinner within, if he will awaken."

Apart from using the obvious symbols of light, Hunt overlaid many of the objects in the picture with symbolic meaning to demonstrate the world's inability to recognize Christ. He explained that, "the closed door was the obstinately shut mind; the weeds the interference of daily neglect, the accumulated hindrance of sloth; ... the bat flitting about only in darkness was a natural symbol of ignorance." And when asked why the door had no outside handle, he replied: "It is the door of the human heart, and that can only be opened from the inside."

3. Our Response "Christ, Be Our Light"

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT

Bernadette Farrell



1. Long-ing for light, — we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for
2. Long-ing for peace, — our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for
3. Long-ing for food, — man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for
4. Long-ing for shel-ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for
5. Man - y the gifts, — man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



1. truth, — we turn to you. Make us your own, —
2. hope, — man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone —
3. wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread, —
4. warmth, — man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
5. hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



1. your ho - ly peo-ple, light for the world to see.
2. has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
3. bro - ken for oth-ers, shared un - til all are fed.
4. shel - ter - ing oth-ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
5. to one an - oth-er, mak - ing your king - dom come.



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.



Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to-day.

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4. Reading Luke 11:5-13

Jesus said to them: "If one of you knows someone who comes to him in the middle of the night and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has come in from a journey and I have nothing to offer him'; and he from inside should reply, 'Leave me alone. The door is shut now, and my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up to look after your needs.' I tell you that even though he does not get up and take care of the man because of friendship, he will do so because of his persistence, and give him as much as he needs.

“So I say to you, ‘Ask and you will receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

“For whoever asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; whoever knocks is admitted. What father among you will give his son a snake when he asks for a fish, or hands him a scorpion if he asks for an egg? If you, with all your sins, know how to give your children good things, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

5. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

6. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: That the people of the world be drawn to the saving light of the Gospel through our words and actions on behalf of the Lasallian mission, we pray...

All: Christ, be our light.

Reader: For forgiveness for the times when our Church and our Lasallian Family have failed to open the door of our hearts to those in need, we pray...

All: Christ, be our light.

Reader: In thanksgiving for those who have brought light to our darkness and peace in troubled times, we pray...

All: Christ, be our light.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: Christ, be our light.]

7. Closing Prayer from the Iona Community Worship Book

Reader: When the lights are on and the school [or agency] is full and laughter is easy and all is well...

All: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Reader: When the lights are low and the school [or agency] is still and the talk is intense and the air is full of wondering...

All: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Reader: When the lights are off and the school [or agency] is sad and the voice is troubled and nothing seems right...

All: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Reader: And today, always today, as if there were no other people, no other school
[or agency], no other door...

All: Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Anne Frank

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: For two years the adolescent
Anne Frank and her family
shared a small hiding place in a
building in Amsterdam during
the Nazi occupation. They were
found and sent to a
concentration camp, where
Anne later died. In the diary of
her experiences, she wrote:



“In spite of everything, I still
believe that people are really
good at heart. I simply can't
build up my hopes on a
foundation consisting of
confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a
wilderness; I hear the ever-approaching thunder, which will destroy us,
too; I can feel the suffering of millions; and yet if I look up into the
heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty will end, and
that peace and tranquility will return again. In the meantime, I must uphold
my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry
them out.”

- *How am I called to uphold my ideals, to love those in my ministry, and to build a community that will best serve those entrusted to my care?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

A Celtic Blessing

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: May the God of strength be with us,
holding us in strong-fingered hands;
and may we be a sacrament of God's strength
to those whose hands we hold.
May the blessing of God's strength be upon us. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Anne Frank, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

where poverty and injustice collect more casualties
than we can hold in our fearful and fragile hearts.

All: To a world too long in darkness,
too blinded by shame,
a flickering Light of hope enters and gloom departs.

Reader: God knocks at the door of our town –
where streets are paved too often only with good intentions,
where bridges to bring people together lie dismantled,
where street lights are darkened
by petty differences, hostility, and greed.

All: To a town too long deaf to voices crying for attention,
a simple Word of hope is uttered and ears begin to heed.

Reader: God knocks at the door of our families –
where meals are for nutrition and no longer for nurturance,
where embraces are a passing after-thought,
rushed and hurried in the press of time.
where soulful conversations are the exception
and not the commonplace.

All: To families too long hardened in a frozen mime,
a gentle Breath of hope warms the household space.

Reader: God knocks at the door of our world, our town, our families, our
hearts...

All: If we but crack open the door ... our God will enter!

5. Reading from the 2008 *Pastoral Letter* of Brother Superior
General Alvaro Rodriguez, pages 9-10

There is no doubt that the suffering of the innocent is a difficult mystery to understand, but what is most important is not so much to try to explain it but to avoid magnifying it in our own actions and omissions. As Father Cantalamessa, the preacher for the Papal Household, tells us: “It is also not enough just not to magnify the suffering of innocent ones, it is necessary to try to see that it does not exist! Facing the spectacle of a young girl frozen from cold and who is crying from hunger, a man shouts in his heart to God: “Oh, God! Where are you? Why don’t you do something for that poor innocent one?” And God answered him: “Of course I did something for her. I made you!”

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: In thanksgiving for the work, inspiration, and legacy of St. John Baptist de La Salle and his first disciples, we pray...

All: Hear us, O God.

Reader: With gratitude for our own call to the ministry of Lasallian education, we pray...

All: Hear us, O God.

Reader: For our Lasallian students, present and past, particularly for those who find themselves alone and whose needs are known to you alone, we pray...

All: Hear us, O God.

Reader: For those whose access to education is limited by poverty, warfare, or political turmoil, we pray...

All: Hear us, O God.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: Hear us, O God.]

8. Closing Prayer from the 2008 *Pastoral Letter* of Brother Superior General Alvaro Rodriguez, pages 44-45

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Come, Divine Spirit,
let me be molded like Jesus.
Renew me, strengthen me, change me,
to be, to think, and to live like Him...

Open my ears to hear you
in the muffled clamor of the poor,
in the stifled cries of the excluded,
there where your Spirit emerges...

Transformed, I freely choose
to make the Kingdom present,
animated by the same Spirit that animated Jesus. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

The Martyrs of El Salvador

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon



Reader: Six Jesuit priests, their cook, and her daughter were murdered at the University of Central America in El Salvador in 1989. These Jesuits were leading spokespersons for a nonviolent, negotiated settlement of the country's ten-year civil war. We now listen to the words of two of the priests:

“... how can we be really free if our brothers and sisters are not free? This is my country, and these people are my people. We are not just teachers and social scientists. We are also parish priests, and the people need to have the Church stay with them in these terrible times – the rich as well as the poor. The rich need to hear from us, just as do the poor. God's grace does not leave, so neither can we” (Segundo Montes, SJ).

“We cannot build up the people of God with our backs to the people, to the vast and exploited popular majorities, and to their real problems and struggles ... The presence of God in the people, in their suffering and joy, in their defeats and victories, cannot but benefit the people, if it is a liberating God who presses toward a better future, in which everything will be new: the heavens, the earth, and human beings themselves” (Ignacio Ellacuria, SJ).

- *How can I effect change that brings about the transforming power of God's love?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

St. Ignatius of Loyola

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Lord, teach me to be generous.
 Teach me to serve you as you deserve,
 to give and not to count the cost,
 to fight and not to heed the wounds,
 to toil and not to seek for rest,
 to labor and not to ask for reward,
 save that of knowing that I do your will. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: The Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador, models of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Called to Discipleship

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Song "He Keeps on Blessing Me"

He Keeps on Blessing Me

He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me. . .He keeps on blessing me

Over and over again (3x)

He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me. . .He keeps on blessing me

Over and over again (3x)

Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

2. Reading Adapted by Brother William Mann from Robert Crouse,
John Ewing Roberts, & Morris Dye

In Caravaggio's painting "The Calling of St. Matthew," five men are gathered around a table in the customs house, all elegantly dressed in silks and velvets, with plumes in their hats, earnestly engaged in counting coins. On the right side, we see two standing men. Separating the two groups, and perhaps connecting them, are a black void and a long triangular shaft of light.



contemporary world while Jesus and Peter are presented barefoot and clad in rough clothing. They have different values; they are from another world.

Matthew's right hand is still on the coin he had been counting. Caravaggio captured in a strangely transfixing way Matthew's sense of fear and wonderment – his eyes wide open and the index finger of his left hand pointing incredulously at his own chest. "Who, me?"

The strong beam of sunlight above Jesus carries his summons across the room to Matthew. There is a divine presence here; Matthew cannot ignore it. The light on Jesus' face and on Peter is no ordinary light. Ordinary light would cast a shadow on the youth with the sword.

Our eyes move to the hand, and the longer we look at it, the more we feel like we've seen it before. And we have. The hand of Jesus is the reverse of the hand of Adam in Michelangelo's *Creation* from the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Adam lifts a languid hand to his Creator, who moves with energy to bestow the gift of life. The hand of God is a life-giving hand, a creative hand.

Dag Hammarskjöld wrote on Pentecost 1961: “I don’t know who – or what – put the question. I don’t know when it was put. I don’t even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer ‘yes’ to someone – or something – and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in self-surrender, had a goal.”

Matthew in the customs house ... the teacher in the classroom ... you or I in the course of our employment ... or on our knees in prayer ... any time ... any place ... the creative, transforming light can shine ... the hand of God can reach out toward us ... and call us to life with Jesus, in Jesus, for Jesus.

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

4. Our Response

Reader: “God, who guides all things with wisdom and serenity and whose way it is not to force our inclinations, willed to commit me entirely to the care of the schools. He did this in an imperceptible way and over a long period of time so that one commitment led to another in a way that I did not foresee in the beginning.”

[De La Salle’s *Memoir of the Beginnings*]

All: Come, Divine Spirit,
let me be molded like Jesus;
renew me, strengthen me, transform me.

Reader: “The Lasallian mission has been part of our lives here; and because of this experience, we have become more deeply engaged in the mission, a mission that calls us in a special way to the educational service of the poor, to an understanding of the systemic roots of poverty, and to the promotion of justice. This mission also calls us to be ‘signs’ of the times and the living memory of De La Salle.”

[*A Final Message from the International Assembly of 2006 to the Lasallian Family*]

All: Come, Divine Spirit,
let me be molded like Jesus;
renew me, strengthen me, transform me.

Reader: “We count on you to take up the challenge, each according to your age, state in life, and personal convictions. Do you hear the calls, loud or silent, of those for whom you are directly responsible, with their intellectual, moral, affective, and spiritual needs? We ask you to continue to respond to these calls with us.”

[*A Message to the Lasallian Family from the 44th General Chapter of 2007*]

All: Come, Divine Spirit,
let me be molded like Jesus;

renew me, strengthen me, transform me.

Reader: As [Lasallians], we are called to be witnesses of a different world – of an alternative society based on Gospel values – to be signs of life, fraternity, hope, the future, the Kingdom.”

[Brother Superior General Alvaro Rodriguez in
Pastoral Letter of December 2008]

All: Come, Divine Spirit,
let me be molded like Jesus;
renew me, strengthen me, transform me.

5. Today’s Reading From Michael Gano, a lay colleague in the Philippines ... words he shared at the 2004 Holy Week Retreat of the District of the Philippines

Perhaps one of the greatest blessings has been my discovery ... of Lasallian spirituality and how well it resonates with me. I find being Lasallian such a practical way of being a spiritual person. Seeing with the eyes of faith ... making no distinction between my work life and my spiritual life ... not striving to be a “superstar,” but doing things “together and by association” ... living not just for myself but being of service to others ... striving for excellence, not for its own sake, but to be of greater service ... not worrying about my own salvation, but focusing on how I give service to others whether in the classroom, in the office, or in the exercise of my administrative functions ... focusing on relationships, person to person ... being concerned for the least, the last, and the lost ... these, I find very meaningful in my Lasallian life.

Many times in the past, I have tried to run away from this call to be Lasallian. But I realize now that being Lasallian and being myself are almost inseparable....

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: That in our everyday relationships we might remain open to the creative, transforming call of God, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That in our journey as Lasallian educators we might continue to share the living charism of De La Salle and his first disciples and to discover its prophetic voice in our own lives, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That in our everyday work we might hear and respond to the calls to self-sacrifice and service for the good of others, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?
[Response: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.]

8. Closing Prayer Source Unknown

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Good and loving God,
we renew today our dedication
to the work begun by John Baptist de La Salle.

Side One: As a Lasallian educator,
I pray that I respect and value each person who comes into my life
for who they are.

Side Two: I accept that their experiences may be different from my own,
as each of us follows paths in life that are individual to us.

Side One: I will try to be a positive role model
who is inspired to touch the hearts of those entrusted to my care.

Side Two: I will open my heart to be influenced for good
by remaining open to recognize the presence and the call of God
in the persons before and beside me.

Side One: I ask your merciful help
in developing attitudes and values
that lead me to make positive choices
about what is lasting and truly important.

Side Two: I will try to transform the negative into the positive
in the ordinariness of my everyday living.

All: Together, we pray that we never become indifferent
and that we grow in faith and zeal
in working together as Lasallian sisters and brothers
to build your kingdom here on earth
and especially in the places where we live and work. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

Charles de Foucauld

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: Ordained a priest in 1901,
Charles de Foucauld left for
Algeria to imitate what he
called "the hidden life of Jesus"
by living a life of austerity and
Christian compassion among
the poor. He was killed by
armed rebels in 1916. He wrote:

"The moment I realized God
existed, I knew that I could not
do otherwise than to live for
Him alone ... Faith strips the
mask from the world and
renders meaningless such
words as anxiety, danger, and
fear, so the believer goes
through life calmly and
peacefully, with profound joy –
like a child, hand and hand with
his mother.

"Jesus came to Nazareth, the
place of the hidden life, of
ordinary life, of family life, of
prayer, work, obscurity, silent virtues, practices with no witnesses other
than God, his friends, and neighbors. Nazareth, the place where most
people lead their lives. We must infinitely respect the least of our brothers
[and sisters] ... Let us mingle with them. Let us be one of them to the
extent that God wishes ... and treat them fraternally in order to have the
honor and joy of being accepted as one of them."

- *Where is the place which is my "Nazareth," and with whom do I mingle there?*



Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

The Abandonment Prayer of Charles de Foucauld

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray.

All: Father, I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you.

I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you, with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself, to surrender myself,
into your hands, without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Charles de Foucauld, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Believing Women

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Song “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]

Slowly

The musical score is written on a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked 'Slowly'. The score is divided into two parts: 'Cantor:' and 'All:'. The lyrics are: 'Let us re-mem-ber: We are in the ho - ly pre-sence of God.'

Reflection of Our Lasallian Identity

2. Reading Matthew 15:21-28

Then Jesus went from that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, “Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon.” But he did not say a word in answer to her. His disciples came and asked him, “Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us.” He said in reply, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But the woman came and did him homage, saying, “Lord, help me.” He said in reply, “It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs.” She said, “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.” Then Jesus said to her in reply, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that hour.

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
4. Our Response from De La Salle & Luke 1:46

Reader: “When the angel declared to Mary that she was to be the Mother of God, and honored her as such, this admirable virgin has no other reply except that she is the servant of the Lord.”
[*Meditation*, 112.1]

All: “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

Reader: “Oh woman! Exclaimed Jesus [of the Canaanite], how great is your faith.”
[*Meditation*, 38.2]

All: “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

Reader: “Monica never stopped praying and weeping for [her son Augustine’s] conversion; she ... undertook long journeys to keep him from being altogether lost.”

[*Meditation*, 122.3]

All: “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

Reader: “Mary Magdalene left the world in which she had been involved and gave herself entirely to Jesus Christ. Nothing held her back.”

[*Meditation*, 144.1]

All: “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

5. Reading from “Last Word” by Anna Quindlen in *Newsweek*, February 2, 2009, page 64



If there is one message that echoes forth from [the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women], let it be that human rights are women’s rights, and women’s rights are human rights for one and for all. Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely – and the right to be heard. Women must enjoy the rights to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure...

A simple primer on the state of the world: women do most of the good stuff and get most of the bad. No whine, just fact. They harvest food and raise children, tend to the aged and ill. Yet according to the Global Fund for Women, two thirds of the

world’s uneducated children are girls, and, naturally, two thirds of the world’s poorest people are female. Not coincidentally, women make up only about 16 percent of parliament members worldwide. Simple mathematics dictates that if we are interested in promoting prosperity, education and good government, [we] must focus on the welfare of women.

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: For the times we have failed to listen to those whose voices are often ignored, we pray...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For parents and guardians who struggle every day with the joys and sorrows of raising their children and caring for aged and ill relatives and friends, we pray...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: That all members of the Lasallian Family work together for the establishment and protection of human rights, particularly for women and children, we pray...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?
[Response: Hear our prayer.]

8. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: We thank you, God,
for what you reveal of yourself through the women of the world.

Although humble, you exalt them.
Although poor, you enrich them.
Although empty, you fill them.
Although your servant, you care for them;
and, in your goodness, you entrust us into their care.

Through them, may we learn about you.
May we become, through grace, humble, poor, and empty
so that you may exalt and enrich us,
fill us with heavenly blessings,
and bring Christ to birth through faith in hearts. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

Sister Dorothy Stang

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: For over forty years, Sister of
Notre Dame de Namur Dorothy
Stang worked with the peasant
families of the Amazon Basin
of Brazil in their attempts to
make a living from small
subsistence farms and initiate
land reforms, a work for which
she was murdered in 2005. She
wrote:



“Our forest is being overtaken
by the others daily ... Together
we can make a difference. I
don't want to flee, nor do I
want to abandon the battle of
these farmers who live without any protection in the forest. They have the
sacrosanct right to aspire to a better life on land where they can live and
work with dignity while respecting the environment.”

- *How might I strengthen my level of commitment to the poor and oppressed of my school, my city, and my world?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

“Litany of Thankfulness” of the Iroquois Nation

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and
one heart as we pray:

All: We give thanks to God above, to God below, to God within

for the whispers of breath and life that we have been given.

We give thanks
for our families and friends, the near and the far,
for the challenges and compassion of others who form our spirits.

We give thanks
for the earth, our Mother, who supports the people,
for the plants, our medicines, which grow on the earth.

We give thanks
for the animals, our four-legged relatives, who sustain us,
for the birds, our winged relatives, who sing to God.

We give thanks
for the sun, our elder brother,
who warms the earth and provides light;
for the moon, our grandmother,
who guides the people and the cycles of life;
for the stars, who provide direction at night.

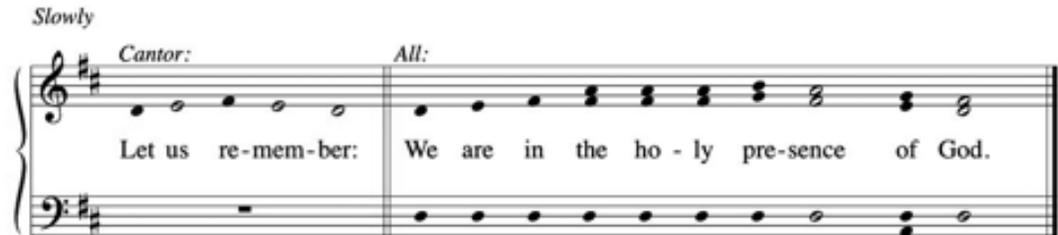
For all creation, we give thanks.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.
Leader: Sister Dorothy Stang, model of gospel living,
All: inspire us.
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

A Gift in the Church

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Song “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]



Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

2. Reading *Meditation #199 of De La Salle*

Saint Paul ... was enabled like a good architect to lay the foundation for the building of the faith and of the religion which God raised up in the cities where he announced the Gospel, according to the grace which God had given him ... Without comparing yourself to this great saint (and keeping in mind the due proportion between your work and his), you can say that you are doing the same thing, and that you are fulfilling the same ministry in your profession.

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

4. Our Response from De La Salle’s *Meditation #199*

Reader: “You are called to lay the foundation for the building of the Church when you instruct children in the mystery of the most Holy Trinity and the mysteries accomplished by Jesus Christ when he was on earth.”

All: “Look upon your work, then, as one of the most important and most necessary services in the Church.”

Reader: “How much, then, must you consider yourselves honored by the Church, to have been assigned by her to such a holy and exalted work, to be chosen by her to procure for children the knowledge of our religion and the Christian spirit.”

All: “Look upon your work, then, as one of the most important and most necessary services in the Church.”

Reader: “To announce the Gospel of the kingdom of God ... is why Jesus Christ has sent you and why the Church, whose ministers you are, employs you. Bring all the care needed, then, to fulfill this function with as much zeal and success as the saints have had fulfilling it.”

All: “Look upon your work, then, as one of the most important and most necessary services in the Church.”

Reader: “Thank God for the grace he has given you in your work, of sharing in the ministry of the holy apostles and the principal bishops and pastors of the Church. Honor your ministry by making yourselves, as Saint Paul says, worthy ministers of the New Testament.”

All: “You must, then, look upon your work as one of the most important and most necessary services in the Church.”

5. Today’s Reading Adapted from *Religious Life in America* by Sean Sammon, FMS [(New York: Alba House, 2002), pp.38-39]

Jesus came proclaiming the reign of God, its imminence, and our need to prepare for it. Religious life [and those Religious Families associated with it ... like our Lasallian Family ...] ought to be the Church’s memory of this central truth of our faith ... [A] story from the tradition of the Hasidim [brings this point home]. The tale is about the great Rabbi Naptali. Every evening after the sun went down, he had the custom of walking through town and then into its outskirts. His daily constitutional gave him time to reflect, and also helped him keep up with the comings and goings of his neighbors.

Wealthy landowners in this town had the custom of hiring watchmen to guard the perimeters of their property at night. One evening after dark, the rabbi came across one of these watchmen and asked him for the name of his employer. A familiar one was given in answer.

To the surprise of the rabbi, the watchman next asked him about his employer. The question hit the clergyman squarely in the heart, stopping him in his tracks. Wasn’t it obvious to the watchman and indeed to all the world, the rabbi wondered, that he worked for the Master of the Universe? Unsure of himself now, the rabbi delayed giving an answer, and instead walked with the watchman along the grounds of the rich man’s estate. Eventually, the rabbi spoke. “I’m sorry to say,” he admitted, “that I am not sure that I really work for anyone. You see, I am the rabbi in this town.”

After a long, silent walk, the rabbi asked the watchman, “Will you come and work for me?” “Of course, I would be delighted to,” responded the watchman, “What would my duties entail?” The rabbi replied, “Oh, there would be just one thing that you would always do. Remind me for whom I work, in whose employ I am, and why I am here. Just remind me – that’s all.”

In light of our almost 40 years of efforts aimed at [renewal]..., we could very well believe that we are the rabbi in this tale, ever in need of being reminded for whom we work. However ... our place is among those who watch. We are called to live in darkness on the perimeter and to remind our Church constantly about its true identity....

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: That in our Institute and in the worldwide Lasallian educational network ... that all Lasallians ... Brothers and Partners alike ... might see and understand more clearly what God is inviting us to be and to do for the young and for the poor of the world, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That people who live in war-torn sectors around the globe might know peace and that calm might be restored to their homelands ... that all Lasallian Partners and Brothers in mission might be kept from harm ... and that the leaders of nations might discover the correct path toward a just, true, and lasting peace, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all Brothers and Partners in Lasallian formation programs and courses around the world ... grow in association for the sake of the mission ... and receive the graces and the knowledge needed for the work that awaits them in their Districts and ministries, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our own community gathered here in prayer ... might look on life with the eyes of faith ... might know what it is that God asks of us ... might be blessed with good companions who help us never to forget for whom we work ... and might remain faithful to the prophetic task of helping to remind our Church about its true identity, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.]

8. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Good and loving God,
open our eyes and our hearts this day ...

to your presence in all of those with whom we live and work ...
to your presence in all of those entrusted to our care ...
to your presence in the vulnerable and the marginalized ...
to your presence in those who can do nothing for us in return.

Lead us to act justly,
to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with you. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

Dom Helder Camara

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

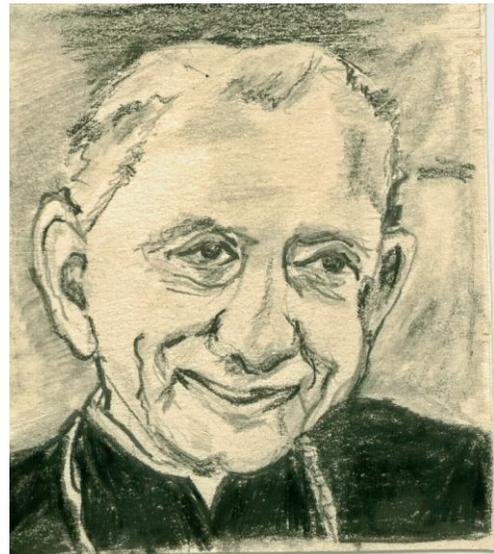
Reader: Dom Helder Camara worked
tirelessly in solidarity with and
on behalf of the poor, the
marginalized, and the voiceless.
The following story has been
told about him:

“A Brazilian man had been
hired by his country's rich and
powerful to kill yet another
religious troublemaker. Already
[Dom Helder] had been
silenced and warned and
threatened, his house shot at,
his followers and co-workers
jailed, tortured, and murdered.

Yet his work continued ..., and so the time had come to kill this man. The
assassin was hired ...

“His heart hardened and his trigger ready, the executioner walked through
the small flower garden belonging to his intended victim, his marked man:
His Excellency, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Recife and Olinda in
northeast Brazil. Unmoved by ... the stark simplicity of the house, the
experienced assassin proceeded according to plan, knocking on the plain
wooden door.

“A very small, frail-looking man opened the door. Speaking with
authority, the visitor said he wanted to see Dom Helder Camara. ‘I am
Dom Helder,’ replied the little man at the door. His plan disrupted, his
image of the archbishop instantly shattered, the assassin stammered, ‘You
are Dom Helder Camara?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the bishop. ‘What do you
want? Come in.’ After showing his guest to a chair, Dom Helder asked,
‘Do you need me for anything? What do you want?’ ‘No, no,’ said the
assassin, clearly flustered. ‘I don't want to have anything to do with you



because you are not one of those that you kill.’ ‘Kill? Why do you want to kill?’ asked Dom Helder. ‘Because I was paid to kill you, but I can’t kill you,’ the assassin answered. ‘If you are paid, why don’t you kill me?’ the archbishop reasoned. ‘I will go to the Lord.’ ‘No,’ said the assassin, ‘you are one of the Lord’s.’ And he got up and went away.”

- *How do I assist those with whom I interact as a Lasallian educator – my students and my colleagues – to know that they are “one of the Lord’s?”*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

from Howard Thurman

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Open unto me – light for my darkness.
Open unto me – courage for my fear.
Open unto me – hope for my despair.
Open unto me – peace for my turmoil.
Open unto me – joy for my sorrow.
Open unto me – strength for my weakness.
Open unto me – wisdom for my confusion.
Open unto me – forgiveness for my sins.
Open unto me – tenderness for my toughness.
Open unto me – love for my hates.
Open unto me – Thy Self for my self.
Lord, Lord, open unto me! Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Dom Helder Camara, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

We Are Called

Recalling the Presence of God

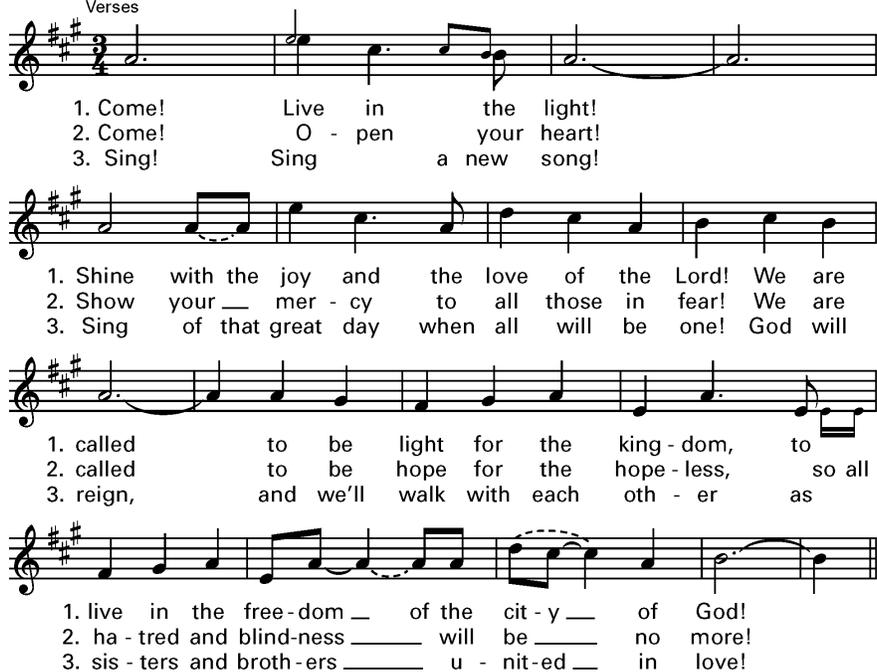
1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

2. Song "We Are Called" WE ARE CALLED

David Haas

Verses



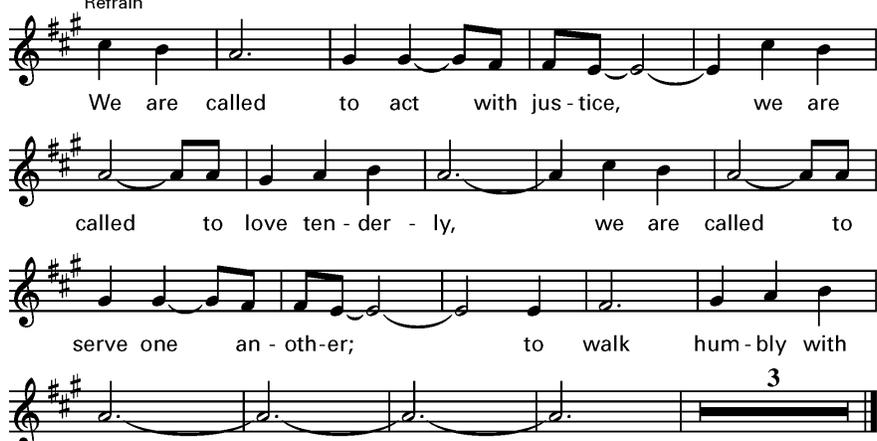
1. Come! Live in the light!
2. Come! O - pen your heart!
3. Sing! Sing a new song!

1. Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord! We are
2. Show your — mer - cy to all those in fear! We are
3. Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will

1. called to be light for the king - dom, to
2. called to be hope for the hope - less, so all
3. reign, and we'll walk with each oth - er as

1. live in the free - dom — of the cit - y — of God!
2. ha - tred and blind - ness — will be — no more!
3. sis - ters and broth - ers — u - nit - ed — in love!

Refrain



We are called to act with jus - tice, we are
called to love ten - der - ly, we are called to
serve one an - oth - er; to walk hum - bly with
God.

Text: Based on Micah 6:8. Text and music © 1988, GIA Publications, Inc.
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Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

3. A Reading from Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years* (pp. 130-131)

Last summer I was in Israel, working on an archaeological dig. At the site of the ancient city of Dor, each day as I swung my pick into the age-old soil, I [found myself] inwardly chipping away at [my own issues of faith and belief and] ... expended a good deal of energy cursing the facts of human suffering in the world, and trying to imagine some kind of hope of restoration.

Excavating at the level of the Iron Age can be rather tedious; only rarely did we turn up any precious small finds. Most of the time was spent staring at dirt walls and broken pottery shards. In my square, not even one whole vessel was uncovered all season – just so many broken pieces, scraps of ancient civilization. All of the brokenness appeared to me as an accurate metaphor for understanding the world. Broken and crushed, every piece of it; broken with small personal pains, as well as with overwhelmingly large human struggles. Yet as the summer went on, and I kept staring at the pottery, I slowly started to notice something more than just the brokenness. Some of the pieces of clay, however broken, were really quite beautiful.

Later in the summer, I found out about the business of pottery mending; [and seeing ...] those restored vessels encouraged me to imagine perhaps that at least some of the world's brokenness could be overcome. I began to picture myself in a kind of vocation of mending, of repairing some of the world's brokenness.

To mend the world. To proclaim a radical vision of social transformation that would prevent future brokenness from occurring. These are the tasks that I perceived the world to be demanding of me.

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
5. Our Response Adapted from Psalm 100

All: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
worship the Lord with cries of gladness;
come before God with joyful song.

Side One: Know that the Lord is God, our maker to whom we belong,
whose people we are, God's well-tended flock.

Side Two: Enter the temple gates with praise, its courts with thanksgiving.
Give thanks to God, bless God's name;
good indeed is the Lord, whose love endures forever,
whose faithfulness lasts through every age.

All: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
worship the Lord with cries of gladness;
come before God with joyful song.

6. A Reading from the writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ

Above all, trust in the slow work of God. We are quite naturally impatient with everything to reach the end without delay. We should like to skip the intermediate stages. We are impatient with being on the way to something unknown, something new. And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability – and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you. Your ideas mature gradually – let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste. Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be. Give Our Lord the benefit of believing that His hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

8. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: That we might have the graces necessary to suffer with patience the difficulties we have to endure, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we might have the courage to live with Lasallian zeal our holy ministry of education, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we might find beauty and salvation in our ministry among people, who like ourselves, are broken and imperfect, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]

9. Closing Prayer St. Ignatius of Loyola

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Dear Lord, teach me to be generous;
teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labor, and not to ask for any reward –
except that of knowing that I am doing your holy will. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

Desmond Tutu

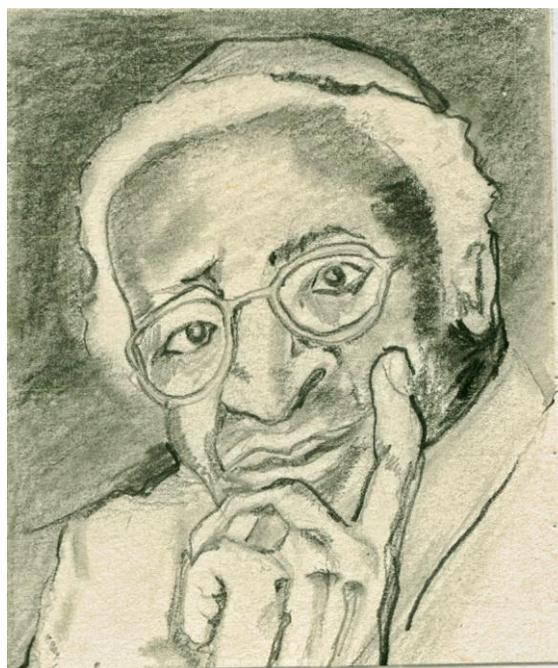
Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: Desmond Tutu,
Archbishop Emeritus of
Cape Town in South
Africa and recipient of
the Nobel Peace Prize,
speaks here about the
power and the challenge
of forgiveness and
reconciliation.



“Forgiveness and reconciliation are not cheap. They are costly. After all, they cost God the death of God’s Son. Forgiveness is ... an act of much hope and not despair. It is to hope in the essential goodness of people and to have faith in their potential to change. It is to bet on that possibility. Forgiveness is not opposed to justice, especially if it is not punitive justice but restorative justice, justice that does not seek primarily to punish the perpetrator, to hit out, but looks to heal a breach, to restore a social equilibrium that the atrocity or misdeed has disturbed ...

“Remember, Jesus did not demand that we should be merely good. No, he challenged us to be perfect, to seek to emulate the perfection of God, who makes the sun shine on good and bad alike...

“That is why we admire not the macho, the aggressively successful. No, we revere a small, frail woman, Mother Teresa, because she was good. The world admires an old man, Nelson Mandela, because he is magnanimous, he is forgiving, he is good. We have an instinct for goodness, our hearts thrill in the presence of goodness, for God has made us for himself and our

hearts are restless until they find their rest in him. We are a glorious paradox, the finite made for the infinite. . . Dear friends, please remember that ultimately there is no future without forgiveness.”

- *How are we called to emulate the perfection of God in forgiving one another?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

Julian of Norwich in *Showings*, Chapter 31

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: And so our good Lord answered to all questions and doubts which I could raise, saying most comfortably:
“I may make all things well,
and I can make all things well,
and I shall make all things well,
and I will make all things well,
and you will see yourself
that every kind of thing will be well.”

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Desmond Tutu, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

The Most Holy Trinity

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...

All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

2. Song "He Keeps on Blessing Me"

He Keeps on Blessing Me

He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me

Over and over again (3x)

He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me. . . He keeps on blessing me

Over and over again (3x)

Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

3. Reading Brother William Mann with adaptations of commentaries by Alexander Boguslawski, Tim Gaden, Soo-Young Kwon, Henri Nouwen, & Ann Hanincik

The fifteenth-century Russian monk Andrei Rublev presents us with a portrayal of the Holy Trinity as seen within the allegory of the hospitality of Abraham, who was visited by three heavenly wanderers. "When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them; and bowing to the ground he said: My Lord, if I may ask this favor, please do not go on past your servant" (Gen 18:3). They accept the invitation, and he serves them food and drink.



Note that there is no hierarchy of order represented here. A sense of equality and calm is communicated by the inclination of a head ... a gaze ... a hand raised in blessing. Rublev expresses in visual metaphor an insight into the relational and accessible character of the Trinity. The unoccupied side of the table invites the viewer to draw closer ... to become part of the scene ... perhaps even to listen in on intimate and sacred conversation.

This image is not altogether unrelated to that of Jacob's ladder (Gen 28:12), which was proposed as a model for educators by St. John Baptist de La Salle. In prayer, we are invited to ascend and spend time in the holy presence of God ... to seek divine guidance ... and to make known the needs of those who have been entrusted to our care. We thus return to our ministry, De La Salle suggests, with a greater ability to guide others along the path of salvation (Meditation 198.1).

As I pause in reflection before this icon, the image of the Three-at-Table calls to mind so many other images of table-fellowship in the gospels ... most notably the meals at the house of Martha and Mary, in the Upper Room, and on the Emmaus Road ... and this allegory of hospitality is transformed into a revelation of a divine pattern of welcome and of holy, loving, and eternal communion.

The Three-in-One face outward in openness toward our world and invite us to draw closer to the table ... to dare to be bold enough to enter into this sacred mystery ... so as to be better able to extend its glory over all the earth (M 46.3).

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
5. Our Response From De La Salle's *Meditation 46: Trinity Sunday*

All: Glory to you, O Trinity,
one God in three equal Persons;
glory and praise to you for endless ages.

Side One: "It is your duty to go up to God every day by prayer
to learn from God all that you must teach your children,
and then come down ... to instruct them
about what God has communicated to you for them ..."
[De La Salle, M 198.1]

Side Two: "Adore this sacred mystery ...
of one God in three Persons,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit..."
[De La Salle, M 46.1]

Side One: "Jesus ... honored [Martha] several times
by being her guest at table ...
One can scarcely measure how much
this saint profited by so great a favor ...
Purify your heart to receive him often
and to profit by so great a favor."
[De La Salle, M 147.1]

Side Two: "Ask God ... for a deep faith
to believe in this sacred mystery;
and while firmly professing
that God is One in Three Persons,
proclaim that blessed are those who have not seen,
but yet believe..."
[De La Salle, M 46.2]

Side One: "Jesus Christ went with [the Emmaus disciples]
to the place where they stopped
and remained there with them [to share a meal].
In the same way, Jesus will be glad to be with you
when you take pleasure in speaking of him
and of what can lead you to him."
[De La Salle, M 30.3]

Reader: That our Lasallian educational network might be a source of healing and an agent of mercy in the world and in the church, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our families and our communities might be witnesses of hospitality and communion in a divided world, we pray...

All: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.]

10. Closing Prayer USCCB Prayer to the Blessed Trinity (Adapted)

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: God of all creation,
you led the chosen people into the promised land;
lead the excluded and the neglected to a place of belonging.

Savior and brother Jesus Christ,
you descended among the dead and rose again;
raise up all who are fallen, broken, or alone.

Holy Spirit of life,
you inspired and sustained the martyrs and prophets;
give us the strength to help our brothers and sisters in need. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Peter Maurin

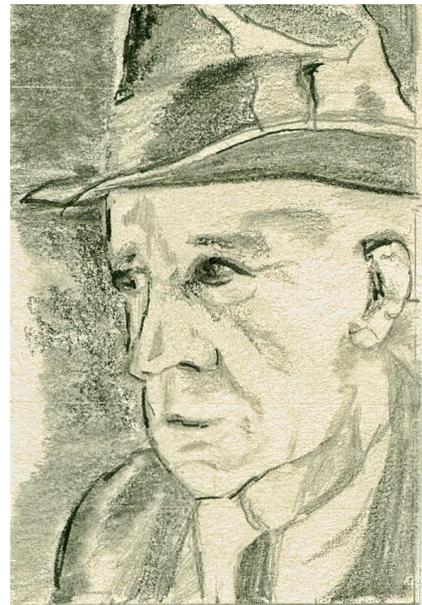
Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: Peter Maurin, a former De La Salle
Christian Brother, was a great
friend and inspiration to Dorothy
Day in founding the Catholic
Worker Movement. He was the
thinker; she was the doer. His essay
"A Case for Utopia" is a simple yet
insightful commentary on living the
Gospel message.



"The world would be better off if
people tried to become better, and
people would become better if they
stopped trying to become better
off. For when everyone tries to
become better off, nobody is better
off. But when everyone tries to
become better, everybody is better
off. Everyone would be rich if nobody
tried to become richer, and nobody
would be poor if everybody tried to
be the poorest. And everybody would
be what he [or she] ought to be if
everybody tried to be what he [or she]
wants the other fellow to be."

- *How am I called to become better in order to make the lives of others better?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

from Brother Nicholas Hutchinson in *Walk in My Presence*,
vol. 1, p. 91

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Give us, Lord God, a vision of our world
as your love would make it:
a world where the weak are protected,
and none go hungry or poor;
a world where the benefits of civilized life are shared,
and everyone can enjoy them;
a world where different races, nations, and cultures
live in tolerance and mutual respect;
a world where peace is built with justice,
and justice is guided by love;
and give us the inspiration and courage to build it,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Peter Maurin, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

A Prayer for Peace

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...

All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

2. Song "Prayer of Peace"

PRAYER OF PEACE

David Haas

1, 6. Peace be - fore us, peace be - hind us, peace _____
 2. Love be - fore us, love be - hind us, love _____
 3. Light be - fore us, light be - hind us, light _____
 4. Christ be - fore us, Christ be - hind us, Christ _____
 5. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

1, 6. un - der our feet. Peace with - in us, peace _____
 2. un - der our feet. Love with - in us, love _____
 3. un - der our feet. Light with - in us, light _____
 4. un - der our feet. Christ with - in us, Christ _____
 5. lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

1, 6. o - ver us, let all a - round us be peace.
 2. o - ver us, let all a - round us be love.
 3. o - ver us, let all a - round us be light.
 4. o - ver us, let all a - round us be Christ.
 5. lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Text: Based on a Navaho Indian prayer. Music: David Haas. Text and music © 1987, GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

3. Reading Matthew 5:3-12a

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be

filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response St. Francis of Assisi

Side One: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Side Two: Where there is injury, let me sow pardon.
Where there is doubt, let me sow faith.

Side One: Where there is despair, let me sow hope.
Where there is darkness, let me sow light.
Where there is sadness, let me sow joy.

Side Two: Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console ...

Side One: To be understood as to understand ...
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive.

Side Two: It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

6. Reading Oscar Romero as quoted in *The Violence of Love*

Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right, and it is duty.

7. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 3 to 5 minutes]

Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

8. Intercessory Prayer "The Litany for Social Justice," *Prayers for Peace:*
St. Paul's Chapel in New York City

Reader: We pray for continued blessings on all peacemakers, on leaders who value peace, and on everyone who promotes nonviolent solutions to conflict. We pray for a speedy end to all violence and warfare around the world. God of peace and gentleness...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray that the Holy Spirit may embrace the most vulnerable members of our society; we pray for an end to the growing disparity between the rich and the poor; we pray for the grace and courage to strive for economic justice for all people. God of all gifts and blessings...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for an end to prejudice throughout our country and the world; that we will respect all people as precious children of God; and that racism, sexism, religious intolerance and all other forms of bigotry and discrimination will be forever banished from our hearts, our society, and our laws. God of fellowship and equality...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for a reverence for the earth and all creation; that we will have the tools and the will to conserve it; that we will use its bountiful resources in the service of others; and that we will become better stewards of all that has been entrusted to us. God of nature and the universe...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for the sick, for the aged and the infirm, and for those suffering with physical or mental disabilities; that all may have access to proper health care; and that God's loving embrace may be felt by all who suffer. God of comfort and healing...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for all children and families, and particularly for the orphaned, the neglected, the abused, and those who live in fear of violence or disease; that they may be relieved and protected. God of children and families...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray for all who have died as a result of violence, war, disease or famine, and we hold up most especially those lives that were lost due to human blindness, neglect, or hardness of heart. God of eternal life and resurrecting love...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?
[Response: Hear our prayer.]

9. Closing Prayer "The Peace," *Prayers for Peace:*

St. Paul's Chapel in New York City

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: May the peace of God,
Eternal Spirit, Earth-Maker,
Pain-Bearer, Life-Giver,
source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
be with us today
and remain with us always. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Blessed Franz Jaegerstaetter

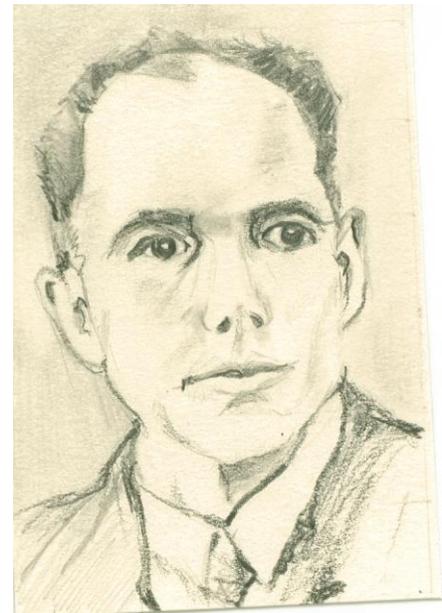
Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: Franz Jaegerstaetter, an Austrian
Christian who opposed the Nazi
regime by refusing to serve in the
armies of the Third Reich, was
imprisoned and executed in August
1943. He was beatified in October
2007. He wrote:



“Just as the man who thinks only of
this world does everything possible
to make life here easier and better, so
must we, too, who believe in the
eternal Kingdom, risk everything in
order to receive a great reward there.
Just as those who believe in National
Socialism tell themselves that their
struggle is for survival, so must we,
too, convince ourselves that our
struggle is for the eternal Kingdom. But with this difference: we need no
rifles or pistols for our battle, but instead, spiritual weapons – and the
foremost among these is prayer ... Through prayer, we continually implore
new grace from God, since without God's help and grace it would be
impossible for us to preserve the faith and be true to his commandments ...

“Let us love our enemies, bless those who curse us, pray for those who
persecute us. For love will conquer and will endure for all eternity. And
happy are they who live and die in God's love.”

- *How am I called to preach the Gospel through my actions?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

from Thomas Merton in *Thoughts in Solitude*

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray.

All: My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself;
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you
does, in fact, please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And, I know that if I do this,
you will lead me by the right road
though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore, will I trust you always
though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me;
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Blessed Franz Jaegerstaetter, model of gospel living,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

Called to Serve

Recalling the Presence of God

1. Opening Song "The Servant Song"

THE SERVANT SONG

Richard Gillard



1, 6. Will you let me be your ser- vant, Let me be as
2. We are pil- grims on a jour- ney, We are trav - 'lers
3. I will hold the Christ- light for you In the night- time
4. I will weep when you are weep- ing; When you laugh I'll
5. When we sing to God in heav- en We shall find such



1, 6. Christ to you; Pray that I may have the grace to
2. on the road; We are here to help each oth - er
3. of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you,
4. laugh with you. I will share your joy and sor - row
5. har - mo - ny, Born of all we've known to - geth - er



1, 6. Let you be my ser - vant, too.
2. Walk the mile and bear the load.
3. Speak the peace you long to hear.
4. 'Til we've seen this jour - ney through.
5. Of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

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Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity

2. Reading Gospel (John 13: 5-9, 12-14)

“Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, ‘Lord, are you going to wash my feet?’ Jesus answered, ‘You do not now know what I am doing, but later you will understand.’ Peter said to him, ‘You will never wash my feet.’ Jesus said to him, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.’ Simon Peter said to him, ‘Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!’

“After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and

Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For if I have set you an example, it is that you also should do as I have done to you.”

3. Silent Reflection [about 2 to 3 minutes]

Take this time to silently meditate with Sieger Koder’s *The Washing of Feet*:

Whose feet is God calling me to wash?

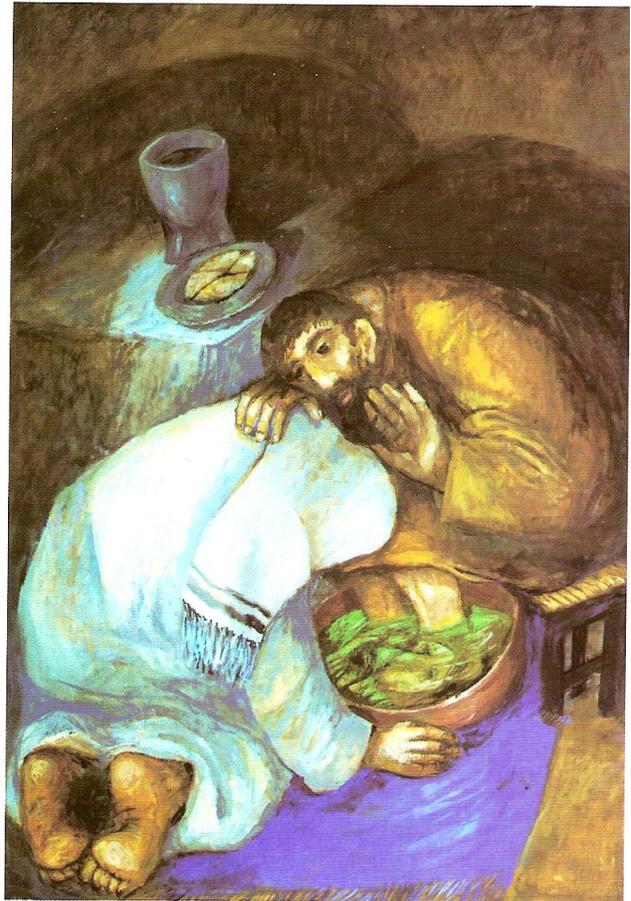
How is God calling me to be Christ like to those “entrusted to my care?”

4. Reading by Andy Alexander, SJ of Creighton University Online Ministries

The washing of the feet teaches several things. It is not easy to have our feet washed. They smell. They are not always very attractive. It is a part of our bodies that we rarely let others touch or caress. And, it is not easy to wash the feet of another. This is all a powerful drama representing the power of love. It is not easy for me to let you love me. It is not easy for me

to love you. Parts of me are not very acceptable. I’ll let you love certain parts of me, but rarely will I let anyone close to the “smelliest” and most unattractive parts of me. And, when I love you, I often will love you when you are most presentable or attractive. When you put me off or when you are not at your best, I don’t do so well at loving.

Jesus loves us unconditionally, that is, without condition. He loves us, not because we deserve it. He loves us because we need loving. He tells us to love the same way. In the washing of the feet, we are given his ... self-sacrificing example of how to love each other. “This much,” he says. “Love each other this completely, this freely, loving the most unattractive parts of each other, where love is most needed.”



Recommitting to Lasallian Mission

5. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: Jesus Christ gave an example to the apostles that they might do as he himself had done ... so that seeing how he acted, they could, in all they would have to do to win souls to God, be guided and formed by his conduct. [M 196.2]

All: Lord, help us to serve others with humility and gentleness and so lead them toward you.

Reader: You carry out a work that requires you to touch hearts, but this you cannot do except by the Spirit of God. Pray to him to give you today the same grace he gave the holy apostles, and ask him that, after filling you with his Holy Spirit to sanctify yourselves, he also communicate himself to you in order to procure the salvation of others. [M 43.3]

All: Lord, help us to serve others with humility and gentleness and so lead them toward you.

Reader: It was ... gentleness and tenderness for his neighbor that made it possible for him to convert many souls to God ... for it was this virtue that won the hearts of all those with whom he dealt; and the affection they felt for him was a means he used to lead them to God. [M 101.3]

All: Lord, help us to serve others with humility and gentleness and so lead them toward you.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?

[Response: God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.]

8. Closing Prayer from De La Salle's *Method of Interior Prayer* #275, 285, & 287

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Help me, O my God ...
May I learn to be humble ...
in imitation of your beloved Son;
and may I take pleasure in serving others.

Let me partake, in my ministry,
of the same thoughts and the same affections that were yours
when you washed your apostles' feet ...

Unite my mind and heart with yours.
Encourage me to be humble in the service of others
so that in this way, and with the aid of your holy grace,
I may merit to be lifted up even to you,
to be united to you
in this life by grace
and in the next by glory,

and thus to participate in your infinite happiness
for all eternity. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All: pray for us.
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,
All: forever.

Cesar Chavez

Call to Worship

Leader: Be still within and without,
in touch with a remembered moment of God's presence today. Center
yourself in God.

(Strike the Tibetan prayer bowl, and allow the sound to diminish.)

A Reflection on a Modern Icon

Reader: Cesar Chavez's relentlessly campaigned for social justice for farm workers and laborers in the United States. Through his powerful rhetoric and impassioned calls to action, he transformed as well as persuaded and inspired his audiences. He wrote:

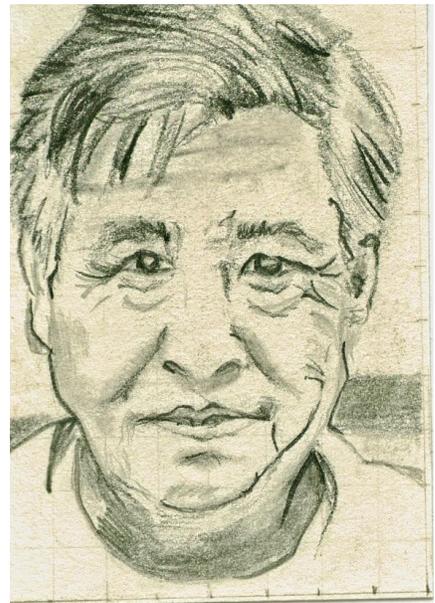
“Since I had the inclination and the training, helping people came naturally. I wasn't thinking in terms of organizing members, but just a duty that I had to do. That goes back to my mother's training...

“Once you helped people, most became very loyal. The people who helped us back when we wanted volunteers were the people we had helped. So I began to get a group of those people around me.

“Once I realized helping people was an organizing technique, I increased that work. I was willing to work all day and night and go to hell and back for people – provided they also did something ... in return. I never felt bad asking for that. It didn't contradict my parents' teachings, because I wasn't asking for something for myself.

“For a long time, we didn't know how to put that work together into an organization. But we learned after a while – we learned how to help people by making them responsible ...

“When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit our lives are all that really belong to us. So it is how we use our life that determines the kind of men [or women] we are.”



- *How am I called to preach the Gospel through my actions and to use the lessons learned from my parents to make the world a better place?*

Pause for Quiet Reflection

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

Closing Prayer

St. Teresa of Avila

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
with compassion on this world.
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good;
yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
yours are the eyes; you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
with compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Cesar Chavez, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

A Method of Prayer for Teachers

Brother William Mann¹

Introduction

In the *Collection*² and also in *The Explanation of the Method of Interior Prayer*,³ John Baptist de La Salle proposes a method for personal and interior prayer. The method, however, should not be mistaken for the prayer itself. Neither should one mistake personal and interior prayer for the whole of one's relationship with God. De La Salle's method was proposed as a way of entering into conversation with God, the kind of conversation which is capable of illuminating and transforming the whole of one's life. It was for this end that De La Salle developed three series of *Meditations*⁴ to help his teacher disciples enter more easily into the daily practice of this conversation.

For De La Salle, there is ultimately no distinction to be made between the quest for closer intimacy with God in prayer, on the one hand, and the duties of one's employment as a Christian educator, on the other. The two are clearly and indissolubly linked in the ministry of Christian education. "Since you are entrusted with the instruction of others, you should endeavor to become competent in the art of speaking to God, about God, and for God; but rest assured that you will never be able to speak to your students in such a way as to win them to God, until you yourself have learned to speak to God and about God."⁵

The kind of personal and interior prayer recommended by De La Salle really requires that one be immersed in the scriptures. "This process involves the kind of dynamic that happens in making friends with anyone. You have to spend time together, talk together, listen to each other, and get to know each other."⁶ And the scriptures present us with a privileged opportunity to spend this kind of time with God.

Over and over again in the *Meditations for Sundays* and *Meditations for Feasts*, De La Salle begins with explicit references to gospel texts. The *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* reflect a profound assimilation of the Mystery of God's Love at Work in the World as it can be discovered in the writings of St. Paul. "It is God that we strive to know by spiritual reading and by interior prayer so that we might be better able to make Him known and to make Him loved by all those to whom we have made Him known."⁷

¹ An adaptation by the District of Great Britain [delasalle.org.uk/lace/previous/ARTICLES/prayer.htm] of the introduction of *Ambassadors of Jesus Christ: Prayer Meditations for Christian Educators* by Brother William Mann, Brother Henry Dissanayke, and Brother Isaias Tzegay (Rome, 1995; reprinted in Manila, 1996), pp. 1-9.

² De La Salle, *Collection of Various Short Treatises* (Lasallian Publications, 1993).

³ De La Salle, *The Explanation of the Method of Interior Prayer* (Lasallian Publications, 1995).

⁴ De La Salle, *Meditations for Sundays, Feasts, and Retreat* (Lasallian Publications, 1994).

⁵ De La Salle, *Meditations*, #64.2.

⁶ Palker J. Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (Harper Collins Publishers, 1983, 1993), p. 101.

⁷ De La Salle, *Meditations*, #41.3.

As De La Salle became aware, by God's grace, of the human and spiritual needs of the artisans and the poor, he devoted himself to forming educators totally dedicated to teaching and to Christian education. God's Spirit breathes life into the world. The Holy Spirit, in every generation, continues to confide to teachers a special role in the Christian and human formation of the young and, through them, continues to enable students to welcome Jesus into the deepest aspirations of the human heart as Good News.

Personal and interior prayer is not the privatized activity of an isolated Christian. Prayer is "a time when we can still ourselves enough to begin to feel our natural connectedness to each other and the world."⁸ The acquisition of the habit of personal and interior prayer will be out of the question for anyone who does not try to cultivate compassion for others.⁹ In prayer, the Spirit unites the one who prays with the whole of the Church gathered around Jesus in need and prayer. It is, therefore, really prayer with the Church; furthermore, it is, for De La Salle, prayer normally made in a Church.¹⁰

The method proposed requires about thirty minutes a day. It also requires that you put aside your busy-ness and external clutter for a little while, and that you try to free yourself from some of your inward noise and internal static. It requires some solitude, some silence. For, after all, personal and interior prayer is "a way of entering into silence so deeply that we can hear the whole world's speech, a way of entering into solitude so deeply that we can feel the whole world's connections. In prayer we touch that transcendent Spirit from whom all things arise and to whom all things return, who makes all things kindred as they go."¹¹

First Movement: In the Presence of the Living God

You are invited to begin by entering into a more conscious awareness of the presence of God. We walk in God's world.

- The Trinity is immanently present. Our God is neither distant nor indifferent. Rather, God, present in the world, desires that all of us come to "the knowledge of God Himself and of all that He has willed to reveal to us through Jesus Christ, through His apostles, and through His Church."¹² However, there are many other realities in each of our lives that compete for our attention and distract us from awareness of this presence.
- Where is God most present to you? Is it in the quiet of your heart? Is it in your relationships? Is it in ministry? Perhaps God is particularly present to you in the beauty of nature or under the rags of the poor who wander in the streets. For some, it is the presence of God in the Eucharist which attracts. Take the time to recall God's presence, and then spend some minutes in its conscious awareness. Spend as much quiet time, as possible, in this way.
- Who am I to be in God's presence? Who is this in whose presence I find myself? "Implore Him: Lord, do not pass me by, do not leave until I am aware that you have

⁸ Palmer, p. 80.

⁹ Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New Directions Books, 1972), p. 77.

¹⁰ From Brother Jean-Louis Schneider, *Ministre de l'Education Chretienne* (Rome, 1994).

¹¹ Palmer, p. 124.

¹² De La Salle, *Meditations*, #193.1; cf. 1 Tm 2:4.

come. Lord, keep knocking at my door; knock again and again until I open to you. This is the attitude of an open person. One's whole being is a "yes" to God in silence."¹³

- God wills a union of our mind and heart with that of Jesus who came to do the Father's will. "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly."¹⁴ The wonderful news is that God invites "me to share, as His son [or daughter], in His own care for my brothers [and sisters]."¹⁵
- Ask God present to you to help you to be more aware of this will, to be more open to it, to be one in mind and heart with what God wants most to do in the world through you. "Doing your will, O God, is delightful!"¹⁶

And so, in the first movement of the method of personal and interior prayer proposed here, you are invited to spend some time considering the divine will. Remember that "God's will is certainly found in anything that is required of us in order that we may be united with one another in love."¹⁷ Ask God to help you to understand where God is leading you through and in the midst of the concrete experiences of your everyday ministry.

Second Movement: Living the Mystery of Christ

The second movement of our method of personal and interior prayer is the invitation to contemplate the Mystery of God's Love at Work in the World, and particularly in your own life. This will normally be the main body of your time in prayer, and the Jesus of the gospels will be at the heart of this movement. De La Salle suggests that we contemplate Jesus Christ in the gospels so that, by the example of His life and teachings, we might be gradually transformed to be more like Him.

- How are you participating in the Mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus in your daily efforts to reach and touch the lives of the people with whom you minister? This is, above all, really a matter of identity and re-birth in Christ. "And the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. Of course, I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."¹⁸
- Jesus gives "us an example of how human beings can live transcendently by a love of self-emptying sacrifice on behalf of others. He lives for others. His focus is to bring fullness especially to the poor, the sick, the outcasts of society, the oppressed and the discriminated against, the criminals and the sinners. This is the way we should love. This is how we see the glory of God shining through us. God looks like Jesus! We will be like God if we live like Jesus."¹⁹

¹³ Quoted from Ladislaus Boros, *On Christian Prayer*, in Brother Alvaro Rodriguez, *Metodo de Oracion, para concersar con Dios, segun San Juan Bautista de La Salle* (Guatemala, 1982), p. 11.

¹⁴ Jn 10:10.

¹⁵ Merton, p. 18.

¹⁶ Ps 40:8.

¹⁷ Merton, p. 76.

¹⁸ Gal 2:20.

¹⁹ George A. Maloney, *Entering into the Heart of Jesus: Meditations on the Indwelling Trinity in Saint John's Gospel* (Alba House, 1988), p. 19.

Do not rush this stage. Spend time with the suggested passages. Read them over a few times. Pay special attention to the words or phrases that catch your attention. Listen to what is being said and to the one who is saying it. Be quiet. Go slowly. Look at your life. See how your life compares with the life of Jesus. Allow God to speak to your heart. Enter into the Mystery of God's merciful goodness. Contemplate this God of Love at Work in Your Own Life. Be attentive to all that stirs within you.

Third Movement: Empowered by the Spirit

Finally, we arrive at the third movement, or the conclusion, of the prayer period. This will normally take just a few minutes.

- Quickly remember what has happened during the prayer period. What feelings animated you? What were your principal reflections?
- As you come to the end of your prayer time, you are asked to make a resolution to be more open to the work of the Spirit who is in you and trying to work through you for others. Embrace the graced texture of your own life story. Reflect on where God's Spirit seems to be breaking into your life and drawing you to sacrifice yourself that others might have a fuller life. What is it that is helping you to live each day with authenticity and holiness? "Follow the Spirit's lead."²⁰ Accept the new life that God is trying to give you today.
- Take the time to express the love and admiration you have for God. Thank the Father, Jesus, and the Spirit for the graces received during the prayer period, as well as for the sentiments and feelings that have been experienced. Offer yourself again to God with Christ, with all the activities and efforts that the day will bring.²¹

Conclusion

It is hoped that this method will assist you to converse with God about your ministry as a Lasallian educator. Look around our world with the eyes of faith. Listen in hope to the cries of all of those who wait. Respond in love and zeal, humbled by this opportunity which is ours to share in the renewal and re-creation of the face of the earth "as the ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ."²²

²⁰ Gal 5:25.

²¹ Brother Alvaro Rodriguez.

²² De La Salle, *Meditations*, #195.2; cf. 2 Co 5:20.