



*Celebration
of the
Sanctity of Life*

From the Catholic Conference of Kentucky Pro-Life Committee

Notes on Using the Prayer Service

The services in this collection were designed for a variety of settings, and we encourage you to adapt them to your particular needs. The role of leader can be shared by one or more persons. Some advance preparation, such as handouts or candles, may be required. Suggested hymns are widely available.

GATHERING HYMN *May We Praise You* (John Foley, SJ)

GATHERING PRAYER

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Response: Amen.

Leader: God our Creator, you fashioned human life in your divine image, and each new life receives from you an eternal destiny. From the very moment of inception, we grow to fulfill your purpose for us. Through your Son Jesus Christ, we have been redeemed. Through him we have become your adopted children. We are stewards of creation; we are heirs of heaven. Thank you for these gifts of sacred life and holy love. We praise your goodness; we adore you. Hear us as we pray, through Jesus Christ, your Son, Our Lord.

Response: Amen.

READINGS

First Reading: (*Col 1:9–14*) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Therefore, from the day we heard this, we do not cease praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding to live in a manner worthy of the Lord, so as to be fully pleasing, in every good work bearing fruit and growing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with every power, in accord with his glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy giving thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light. He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Pause for silent reflection.

Second Reading: (*Dt 30:19*) A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy.

I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live...

The word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Pause for silent reflection.

Third Reading: (*DV 41*) A reading from the Vatican Instruction *Donum Vitae* (*The Gift of Life*).

Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves “the creative action of God,”

and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can, in any circumstance, claim for himself the right to destroy directly an innocent human being.

Pause for silent reflection.

PRAYER *The Life Promise*

Leader: Please join me now in making the “Life Promise.”

All:

In the name of the One God, ever living and life-giving, faithful and true, I promise always to choose life.

- ◆ I accept God’s gift of life to me, whatever the circumstances of my conception and my birth, of my parents, of my family, of all who ever cared for me or did me harm in the journey of my early years. God calls me by name and works all together for my good. Grateful for his faithful love, I choose life.
- ◆ I accept God’s gift of life around me, whether sister or brother, friend or stranger, however whole or broken, great or small, whether saint or sinner, rich or poor, both well and ill, ally, enemy, or indifferent. I accept them, for each human life is a sacred treasure; each is crafted in God’s image; in each moves the Spirit’s blessing. Grateful for his abundant blessings, I choose life.
- ◆ I accept God’s gift of life in my dying. His hands shape the manner of my death; his clock counts out my hours. God lays me down and he upholds me. Grateful that God is Life, I choose life.

All this we pray in the name of the One God, everlasting and life-giving, faithful and true. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: In faith and hope, let us place our petitions before the Lord.

The response is: ***Loving God, hear our prayer.***

Leader:

- ◆ That God may send an angel to every child who lives in the womb, to guard each defenseless life, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That we may see the image of Christ in all who are neglected or ignored, especially the poor, the sick, and the aged, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That through the intercession of Mary, whose heart was pierced with a sword, everyone who suffers from violence may find peace and strength, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That every parent who struggles alone to raise children may find support and community within our Church, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That men and women condemned to death row may know repentance and forgiveness, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That the rights to life and liberty may be watchwords of our nation, we pray to the Lord. (*Response*)
- ◆ That all those who work for life, physicians, teachers, religious, deacons, priests,

legislators, judges, social workers, especially those who pray at abortion clinics and serve families in crisis, may please God by their perseverance, we pray to the Lord. *(Response)*

PRAYER *The Lord's Prayer*

Leader: Let us call on our Father as Jesus taught us.

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven.... Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: O God, compassionate and merciful, protector of the widowed, defender of the orphaned, you who are Love itself have fashioned us in your divine image. You command us to love as we are loved by you, loving our neighbors and forgiving our enemies. Holy God, send out your Spirit to fill our hearts with courage. Guide our steps along your way toward our heavenly home, that we may live with you there for ever and ever. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *Now Thank We All Our God* (Martin Rinkart, Johan Cugar)

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