

# Prayer Service:

## Love One Another as I Have Loved You

**Leader:** We pray with humble hearts in the name of God, who is Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of the world. Let us bow our heads and pray for God's mercy. (*pause*) Creator God, You are the giver of all gifts, yet we sometimes fail to show gratitude, care, or respect for all you have created, and so we pray:

**All: Creator of all, help us be humble stewards of all your gifts.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, you gave sight to the blind, yet we often choose not to see, and so we pray:

**All: Christ, our Lord and brother, give us new eyes to see.**

**Leader:** Sanctifier, Spirit of God, you inspired the prophets to speak for those who sometimes could not speak for themselves, and so we pray:

**All: Spirit of God, give us inspiration and a strong voice to speak on behalf of those who are marginalized or forgotten.**

**Leader:** God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, we gather as your children and as brothers and sisters to one another. We ask you to create in us new hearts, to open our eyes, and to make us one in your love. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

**All: Amen.**

**Lector:** Let us listen attentively to the Word of God from the Gospel of Luke.

*(The lector will read Luke 16:19–31, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. When the reading is finished, the lector will say the following:)*

**Lector:** The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

*(Allow a moment of silence.)*

**Leader:** You are now invited to spend several minutes in silence to consider your own attitudes and actions toward those you may have considered to be outsiders or less than you in some way. You are also invited to pray for the grace to be able to walk in the shoes of those who are different from you.



**Music Leader:** *(Play an appropriate piece of music or lead the class in song.)*

**Leader:** Aware of our need for God's grace, we offer our petitions. All are invited to pray. After your petition, please say, "We pray to the Lord." The response will be, "Redeemer of all, have mercy on us." *(The leader may begin the petitions, allowing time for the students to add their spontaneous prayers. The petitions can also be prepared in advance and given to different students to read. After a few moments, the leader can continue.)*

**Leader:** Are we too selfish or possibly too proud to see a person in need, even if she or he is right in front of us? Is it because that person is of a different race or a different religion? Is it because that person is poor or homeless? Is it because of that person's social status or sexual orientation? Does our own attitude of self-sufficiency and our unwillingness to walk in another person's shoes blind us to the dignity of the person who is different from us? Let Jesus speak to us today as he spoke to his disciples. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you should also love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples" (John 13:34–35).

**All: They will know we are Jesus' disciples by our love for one another. Alleluia!** *(In the season of Lent, say: Amen! So be it!)*

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