



Spring 2008

**Dear Brothers,**

Even though we may work in various ministries, our community living often runs in something of a yearly cycle. We may begin the year with community planning or goal setting, and we may conclude the year with a community evaluation or celebration. The Province Liturgy Commission asked our small committee to make suggestions for End-of-the-Year Rituals. Provided are resources to help us mark the end of a year of community life together.

The first resource is a *Prayer Service of Thanksgiving* which could be used as an Evening Prayer. Into that service the community might choose to insert one of the sharing components described after the scripture reading.

These suggestions are provided for your adaptation or use. They might suggest to you other ideas that seem more appropriate to your local situation. At the end of the community year you might also pray for those brothers moving to a new community or work, and for those who bear burdens of illness or aging. We hope these resources prove helpful for our brotherhood and common life.

Fraternally,

*Brandon Alana, nSM*

*Chris Conlon, SM*

*Mike Lisbeth, SM*

## END OF YEAR COMMUNITY PRAYER SERVICE

### POSSIBLE PRAYER FORMATS

April 22, 2008

**A typical format for a prayer service could include:**

- Opening hymn
- Prayer
- Reading(s)—Scripture and/or another source
- Psalm response
- Gospel reading
- Reflections (one person or shared)
- Magnificat
- Intentions/Lord's Prayer
- Closing song

Since this is a prayer service, various things can be added or subtracted. A slideshow can be used, with a reading or in place of a reading. Instead of a homily, all can be invited to share an idea with the community. The Intentions can be prepared and/or mentioned by individuals. The main purpose of what is done is to focus the thought and prayer of the community as a summary of the things with which we “go forth.”

#### **Possible Scripture texts**

##### **1. Deuteronomy 8:11-18**

Take care that you do not forget the Lord your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today.<sup>12</sup> When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them,<sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied,<sup>14</sup> then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery,<sup>15</sup> who led you through the

great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock,<sup>16</sup> and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good.<sup>17</sup> Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth."<sup>18</sup> But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

## **2. 1 Thessalonians 3:9; 11-13**

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you?<sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you.<sup>12</sup> And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you.<sup>13</sup> And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

## **3. Romans 1:8-12**

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world.<sup>9</sup> For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers,<sup>10</sup> asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you.<sup>11</sup> For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you<sup>12</sup> — or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

## **4. John 11:40-45**

Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me.<sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"<sup>44</sup> The dead man came out,

his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."<sup>45</sup> Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

#### 5. John 15:1-8

I am the true vine and my Father is the vine grower. He prunes away every barren branch, but the fruitful ones he trims clean to increase their yield. You are clean already, thanks to the word I have spoken to you. Live on in me, as I do in you. No more than a branch can bear fruit of itself apart from the vine, can you bear fruit apart from me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who lives in me and I in him will produce abundantly, for apart from me you can do nothing. A man who does not live in me is like a withered, rejected branch, picked up to be thrown in the fire and burnt. If you live in me, and my words stay part of you, you may ask what you will – it will be done for you. My Father has been glorified in your bearing much fruit and becoming my disciples.

#### Possible Psalm Responses

##### 1. Psalm 30:1-5 (*Musical Setting, Gather #24*)

<sup>1</sup> I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup> O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

<sup>3</sup> O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol,  
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

<sup>4</sup> Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.

<sup>5</sup> For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime.  
Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

## 2. Psalm 40:1-5

<sup>1</sup> I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

<sup>2</sup> He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

<sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> Happy are those who make the Lord their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.

<sup>5</sup> You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

## 3. Psalm 116:12-19

<sup>12</sup> What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me?

<sup>13</sup> I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord,

<sup>14</sup> I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

<sup>15</sup> Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones.

<sup>16</sup> O Lord, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds.

<sup>17</sup> I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord.

<sup>18</sup> I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people,

<sup>19</sup> in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem.

## 4. Psalm 136

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> O give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>4</sup> who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>5</sup> who by understanding made the heavens, for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>6</sup> who spread out the earth on the waters, for his steadfast love endures forever;

<sup>7</sup> who made the great lights, for his steadfast love endures forever;

- <sup>8</sup> the sun to rule over the day, for his steadfast love endures forever;
- <sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to rule over the night, for his steadfast love endures forever;
- <sup>23</sup> It is he who remembered us in our low estate, for his steadfast love endures forever;
- <sup>24</sup> and rescued us from our foes, for his steadfast love endures forever;
- <sup>25</sup> who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever.
- <sup>26</sup> O give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.

## Reflection Options

### 1. Cup of Bitterness, Cup of Blessing

While gathered at table after a festive meal, prepare two cups of wine, one dry and one sweet. Recall that our lives are a history of experiences, some difficult and some enjoyable. Pass the “Bitter Cup” from brother to brother, allowing each person to speak reverently and briefly about a difficult experience of the past year. Then pass the “Blessing Cup” from brother to brother, allowing each person to reverently and briefly name a blessing from the past year.

### 2. Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In advance of a community celebration, brothers are given a printed list of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). Actually, they are given one copy of this list for each community member. In advance, each brother considers what Gifts are exemplified by each brother. He might write a brief recollection of the manifestation of these Gifts. At the community celebration, brothers read or present these written comments to one another.

Charity	Kindness	Faith
Joy	Goodness	Modesty
Peace	Long-suffering	Continency
Patience	Mildness	Chastity

### 3. Affirmation Telegram

In advance of a community gathering, brothers are given a copy of a blank “Affirmation Telegram.” Reflect on the contribution of each brother, and briefly write it on one of the forms. At the community celebration, brothers read or

present these written comments to one another. The Affirmation Telegram is a half-sheet of paper that has the name of the sender, the name of the receiver and "I appreciate you for/because ..." and "I urge you to ..."

#### **4. Community Appreciation Awards**

In advance of a community meeting, brothers can indicate various areas of appreciation for other individuals in the community. They can be in the area of service (cooking, cleaning, housework, driving, etc.), of disposition (kindness, cheerfulness, humor, prayerfulness, etc.) or any similar area. There can be sheets for each individual. These can be shared in the context of a community meeting or a communal prayer service.

#### **Possible Songs**

1. *Now Thank We All Our God* - Crüger (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#202)
2. *We Gather Together* - Kermser (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#205)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#571)
3. *O Love of God/Amor de Dios* - Hurd (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#301)
4. *How Shall I Sing to God?* - Haas (GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#591)

#### **Songs of Blessing/Ministry/Discipleship**

1. *Sent Forth by God's Blessing* - Grove (OCP-Breaking Bread-#369)
2. *Servant Song* - McGargill (OCP-Breaking Bread-#373)
3. *The Servant Song* - Fisher (GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#683) Gillard  
(OCP-Breaking Bread-#375)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#669)
5. *God has Chosen Me* - Farrell (OCP-Breaking Bread-#376)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#682)
6. *The Summons* - Kelvingrove (OCP-Breaking Bread-#380)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#700)
7. *Take the Word of God with You* - Walker (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#381)
8. *Anthem* - Conry (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#521)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#690)
9. *All That is Hidden* - Farrell (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#522)
10. *We are Called* - Haas (GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#718)

## **Songs of Thankfulness/Thanksgiving**

1. *Now Thank We All Our God* - Crüger (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#202)
2. *We Gather Together* - Kermser (OCP-Breaking Bread 2008-#205)  
(GIA-Gather Comprehensive-#571)
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