

Prayer

S E R V I C E



A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER O God of the poor and oppressed,
ALL You call us to bear one another's burdens and advocate for human dignity and the common good. Give us a prophetic voice to meet the challenges of our day.

READING The common good is realized when prevailing economic, political, and social conditions allow "groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment"¹

RESPONSE (alternate verses)

SIDE 1 Neglect of poor and vulnerable persons constitutes a threat to their dignity; the society that neglects them places its conscience at risk.

SIDE 2 The common good and the protection of human dignity require "a preferential option for the poor,"² that is, a commitment to view life from the perspective of those who are deprived of these vital necessities, to speak out for them, to defend their interests, and to assess social policy in terms of its impact on their lives.³

LET US PRAY

ALL God of the poor, teach us to listen to the cries of the oppressed, to see your image in the faces of the outcast, and give us courage to be a voice for the voiceless in our society. May we act with integrity of purpose and passion for the ministry. We pray in trust. Amen.

SUGGESTED MUSIC

"Voices That Challenge," by David Haas, in *I Shall See God*, GIA Publications, Chicago.
"Who Will Speak?" by Marty Haugen, in *Agape*, GIA Publications, Chicago.
"All Are Welcome," by Marty Haugen, in *All Are Welcome*, GIA Publications, Chicago.

NOTES

1. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy*, Washington, DC, 1986, para. 80.
2. See *No Room in the Marketplace: The Health Care for the Poor*, Catholic Health Association of the United States, St. Louis, 1986, for a description of the "preferential option for the poor" and the challenges to the contemporary Church that flow from such an option. See also *Economic Justice for All*, para. 51.
3. *Economic Justice for All*, para. 51.

This prayer service focuses on the values of human dignity and the common good. You may use this service at meetings or on any occasion when you wish to take a moment to reflect on the mission of Jesus. Feel free to adapt the service to suit your own needs.

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