

Prayer

S E R V I C E



LOVING TENDERLY, ACTING JUSTLY

CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER Gracious God, you call us to a new day. Just as Jesus called the people of Israel to a new covenant, you call us to a conversion of life.

ALL May we embrace your wisdom: "Harden not your hearts." Renew our hearts, O God, in the spirit of the Gospel for the service of the world and one another. We pray for an increase in your transforming grace. We pray to be a truly humble people, a people who love themselves as God loves all of us, a people who are willing to be transformed each moment by your word. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

READING I

Hos 2:16, 21-22

So I will allure her, I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart. I will espouse you to me forever; I will espouse you in right and in justice, in love and in mercy; I will espouse you in fidelity, and you shall know the Lord.

READING II

Jubilee time is a reminder that we must not be afraid to enter the fertile desert of our heart and the wilderness of our lives and our world, for both of these places are the Spirit's own home. Where the desert and the wilderness meet is the Spirit realm where we connect, develop more consciousness, regenerate faith, hope, love. Here the Spirit forms God's people, and that same Spirit weaves the fabric of our lives as she teaches us to be merciful. Here God's Spirit also mends those parts of the fabric that are torn and teaches us to be just. Sr. Marie Chin, RSM, *Origins*, August 12, 1999.

REFLECTION

What word does Jesus speak to our organization? Where is Jesus leading us? How do we in our organization do the work of justice?

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, we delight in our call to be disciples of Jesus, heralds of God's justice and peace. We confess that our hearts are often restless and in need of your love and grace. Help us to open our hearts in the spirit of ongoing conversion as we work in the healing ministry of the church. May we learn to love tenderly, act justly, and walk humbly with you. We ask you to shepherd us beyond our wants, our fears, ourselves and lead us into newness of life and purpose. We ask this through Jesus, your son and our brother. Amen.

SUGGESTED MUSIC

"Hosea," by Gregory Norbert, Benedictine Foundation of the State of Vermont.
"Shepherd Me, O God" and "Return to God," by Marty Haugen, GIA Publications, Chicago.
"Change Our Hearts," by Rory Cooney, OCP Publications, Portland, OR.

As we celebrate this jubilee year 2000, we are called to enter the fertile desert of our heart where we experience conversion and, upon hearing the Gospel, are called to love tenderly and act justly. 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.

—Sr. Barbara McMullen, CDP, senior associate, Sponsor Services,
Catholic Health Association, St. Louis, e-mail: bmcnull@chausa.org



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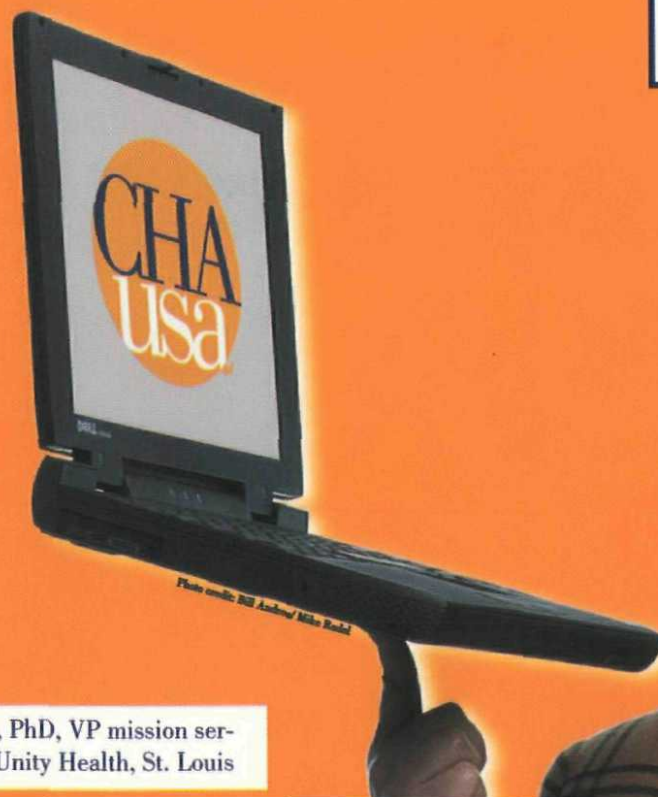
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Sr. Patricia Talone, RSM, PhD, VP mission services and ethicist, Unity Health, St. Louis