

Leadership Rooted in Discipleship

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CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: As followers of Jesus, we are called to embrace the challenges of our day with deep faith and trust in the one who journeys with us. The Beatitudes of Matthew's gospel offer spiritual and practical insight to develop the character needed for both leaders and followers.

READING 1 (*Matthew 5:1-12*)

When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

RESPONSE (Based on *Blessings for Leaders* by Dan R. Ebener)

SIDE 1: The leader is poor in spirit, seeking God through prayer and reflection, and recognizing the action of divine providence.

SIDE 2: The leader is able to mourn, to empathize with and relate to the people.

SIDE 1: The leader is meek and humble, involving the people in decisions, solving problems and addressing challenges.

SIDE 2: The leader seeks right relationships and builds integrity, credibility and a good reputation.

SIDE 1: The leader is merciful, empowering followers to take risks, to show initiative, and to work through the

mistakes that can result.

SIDE 2: The leader strives for purity of heart, is motivated to serve and devoted to a mission.

SIDE 1: The leader is a peacemaker, actively promoting peace and true harmony.

SIDE 2: The leader is willing to risk persecution, courageously pursuing a vision that is created and shared by the whole team.

READING 2

From the essay "Discipleship: The Questionable Measure of Christianity," by Sr. Joan D. Chittister, OSB

To be a disciple is to find ourselves in contradiction. We become purveyors of a world where the weak confound the strong. We begin to seek a world where the rich and the poor change places. We set out to shape a world where the last are made first. Discipleship is an attitude of mind, a quality of soul, a way of living that is not political but which has serious political implications, that changes things because it simply cannot ignore things as they are, things that defy the will of God for humanity.

Pause for reflection

PRAYERS OF PETITION

LEADER: We pray for those who lead our church, and for prophets and teachers in the church, that they look to Christ in all they say and do.

RESPONSE: Christ our hope, hear our prayer.

LEADER: We pray for those in elected office and in positions of authority, that they promote justice and mercy.

RESPONSE: Christ our hope, hear our prayer.

LEADER: We pray for parents, teachers, healers and helpers, that their lives and examples proclaim Gospel truth.

RESPONSE: Christ our hope, hear our prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL: Loving God, we pray for the strength to remain true to our call to help bring about God's reign in our world today. Hear and grant the prayers we offer through Christ our Lord. Amen.