

Prayer

S E R V I C E



THE SACREDNESS AND CONNECTEDNESS OF ALL LIFE

CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER O God, you created us to be in relationship and call us to live in one sacred community.

ALL May we celebrate the strands of God's life and love that bind us together as one human family. We give thanks for the gifts of creation, and for the gift of technology. May we use the technology we have wisely and for the good of all life and the glory of God. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

READING I

I call heaven and earth to witness to you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and to Jacob. The word of the Lord.

Dt 30:19-20

READING II

I beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love. May your unity be based on the unity of faith. For there is one Christ, one faith, one baptism, and one God who binds us together as the foundation of hope. The word of the Lord.

Eph 4:1-7

REFLECTION

What is the blessing of life for me at this time? What issues concerning life am I struggling with at this time? How do I understand and appreciate the diversity present in all God's creation?

RESPONSE

An emergent world invites us to use our most human of all capacities, our consciousness. It asks us to be alert in the moment for what is unfolding. What is happening at this moment? What can we do because of what we just learned? An emergent world welcomes us in as conscious participants and surprises us with discovery. "To recognize that everything is surprising is the first step toward recognizing that everything is gift," says [David] Steindl-Rast.

Life moves toward life. We seek for connection and restore the world to wholeness. Our seemingly separate lives become meaningful as we discover how necessary we are to each other. Steindl-Rast observes that "if we agree to belong, we will feel called to new ways of living. We will notice what is required of us now that we are a community. We will act differently."

When we reach out for a different level of connection, our search for wholeness is rewarded with a world made wholly new.

Margaret J. Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers, A Simpler Way, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 1996, pp. 53, 75, 88.

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL All praise and thanks to you, eternal God of life, for the wonders of creation and all the possibilities that emerge through new patterns of connection. May we always rise to the invitations of your grace to use the gifts of knowledge and healing for the good of the human community. Bless us with the spirit of justice and love. We ask this in your name. Amen.

SUGGESTED MUSIC (these songs may also be used as responses)

"All Are Welcome," by Marty Haugen, in *All Are Welcome*, GIA Publications, Chicago.

"All One People," by Dan Schutte, in *Drawn by a Dream*, OCP Publications, Portland, OR.

"Canticle of the Turning," by Rory Cooney, in *Safety Harbor*, GIA Publications, Chicago.

"God of All Creation," by David Haas, in *As Water to the Thirsty*, GIA Publications, Chicago.

This prayer service focuses on the interconnectedness of all life and our responsibility to steward it wisely. 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: bmemull@chausa.org*

