

Creating a Place Of God's Mercy and Hope

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*Texts are from words of Pope Francis, May 18, 19
and June 12, 2013*

CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: Pope Francis reminds us: "Dear brothers and sisters, being the church, to be the People of God, in accordance with the Father's great design of love, means to be the heaven of God in this humanity of ours. It means to proclaim and to bring the God's salvation to this world of ours, so often led astray, in need of answers that give courage, hope and new vigor for the journey." Let us ask God to be with us and give us the strength we need, as we journey together.

READING (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

Pause for reflection

RESPONSE

LEADER: "May the church be a place of God's mercy and hope, where all feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel."

ALL: Holy Spirit, grant us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel.

LEADER: "And to make others feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged, the church must be with doors wide open so that all may enter. And we must go out through these doors and proclaim the Gospel."

ALL: Holy Spirit, grant us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel.

LEADER: "Because faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others ... with our faith we must create a 'culture of encounter,' a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently, as well as those who hold other beliefs, who do not have the same faith."

ALL: Holy Spirit, grant us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel.

LEADER: "It is the Paraclete Spirit, the 'Comforter,' who grants us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel. The Holy Spirit makes us look to the horizon and drives us to the very outskirts of existence in order to proclaim life in Jesus Christ. Let us ask ourselves: Do we tend to stay closed in on ourselves, on our group, or do we let the Holy Spirit open us to mission?"

ALL: Holy Spirit, grant us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel.

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL: Good and gracious God, your Gospel calls us to be the church, the people of God, in our work and in the world. "May the church be a place of God's mercy and hope, where all feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel. And to make others feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged, the church must be with doors wide open so that all may enter. And we must go out through these doors and proclaim the Gospel." Grant us the ability to welcome all with doors wide open, in our workplace and at your heavenly banquet table. Amen.



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