

# Commissioning: My Brother's & Sister's Keeper

## Leader's Guide

*This easily serves as a commissioning prayer service for a group setting out on a service trip or organizing to respond to people in need.*

**Materials/Preparation:** Prepare a prayer focus or center of a table with cloth, cross, candle and meaningful symbols. Other items needed: CD player, copy of "Calling at the Crossroads" by Bryan Sirchio from "Artist's Hand" ([Crosswind Music](#)) or another appropriate song, printed copies of the prayer service. If using the prayer service as a commissioning, call forth each person before the closing prayer and consider presenting each with a fair trade cross or some other remembrance.

**Gathering:** Gather participants in a circle around the prayer focus. Play "Calling at the Crossroads" by Bryan Sirchio or another appropriate song. Follow the prayer as outlined on the handout. End with a sign of peace and/or a song of your choosing.

# Commissioning: My Brother's & Sister's Keeper Handout

**Leader:** We begin (+) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God, you created us as one human family. It is only fitting that we look at all people as if they are our brothers and sisters, and respond accordingly, especially in times of need and crisis. At this time, we pause to reflect on what that means, seeking forgiveness for the times we failed to respond and asking for the guidance and courage to do what is only right if we are to be our brothers' and sisters' keeper.

**Reader 1:** God, our Creator, in prayer we come to you asking for forgiveness and offering ourselves in service to others.

**Reader 2:** God of Oneness, we ask your mercy for the times when we have found ourselves asking Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

**All:** *Lord, have mercy.*

**Reader 3:** Christ, our Suffering Servant, we seek your forgiveness for the times when we have ignored our duties to respond to the suffering of our brothers and sisters in our community, in our nation, and throughout our world.

**All:** *Christ, have mercy.*

**Reader 4:** God of Life, we ask you to forgive us for the times when we have failed to consider how our actions and inactions affect the people of this world who are most poor and vulnerable.

**All:** *Lord, have mercy.*

**Reader 5:** Jesus, our Brother, we seek your mercy for the times when you were thirsty and we gave you no drink, when you were hungry and we gave you no food, when you were sick and we failed to visit you.

**All:** *Christ, have mercy.*

**Reader 6:** God of Infinite Love, we ask your forgiveness for the times when we have loved ourselves more than we have loved our neighbors.

**All:** *Lord, have mercy.*

**Reader 7:** We pray, God, that through our words—both written and spoken—that we may proclaim the Gospel in such a way that no Christian can ignore his or her responsibility to live as one with all people throughout the world.

**All:** *God be with us.*

# Commissioning: My Brother's & Sister's Keeper

Handout

**Reader 8:** We ask You, God, to strengthen us so that through our daily actions we might live the loving concern and build the Beloved Community that You desire.

**All:** *God be with us.*

**Reader 9:** In where and how we live, God, help us to challenge the enormous and widening gap between the world's rich and the world's poor.

**All:** *God be with us.*

**Reader 10:** Beginning with our families, help us to resist the seductive invitations of materialism and individualism so that we might be forced to answer your call to live lives of loving compassion.

**All:** *God be with us.*

**Reader 11:** We pray, God, that we may use whatever privileges and talents that You have granted us to change the social structures that maintain a gulf between those in our world with much power and those with little.

**All:** *God be with us.*

**Leader:** We now take this moment to give you this cross. May this serve as reminder of our commitment to be our brother and sister's keepers, to make an option for the poor and the oppressed and to choose to live in justice and peace.

*Each person is called forth by name to receive a cross as a reminder of God's call to serve.*

**Leader:** Let us all close with a prayer that was written by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

**All:** Lord, open our eyes that we may see You in our brothers and sisters.  
Lord, open our ears that we may hear the cries of the hungry, the cold, the frightened, and the oppressed.  
Lord, open our hearts that we may love each other as You love us.  
Renew us in Your Spirit. Free us and make us one. Amen.

*End with a sign of peace.*