

Walking Solidarity

Prayer Service
20 Minutes

This prayer service is taken from the 2008-09 Food Fast manual.

Materials Needed

For Prayer Space:

- In your prayer space, include colors, textiles and ceramics that evoke the global nature of this prayer service. Arrange the prayer table with a table cloth, bible, cross (you might arrange several crosses and crucifixes from various countries if you have them), one or more statues or pictures of Mary (use images from a variety of countries).
- CD player
- CD of “The Summons, Will You Come and Follow Me” by John Bell (GIA)

For Participants:

- pens
- *Walking Solidarity Prayer*, one copy for each reader
- one pair of “flip flops” for everyone [You can either provide these for the group (you’ll need to get a general sense of how many need S, M or L) or have the participants bring a pair with them.]

Procedure

Before the Prayer Service

Arrange the prayer space. Set up chairs in a circle that extends out from either side of the prayer table. Leave about two to three feet around the table. If you invite participants to sit on the floor, make sure the table is low enough for all to see it.

Select two readers for the prayer “Blessed Are”. Have them review it through ahead of time, so the reading goes smoothly. Select one reader for the Scripture.

Walking Solidarity Prayer

Leader: All over the world, people in poverty are on their feet. They are on the move. Some make the flight of the refugee, negotiating the frantic escape from violence. Some walk the perpetual route of physical labor, traveling daily to far-away work sites, hauling food and water from distant sources, bearing goods between farm field and market. Others follow the migration patterns of opportunity, trailing the wake of the work and schooling that left ahead of them or call to them across huge distances.

As Catholics we are called to walk in solidarity with people on the margins, with people who lack resources and power. Solidarity with others requires us to carry a bit of their experience with us, to make their hope our hope. We're familiar with being in common cause with friends or family members. But what about people who are not nearby, who we do not know, but about whom we are called to be concerned? Symbols, ritual and prayer can help us here. For our prayer service we'll use a variety of signs and symbols to help us develop this spiritual practice of solidarity.

A symbol that will call us to walk in solidarity with the poor will be our feet, or more specifically what we have on our feet.

Pass out the flip flops or if you have asked participants to bring them from home, have them take them out now.

Consider for a moment how many pairs of shoes you own, and the different uses they are for. Show of hands: How many would say they have fewer than 5 pairs of shoes? How many have more than 5 ... more than 10 ... more than 20 ... more than 50?

What are your shoes for? *[Have the group share examples ...]*

These flip flops will replace the shoes that you brought with you. They too will be a reminder of the walk you are sharing with the world's poor today. And they will also help us record some of the insights we gather on the walk.

Group prayer

Song: "The Summons" by John Bell

Leader: Lord Jesus we are striving to answer your call to follow you. Bless the people whom we carry with us today. We know them only by their faces. You know the length of their histories, the breadth of their stories, the depths of their hearts. You know them as you know us all – as your beloved. Teach us the ways of solidarity as we follow you on your migrant path, your itinerant way, into the hearts of all who seek a home with you. Amen.

Walking Solidarity Prayer

Blessed Are

Reader 1: Blessed are those who are on the move, transforming exodus and flight into energy for a new search. From the victims will come the protagonists of history.


Reader 2: Blessed are those who, forced to wander without direction, with wisdom learn and teach the lesson for the road. They will be the architects of a new time.

Reader 1: Blessed are those who suffer pain, nostalgia, loneliness, yet know how to make of every arrival a new beginning. They shall act with faith, hope and love.

Reader 2: Blessed are those who open borders and mix anthems, flags, races and creeds. Without discrimination, they make the world everyone's home.

Reader 1: Blessed are the wayfarers of the roads. In the tears, sweat and the work of their hands they prepare a tomorrow of justice and right.

Reader 2: Blessed are those who open the door to pilgrims, making solidarity the passport to our common homeland. They are constructing new citizenship.



Reader 1: Blessed are those who foment encounters and re-encounters, sowing peace. They will harvest flowers and stars in the new heaven and the new earth.

Reader 2: Blessed are the excluded, without opportunities, without voice. They will be the first guests in the great banquet, where bread will not be lacking on anyone's table.

"Blessed Are" by Fr. Jose Alfredo Goncalve in Prayer Without Borders, ©2004, Catholic Relief Services

Leader: Please stand and prepare to receive the Word of God.

Scripture: *Luke 9: 57-62*

Leader: Please be seated. Following Jesus usually requires us to leave something behind. For example, Jesus was constantly admonishing his followers to walk away from behaviors, attitudes and beliefs that got in the way of love of compassion.

Take a few moments and reflect on something in your life from which you would like to walk away, something that is not welcome on this journey with Jesus.

Give the group time to think. If it's a large group, have them share with the person next to them. If the group is small they can share with everyone.

Now on your flip flops, write a few words about what you are walking away from.