

Evening Prayer

Choose a leader to read the service. Everyone else responds with the text in bold.

Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-19)

Grant us, Lord, the lamp of charity which never fails, that it may burn in us and shed its light on those around us, and that by its brightness we may have a vision of that holy City, where dwells the true and never-failing Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Light a candle or turn on a lantern or flashlight.

*O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.*

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers, creator of the changes of day and night, giving rest to the weary, renewing the strength of those who are spent, bestowing upon us occasions of song in the evening. As you have protected us in the day that is past, so be with us in the coming night; keep us from every sin, every evil, and every fear; for you are our light and salvation, and the strength of our life. To you be glory for endless ages. **Amen.**

The Lord bless you and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. **Amen.**

Holy Household ToolKit

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to **do justice**, and to love
kindness, and to walk humbly with your
God?" Micah 6:8

Economic Justice

September and October 2020

Core Study

Using your memory, your Bible, and/or google searches, find 10 bible verses or stories that center on money/wealth. Do you notice any trends in the text?

Over the course of September and October, three readings stand out in their specificity to economic justice:

Matthew 20:1-16 (parable of laborers in the vineyard)

Matthew 22: 15-22 (give to the emperor...)

Matthew 22: 34-46 (love your neighbor as yourself)

Consider:

What is the difference between rights and privileges? Does God have a different understanding of what is a right or a privilege? How is justice tied to this distinction?

To whom does all wealth belong? In what context does it become the duty of a larger organization - the government, the church, a charity, etc- to provide for the needs of the persons who cannot do so on their own? In what context does that responsibility fall to an individual or household? Do those ideas compete?

Jesus states that we are to give "to God the things that are God's." What is God's? How do we give things to God?

What is a steward?

Does equal mean the same as just? Does loving our neighbor as ourselves require equal purchasing or budgeting? Does it require just purchasing or budgeting?

Recipe

A substantial portion of the worlds population subsists on versions of rice and beans, which, when eaten in the right proportion (more beans than rice) can serve as a pretty nutritious meal. Try this version of a beans and rice recipe, with a unique sauce, which comes from Portland, Oregon.

Yumm Sauce:

1/2 cup avocado, canola, or grape seed oil	2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup almond meal	1/2 teaspoon coarse, kosher salt
1/2 cup cooked Garbanzo beans	Pinch of coarsely ground black pepper
1/2 cup cooked soybeans or 1/3 cup tofu	1 teaspoon curry powder
1/2 cup water	1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 cup lemon juice	

Topping suggestions:

shredded cheddar cheese
diced tomato
salsa
sliced avocado
black olives
sour cream
cilantro

Instructions:

Mix together all the sauce ingredients in a blender or food processor. Process until smooth. Transfer the sauce to a clean bottle or jar, cover, and refrigerate overnight to allow the flavors to blend.

Place a scoop of brown rice in an individual-sized serving bowl, then layer a scoop of black beans over the rice. Drizzle the rice and beans with a desired amount of Yumm Sauce, then top with desired toppings. (Yumm sauce is calorie dense, about 70 cal in a serving. A little goes a long way.)

Next Steps #1

Help Us Build a Well!

Save the money for the month that you are not spending on your food bill (see House Challenge #1) and donate it to African Palms. It takes \$9,000 to build a well with a generator. Donations can be dropped to the African Palms or church office, given online, or mailed to the church.

(African Palms is offering a Scavenger Hunt this Fall, more info coming!)

Reflection:

It is said it is better to teach a man to fish than to provide a fish. How is it different to provide something versus provide the means to obtain something? Is one better or do they both have their time and place. What can a well accomplish for a community?

Next Steps #2

Needs versus Wants

As a household, write the name of budget line items on individual index cards. You can brainstorm these headings together or you can pull up budget spread sheets. Be specific. Avoid big categories like "entertainment" and instead detail the types of entertainment your family prefers. Examples of headings on cards - mortgage or rent, groceries, eating out, etc.

Organize your cards into three piles: Needs, Wants, Generosity. Some items may deserve more questioning or discussion than others.

Reflection:

To what extent are the needs of others more important than our wants? Are there better ways for you generosity to serve the needs of others? Are there better ways St. John's can support efforts to spread the generosity of the parish to serve the needs of the community?

Theme Setter

Lacing Purse

Why: Money occupies much of our thought processes. It is the means to achieve particular ends, like food, housing, clothing and other necessities. It is important to reflect on how we spend, how we save, and how we share. Lace a change purse to store your money for the next two toolkits as we reflect on questions of faith and money.

Materials provided: 2 foam pieces, (the larger back, and small front rectangle,) lacing, foam stickers.

Instructions:

Lay the foam pieces together, matching up the holes. Find the center hole on the bottom of the purse. Insert the lacing into this center hole, up to the mid-point of the string. Now you have an equal amount to lace up the sides.

Wrap the lacing around the foam, gently as the foam can rip, so that the string enters through the same side, (bottom or top) every time.

Once you have laced up both sides, tie on the matching string to both ends to create a strap.

Found down the top flap, creasing the foam. Use foam stickers to decorate your change purse.

Reflection:

Consider: Who's really the owner of the purse? Who are we responsible to and who are we responsible for? Does that answer change depending on your life circumstances?

Household Challenge #2

In Tanzania, when water is not available through a well, girls walk an average of 3.7 miles a day to get water and carry it back to their homes. Not only is the journey far and the water heavy (usually just over 5 gallons), but also it precludes girls from attending school or women from working income earning jobs.

Carry Water

(A larger description of a water challenge is found at:

https://www-tc.pbs.org/wgbh/rxforsurvival/campaign/givetime/pdf/Rx_Carry_Water.pdf)

Fill up a gallon jug with water. A gallon of water weighs 8 lbs. You can fill up a container for each member of your household or you can take turns carrying the gallon jug. Take your water on a walk through your neighborhood. As you walk, reflect on the weight of the water, the distance you are traveling, the relative safety of your trip.

Reflection:

Discuss what it would be like to have to carry water every day, for miles. How much water would your family need for a day? Do you think if an area doesn't have the infrastructure of water that they have safe roadways?

Is clean water a right or a privilege? Is education a right or a privilege? Is safety a right or a privilege? How can seemingly unconnected needs be connected like water, to education, to safety?

How does this make you reflect on your own water usage? Brainstorm ways your household could use less water. Brainstorm ways we can share and support development that gives everyone access to clean water.

Household Challenge #1

In Maryland, for individuals and families who make under a living wage, they can apply for SNAP benefits, which means they are given a voucher to buy certain categories of food each month. The average amount, depending on the household size is between \$4-\$6 a day per person, with the average amount dropping as the household increases in size.

Can your household keep to this budget for one month?

Household Size	Monthly Food Budget
1	\$194
2	\$355
3	\$509
4	\$646
5	\$768
6	\$921

Reflection:

What do you notice about the types of food that you can afford? Note the cost of various food items: What are the cheapest items in the store? What are the more expensive items?

What are strategies that help decrease the cost? What other challenges can these strategies pose for a household?

What can you do to support your neighbors, both near and far, that are facing food insecurity?