

“TO LOVE THE POOR MEANS TO COMBAT ALL FORMS OF POVERTY”
(Pope Francis)



Setting:

5 lit candles, with the names of each continent.
An empty plate and empty cup. A second plate with dirt.

Antiphon: *Hear me, God. My voice cries out to you, ‘Have mercy, answer me!’ Of you my heart says: ‘Seek God’s face.’ If I seek your face, oh God, do not hide your face from me.*

Take some time to contemplate.

How do the poor people I know live? Why do they live like this? What are they lacking?

- Create a psalm with the realities that I know of my country or the world that touch my heart:

Choose either of these antiphons to repeat:

- *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.*
- *The hungry are filled with good things; and the rich are sent empty away.*

Take some time to allow yourself to form your conscience.

The Earth, our Common Home: Poor, Disposable and Excluded

“Environmental problems cannot be separated from human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment. We have mutilated the way we see the world, the only common home we have to live. The culture of discarding people and things and the over-exploitation of natural resources have turned the Earth into a garbage dump. Now the Earth is one more among the poor.

The global warming of the planet makes us realize that the climate is a general and unique reality, and for that reason, it is part of the common good, "it is a common good belonging to all and meant for all" (*Laudato si'* para. 23), and it calls us all to "recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it" (para. 23). If the current trend continues, in terms of our way of life, production and consumption, "this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us" (para. 24). And we should not think about this global climate change only in environmental terms, but at the same time must think of dimensions that are "social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods" (para. 25), which affect everyone and especially people in developing places who depend heavily on *the land* for their way of life.

Take some time to let yourself be enlightened by the Word of God.

Gospel of Luke 6:36-38

- How does this Gospel challenge me?

A time for solidarity:

We respond: “Hear us God of justice.”

- Help us God to be formed in an ecological and integral conscience, as an alternative for a just and dignified life.
- That our eyes and ears may not be indifferent to the suffering of our brothers and sisters, the cause of an unjust system that excludes and discards.
- May those in poverty continue to be the treasure of our hearts, because in them we see Jesus, who clamors for justice.
 - *Others may be added...*

Let us say together the prayer that binds us as daughters and sons of a common Creator who yearns for a more just and dignified life:

- **Our Father/Mother...**

Peasant’s Prayer:

God, heart of heaven and heart of earth, I ask permission to speak to you, so that my heart may open and let out your Word, your feeling, your worry, your crying. You are great and you are good, you are above my head and below my feet, you beat in my heart; there is nothing that hides from you and you know everything. You know the need to eat every day, the need to cure the body of its sickness, the need to sow our food, the need to raise our animals with which we feed, the fruits that we harvest. Yes, good One, be our caretaker, our eye, our hand, our food, so that we do not fall into discouragement and become enemies of your heart, not caring what we are and what we have to live. Yes, God heart of heaven and heart of the earth, that I may share the abundant fruits with my brothers and sisters, and may our smile be our thanks to you from a small heart that trusts and hopes in You.

