

“You Are the Ones God Has Chosen”

Call to Prayer

(Mark Link, SJ – adapted)

Leader: (as the candle is being lit...)

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world...

Whoever follows me will have the

Light of life

And will never walk in darkness." (John 8:12)

Lord Jesus, you said that where two or three come together in your name,

You are there with them.

The light of this candle symbolizes your presence among us.

And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

we stand before you today

to renew our dedication to Your call

to be ambassadors of Your Son,

to be Your Good News

for those entrusted to our care.

As John Baptist de La Salle

allowed himself to be led by You imperceptibly,

step by step,

to ever deeper commitment

to the establishment of the Christian Schools,

We, too, recognize Your gentle and persistent presence

and grace in our own lives.

With faith in Your loving plan of salvation,

we place ourselves in Your hands

to be your ministers of the Gospel

in a world badly in need of Your grace.

We represent different vocations

and different lifestyles;

we bring different gifts,

different abilities,

different reflections of Your love.

Together we share a common zeal
for our Lasallian vocation
to provide a human and Christian education
to the young, especially the poor.

Reading I

(Saint Teresa of Avila)

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.
Yours are the only hands
with which to do his work.
Yours are the only feet
with which to go about doing good.
Yours are the only eyes
through which compassion
can shine forth upon a troubled world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
and yours are the hands
with which he is to bless others now.

Response Prayer

Side A: O God, it is easy to love the whole world,
but hard to love the person one works next to.

Side B: O God, it is easy to campaign for world peace,
but hard to contribute to the peace within my own home.

Side A: O God, it is easy to be fascinated with some new truth,
and miss You in the thing I have known for so long.

Side B: O God, it is easy to share my home and possessions with people I like;
teach me how to be generous toward others.

Side A: Enable me today to say something, or do something, that will make a difference
to the discouraged, to the inexperienced, to the despairing.

All: Let no selfish concern with my own affairs shut me off from any today. Amen

Reading II

(From a reflection offered by Brother John Johnston, FSC at LLI, Spring 2003)

C'est vous qu'il a choisi... C'est VOUS qu'il a choisi.

John Baptist de La Salle wanted the Brothers to consider these words on the first day of their annual retreat. We find the passage in the first of his Meditations for the Time of Retreat, meditations he composed in the last years of his life..

The words mean literally, *It's you that he (God) has chosen*. Our contemporary translations renders the phrase, *You are the ones he has chosen*.

Chosen for what? Our Founder answers that question with extraordinary clarity and with impeccable logic – a logic grounded, however, in faith. He says that God wants every person to know the truth and to be saved. But it's clear that De La Salle is not thinking abstractly of all human persons. His talking to the Brothers about the young people they have in their classes, kids he describes as “poor, abandoned, and far from salvation.”

...We can imagine John Baptist de La Salle looking directly into the eyes of the Brothers and saying to them, “Brothers, God has given YOU such a ministry...you are the ones he has chosen.” God is *confiding* to your *care*, God is *entrusting* to you, the children and youth that you have in your schools. “Look upon yourselves” as God’s *ministers, ambassadors, co-workers*. God wants you to *represent* Jesus Christ – to re-present – to make Jesus’ loving and saving presence a visible and effective reality in their lives. He wants you, in Jesus’ name and in his place, to touch their hearts and their minds.

Lasallians, De La Salle addressed these words first and foremost to the Brothers....Today, however, Lasallians, without the slightest hesitation, I say that John Baptist de La Salle is addressing these words to each of you, whether you are married, single, member of another religious institute, priest, or Brother of the Christian Schools.

In total accord with your primary life commitment, look upon yourselves as God’s ministers, ambassadors, co-workers. Look upon yourselves as Jesus’ presence in the lives of the youth God is confiding to your care.

Remember always that...

You are the ones God has chosen.

It's you that he has chosen.

C'est vous qu'il a choisi.

Prayers of Intercession

Response: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God our loving Father, we are here now in your loving presence, stripped of our pretenses, aware that you understand us and know our needs before we ask them. In your loving mercy, pardon our failings and hear our prayers. **R**

Lord, bring to us something of your peace and stillness. Come to meet us in the quiet of our hearts, for you are there already, forgiving us, redeeming us, assuring us, healing us. **R.**

May we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith as we journey through life. May He who has begun this work in us, bring it to completion in Him. **R.**

Loving Father, you are full of love and generosity. Continue to fill us with love and gratitude. Lead us to celebrate your constant goodness to us. **R.**

Heavenly Father, we bring to you all the hours of our days, all our talents and gifts, all our successes and failures, all the love we have received and given, all those to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. May your love and light continue to heal, restore and inspire us. **R.**

God our loving Father, we lay before you all the petitions we have in our hearts, our concerns and our problems. Speak to us, lead us, and guide us. Deepen our trust in your holy will. **R.**

Closing Prayer

(adapted from De La Salle, "Prayer of the Teacher before School")

You, my God, are my strength, my patience, my light, and my counsel; it is you who opens the minds and hearts of the children confided to my care. Abandon me not to myself for a moment. For my own conduct and for that of my pupils, grant me the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety, the spirit of holy fear of you, and an ardent zeal to procure your glory. Amen.

Closing Song: God Has Chosen Me

Verse 1

God has chosen me, God has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.
God has chosen me, God has chosen me to bring new sight to those searching for light.
God has chosen me, chosen me.

Refrain:

And to tell the world that God's kingdom is near,
To remove oppression and break down fear,
Yes, God's time is near, God's time is near.

Verse 2

God has chosen me, God has chosen me to set alight a new fire.
God has chosen me, God has chosen me to bring to birth a new kingdom on earth.
God has chosen me, chosen me.

Leader: We conclude our prayer this morning by listening to Jesus speak to us:

"You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.

No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket;

instead, the lamp is put on a lamp stand,

where it gives light to everyone in the house.

In the same way, your light must shine before all people.."

(Matthew 5:14-16)

(Someone extinguishes the candle).

The light of this candle is now extinguished, but the light of Christ in each of us must continue to shine in our hearts and in our lives.

***Saint John Baptist de La Salle...Pray for us!
Live, Jesus, in our hearts...Forever!***