

Commissioning Prayer: Go forth as a beacon of light

(30 minutes)

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FACE THE FAST

Materials Needed

- music player
- music: *Christ, Be Our Light* and *Lead Me, Lord* (download at foodfast.org)
- copy of *Go forth as a beacon of light* for each participant
- table
- candles
- cross
- commissioning necklaces
- bowl for commissioning necklaces
- list of names of all Food Fast participants

Procedure

Prepare the prayer space by placing the table in the center of the space. Put the bowl of commissioning necklaces on the table. Consider decorating the table with candles and a cross.

Ask 9 participants to be readers. Provide readers with a copy of the prayer ahead of time and highlight the part you would like each of them to read.

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FACE THE FAST

Gathering Song

Christ, Be Our Light by Bernadette Farrell

Leader As our time together comes to a close, let us pray for the wisdom and grace to go forth into the world and share our stories. May we have the strength to work for justice and the faith to act with conviction. And may we be a beacon of light for a world in need. Let us conclude our fast by praying and reflecting on the Beatitudes.

Reader 1 **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** May we praise and thank God for the blessings in our lives, and may we always respect the dignity of each and every human being.

All Gracious God, hear our prayers.

Reader 2 **Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.** May we pray in solidarity with those who suffer because they lack the most basic necessities, including access to sufficient food and clear water.

All Compassionate God, hear our prayers.

Reader 3 **Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.** May we act each and every day with humility, and may we be good stewards of the creation that has been entrusted to us.

All Gentle God, hear our prayers.

Reader 4 **Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.** May we hunger and thirst for justice on behalf of our brothers and sisters in need around the world.

All Righteous God, hear our prayers.

Reader 5 **Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.** May we open our hearts to the transformative power of love and forgiveness, that we might create a more peaceful and just world.

All Merciful God, hear our prayers.

Reader 6 **Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.** May our hearts and minds be renewed by the presence of God in our lives, and may we always strive to see the face of God in every person we meet.

All Ever-present God, hear our prayers.

Reader 7 **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.** May we work to protect the most vulnerable members of our society, especially children, that they might know a peaceful and loving world instead of a hostile one.

All: Loving God, hear our prayers.

Reader 8 **Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** May we have the courage to make a preferential option for the poor and put the needs of our brothers and sisters first.

All Steadfast God, hear our prayers.

Reader 9 **Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me.** May our voices carry Your message of justice for the poor, even as others seek to drown them out.

All Just God, hear our prayers.

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FACE THE FAST

Leader It is now time to close our Food Fast by commissioning one another. Each person's name will be read. The person called will step forward, and we will all raise our hands in a blessing, saying the person's first name and "Go forth into the world as a beacon of light."

After your name has been called and you have received a blessing, please take a necklace from the bowl to wear as a sign of your commitment.

Each participant is called by name and blessed.

Leader A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 5:14-16)

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

Leader Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, Our God.

Shine your light before others,
that you may be a beacon in the darkness,
that you may be a messenger of light.

All Amen.

Sending Forth Song

Lead Me, Lord by John Becker (OCP)