

A LITURGY FOR FOOD – LENT 2013

We are the Light of the World
We are the Salt of the Earth



**Ecumenical Advocacy
Alliance**

Liturgy prepared by the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), with special thanks to Norma Dollaga, NCCP and Andrew Donaldson, World Council of Churches.

You are permitted to use all or part of this liturgy provided credit is given to the source.

This liturgy is based on a worship service prepared by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines for a workshop aimed at helping church-based organizations strengthen their capacity to advocate for food justice. In the Philippines, as in many parts of Asia, small-scale farmers struggle against displacement from land grabbing and forced eviction due to urban and industrial development. The encroachment on agricultural areas pushes farmers and families off their lands and away from their main food source. Once unable to grow food for themselves, they face the challenges posed by high and volatile food prices. Asia is one of the world's food baskets, thanks to its natural resources that are perfect for agriculture and food production. Yet shockingly, Asia is also home to nearly 700 million of the world's almost 1 billion hungry people. The images and symbols thus reflect this Asian context.

Before you start

Ashes should be available on the altar for imposition. Bread, soil, grains, a candle, a glass of water, and salt should be placed at the back of the room to be offered at the altar table. Bananas, sweet potatoes and coconut water should be made available at the entrance of the Chapel and participants should be encouraged to pick one of them up as they enter. More worship, learning and action resources are available on the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance website at:

<http://bit.ly/gSuKJ1>

Welcome and Introduction

Every grain of rice
Is a bead of sweat
Of every enslaved peasant
Of each oppressed tiller of the soil

Every grain of rice is a drop of tears
From many mothers shackled to the soil
Every grain of rice is a trickle of blood
All the bones and remains of our ancestors

Every bead of sweat, every drop of tears and blood
Is a grain of rice, is a grain of gold
Every grain of rice is an unborn child
Whose unlived life is payment for our woes

Every grain of rice is a peasant
Whose breath is a prisoner of soil
Every grain of rice is a peasant
Feeding the whole world with the grains from his/her hand and toil

Song: We Who Bear the Human Name
Source: Fred Kaan, Sound the Bamboo, GIA publishers, Chicago

Offering and Thanksgiving--Symbols of Life and Ministry
Bread, Earth, Grains, Light, Water, and Salt are offered at the altar table.

CELEBRATION OF THE GATHERING

Call to Worship

Liturgist: We gather in the name of the blessed trinity. Who are we gathered here, today?

All: We are men and women from around the world
who have journeyed from afar:
we are tired but hopeful; we are anxious but expectant;
we carry fears and questions, but we are confident in our direction.

Liturgist: We are diverse; yet, we came from one womb, borne of the people's pain and joy... their struggle and hope.

All: We are believers in the promise of abundant life.
We are seekers of justice and peace.
We are lovers of truth.
We are nurturers of the earth.

Song: Faith in the Service of the People
Source: Hymnal of a Faith Journey, Published by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 2002, Words by Luna L. Dingayan (1999), Music by Perla S. Dingayan (1999).

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Scripture Readings

Proverbs 13:23
The field of the poor may yield much food, but it is swept away through injustice.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.
I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Hymn of Commitment: You are Salt for the Earth

Source: Marty Haugen, GIA publishers, Chicago, 1986.

WELCOME RITES

AN AGAPE MEAL REMEMBERING THE PAINS AND HOPES OF THE PEOPLE

Words of Invitation

Liturgist: We welcome you to our land.

We are one family; this is also your home.

Like in many Asian places, farmers—no matter how poor they are— offer the best to visitors.

This tradition has been passed on to us from generation to generation.

As a welcome today, we symbolically offer you the best that we have.

Offering of Banana/Sweet Potato

Bananas and sweet potatoes are staple foods for many. Significant sources of carbohydrates, dietary fiber, vitamin B6 and C, potassium and manganese, these crops help sustain people.

Give us this day our daily bread, we always pray.

But as we give thanks for the food that we eat, there is a feast overflowing the tables of those of us who control the earth's resources.

Do we even hear the hungry cries of the people?

God, lead us not into believing that our society is fated and doomed to reflect the image of Lazarus and the rich man.

In contrast to the crumbs that fall from the feast table as token alms for the deprived and dispossessed, we remember that, after asking blessing, Jesus broke the bread and each had a share.

We are called to be true disciples of the Bread Shared for All.

Sound of the Gong

Offering of Buko (Coconut Water)

Buko is a precious resource. Packed with water, sugar and micronutrients, the toil and sacrifice of the coconut grower in harmony with creation, bears this sweet and satisfying thirst-quencher, which is enjoyed throughout our land.

As we eat and drink and feel satisfaction provided by the earth's provisions, let us remember those who toil and those who serve.

Like the woman at the well, we are also called to share with all who thirst, even as we strive to understand Christ's Living Water, a spring gushing up to eternal life.

Sound of the Gong

In Remembrance

We remember the many bent-over men and women
In the rice fields, in the corn fields,
In the factories, in construction sites,
In the urban poor communities,
In the streets, marketplaces, and underground economies.

We remember their hands, their faces
How they who bear the weight of suffering.

In this great Agape feast,
we share what we have with the same love
that Jesus showed in sharing meals
with the marginalized and oppressed.
We remember that as Christ's disciples
NOW IS THE TIME. KAIROS!
Now is the time to strengthen our resolve
To build a new world order, where justice prevails
And peace abides everywhere!

Sound of the Gong

Imposition of the ashes

Prayer (In Unison)

Committing ourselves to a life of communing, serving, and sending,
we pray, each in our own language, as Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

Each is invited to partake of the symbols.

DEDICATION

Words of Commitment

Liturgist: Christ calls us to prophetic ministry
where people's welfare and dignity are sacrificed for profit,
where a few manipulate the earth's resources
while many live in despair and need,
Let us not grow weary.
With God's help, our faith, hope and love will transcend any
doubt or fear.

Closing Hymn: We Cannot Own the Sunlit Skies

Source: Ruth Duck, GIA publishers.

Benediction

Called to be SALT, may our flavour be a catalyst for change and liberation for those whose joy has faded and whose hopes have soured.

Called to be LIGHT, never be consumed or extinguished. May we remain faithful until the end.

We are the Salt of the Earth, a Light in this World,
Wherever this journey will lead us,
We remain steadfast that we can participate in the making of a better world!
AMEN