

# BEgreen

## Contents:

- Introductory note to the Prayer Leader.
- Full running sheet of the prayer with notes and directions (copy as needed for those reading or doing some other action).
- Prayer handout sheet to be copied for all participants.

## Introduction - for the Prayer Leader

Dear Prayer Leader,

Thanks for leading this prayer based on the concept of **Be Green**.

This prayer forms part of a series of prayers inspired by the words of St Oscar Romero "**Aspire not to have more but to be more**" and they draw on resources from [Caritas Australia](#). All of the prayers in the series carry an underlying theme of 'Mission' – the challenge to all Christian people to engage in the mission of Jesus in the world.

The prayer is intended for use with staff groups in a Catholic school community but can be easily adapted to other contexts.

Each of the prayers in the series follows a common structure of:  
Gather - Listen - Respond - Go Forth

### **Be Green:**

#### Creating the space:

For this prayer, it would be ideal if an appropriate outdoor or semi-open space can be used. Where possible, arrange chairs in a circle or semi-circle around a prayer focus point. Try to create different heights in your prayer focus – even if you conceal a book or box under your cloth to create a different height. Items to incorporate in your prayer focus:

- ✓ Red, green and yellow cloths
- ✓ Three candles (+ matches to light the candles)
- ✓ Bible – open at Psalm 104 (a book stand or small easel is ideal to display the Bible)
- ✓ Cross or crucifix
- ✓ Symbol for this week: plants, flowers, leaves

You will also need:

- ✓ Strips of coloured paper - cut each sheet of A4 paper into 4 strips to make enough strips for each person in the group
- ✓ Biro or felt pens
- ✓ Copies of the prayer outline for readers.
- ✓ Copies of the prayer handout for the group.
- ✓ Copies of the [Be More Bio of Kofi Annan](#) (p. 5) – download from Caritas.org.au.

<u>Gather</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome, introduction &amp; preparation to pray</li><li>• Lighting of candles</li><li>• Opening Prayer</li></ul>	3 candle lighters
<u>Listen</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction</li><li>• Reading</li></ul>	3 reader
<u>Respond</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Litany of Praise</li><li>• <i>Be More</i> bio</li></ul>	
<u>Go Forth</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prayer</li><li>• Blessing</li></ul>	

NB: Sections identified as 'Leader' may be divided amongst different people but it is helpful to have a recognisable leader of the prayer.

The structure and ideas included are just suggestions. Please feel free to modify or add to the wording to make the experience more personal and relevant for your staff. Adding your own touches will not only make the experience more enriching for you personally, but also for the rest of your group.

Approximate time required: 20 mins

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## We Gather

The leader welcomes those present and acknowledges the gift of coming together in prayer.

Leader: Our prayer today continues (or begins) our focus on ways in which we might engage in the mission of Jesus, calling us to *Be More*. In today's prayer we are called to *Be Green* – to be aware of our vocation as co-creators of the world; to respond to the call of stewardship of the natural environment; to be conscious of the positive difference we can make through small acts of conserving energy, recycling, re-using and caring for our world.

To respond to the call to *Be Green* we must first recognise that the natural world is a gift and a treasure that we have to appreciate and for which we must give thanks. In the Christian tradition, we acknowledge the head, heart and hands of God in the creation and evolution of our world.

Let's take a moment of silence to simply look around us and drink in all that our environment offers us. Let us also remember the first peoples of this land and the spiritual affinity they share with it.

*(Ring a chime or bell then pause for two minutes of silence. Ring the chime again to end the silence)*

Let's now begin by reminding ourselves that we gather ...

All: In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Candle lighter 1: As we gather here in your name,  
Open our minds to know your voice. *(light 'head' candle)*

Candle lighter 2: Open our hands to do your work. *(light 'hands' candle)*

Candle lighter 3: And open our hearts to hold your Spirit. *(light 'heart' candle)*

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Creator God.  
Through your hand and through your Word,  
you have given us life  
and given life to all our world.  
You call us to be stewards and co-creators.  
Awaken within us a deep respect for where we walk.  
Help us to tread lightly on this land  
and to cherish the gifts endowed upon us.  
We make this prayer through the Holy Spirit,  
who has moved in this world for all time. Amen

## We Listen

Leader: The approach to spirituality that is strongly grounded in St Francis of Assisi holds all of creation in special reverence.

Today we listen to a version of the great Canticle of Creation that was written by Francis in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century.

Reader 1: Be praised Good Lord for Brother Sun  
who brings us each new day.

Reader 2: Be praised for Sister Moon:  
white beauty bright and fair, with wandering stars she moves through the night.

Reader 3: Be praised my Lord for Brother Wind,  
for air and clouds and the skies of every season.

Reader 1: Be praised for Sister Water:  
humble, helpful, precious, pure; she cleanses us in rivers and renews us in rain.

Reader 2: Be praised my Lord for Brother fire:  
he purifies and enlightens us.

Reader 3: Be praised my Lord for Mother Earth:  
abundant source, all life sustaining; she feeds us bread and fruit and gives us  
flowers.

Reader 1: Be praised my Lord for the gift of life;  
for changing dusk and dawn; for touch and scent and song.

Reader 2: Be praised my Lord for those who pardon one another for love of you,  
and endure sickness and tribulation.

Reader 3: Blessed are they who shall endure it in peace,  
for they shall be crowned by you.

Reader 1: Be praised Good Lord for sister Death  
who welcomes us in loving embrace.

Reader 2: Be praised my Lord for all your creation  
serving you joyfully.

(Francis of Assisi, 1225 A.D.)

## We Respond

Leader: In response to Francis of Assisi's Canticle, we are going to create our own  
Canticle of Creation or Litany of Praise.

*Distribute strips of paper and pens.  
(In larger groups, do this activity in pairs)*

Each person (*or pair*) will use the stem "We praise you God for ..." and then  
identify an element of nature or the environment and why we are grateful for it.

For example:

We praise you God for ... rich red sunsets that make us stop in our tracks.

We praise you God for ... the fragrance of flowers; they remind us of those we  
love.

Take a couple of minutes now to come up with your prayer of praise.

*When all have written their prayer, continue...*

Now we will put all of our prayers together as a Litany. We will all say together the stem, "We praise you God..." before each person (*or pair*) completes their line. In between each person we say together "We praise you God ..."

So, let's just take a moment of silence before we begin...

*(Prayers can be read in turn around the group or the leader might invite people to randomly speak their prayers whenever they are ready to do so.)*

Leader: Giving praise for creation is the first step towards recognising our obligation to care for all of creation.  
This week's Be More Bio is Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations. He recognised the responsibility and obligation in which we all must share if we are to ensure a just and equitable future for all people and for our world.  
Take a few moments to read the bio and reflect on the suggestions of ways in which you can 'Be More'.

*(Allow time for group to read and reflect.)*

## We Go Forth

Leader: Let's bring all our thoughts together now and place them before God in prayer.

All: God of earth and sea and air and all creation,  
You entrust to us the care of your world.  
For the times we fail to nurture the earth, we seek you forgiveness.  
Confront us with the beauty of nature every day  
Remind us of our duty.  
So that generations to come will have cause to sing your praise.  
We make our prayer through the Holy Spirit of inspiration. Amen.

Leader: And let's finish now by praying our blessing prayer over one another.

All: As we go about our day, O God;  
As we strive to walk with Jesus as co-creators.  
Remind us that we are the caring hands of Christ,  
Who is with us always.

May your grace, mercy and peace,  
Bless us, keep us and transform us all this day,  
Now and forever. Amen.

## We Gather

**All:** In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

The *Head, Heart* and *Hands* candles are lit.

Leader: Let us pray.

**All:** **Creator God.**  
**Through your hand and through your Word,**  
**you have given us life**  
**and given life to all our world.**  
**You call us to be stewards and co-creators.**  
**Awaken within us a deep respect for where we walk.**  
**Help us to tread lightly on this land**  
**and to cherish the gifts endowed upon us.**  
**We make this prayer through the Holy Spirit,**  
**who has moved in this world for all time. Amen**



Photo by Peggy Roe. Used with permission

## We Listen *(Canticle of Creation)*

Reader 1: Be praised Good Lord for Brother Sun  
who brings us each new day.

Reader 2: Be praised for Sister Moon:  
white beauty bright and fair, with wandering stars she  
moves through the night.

Reader 3: Be praised my Lord for Brother Wind,  
for air and clouds and the skies of every season.

Reader 1: Be praised for Sister Water:  
humble, helpful, precious, pure; she cleanses us in rivers  
and renews us in rain.

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serving you joyfully.

(Francis of Assisi, 1225 A.D.)

## We Respond

Litany of Praise

We praise you God ...

Be More Bio for Kofi Annan.

## We Go Forth

**All:** God of earth and sea and air and all creation,  
You entrust to us the care of your world.  
For the times we fail to nurture the earth, we seek you  
forgiveness.  
Confront us with the beauty of nature every day  
Remind us of our duty.  
So that generations to come will have cause to sing  
your praise.  
We make our prayer through the Holy Spirit of  
inspiration. Amen.

## **Blessing:**

**All:** As we go about our day, O God;  
As we strive to walk with Jesus as co-creators.  
Remind us that we are the caring hands of Christ,  
Who is with us always.

May your grace, mercy and peace,  
Bless us, keep us and transform us all this day,  
Now and forever. Amen.

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"While trying to think about how you can make a big difference, try not to ignore the small differences you make every day." Marian Wright Edelman