

# BE<sup>a</sup>voice

## 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,

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 a Voice:**

### Creating the space:

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 Exodus chapter 4 (a book stand or small easel is ideal to display the Bible)
- ✓ Cross or crucifix
- ✓ Symbol for this week: a megaphone or microphone

You will also need:

- ✓ A copy of the song, *Stand Up, Be More!* from the CD *Alive in the Spirit!* By Musicfire
- ✓ Copies of the prayer outline for readers.
- ✓ Copies of the prayer handout for the group.
- ✓ Copies of the [Be More Bio](#) of Martin Luther King (p. 3) – 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>• Scripture reading</li><li>• Silence</li></ul>	2 readers
<u>Respond</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Be More</i> bio</li><li>• Reflection and response</li></ul>	
<u>Go Forth</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prayer</li><li>• Blessing</li><li>• Song</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

# BE<sup>a</sup>voice

## 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 a Voice* – to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; to speak up for what we know to be right; to speak up for the kingdom of God in our world.

But, before we seek to raise our voices, let us take a moment of silence to be still, to be fully present here and to be conscious of the still, small voice within.

*(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: God of justice and compassion,  
You have spoken through your prophets and through the most humble of men and women.  
You call each of us to be your voice in this world.  
Give us the wisdom to recognise where your voice is needed and the courage to speak your transforming truth.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Word made flesh. Amen.

## We Listen

Leader: Throughout the Old Testament, God called individuals to speak on God's behalf; to carry God's message to the people. Not all those God called were ready to accept the challenge. Some, like Jonah, tried to run from the task. Others, like Jeremiah, tried to convince God that they were inadequate.  
Moses is perhaps the best known spokesman for God, yet he too was reluctant to accept that he could speak on God's behalf.  
Let's listen to his story...

*(Exodus 3:9-10; 4:10-16)*

Reader 1: A reading from the Book of Exodus

Reader 2: The Lord said to Moses, 'The Israelites' cry for help has reached me, and I have seen the cruel way in which the Egyptians oppress them.

So now I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.'

Reader 1: But Moses said to the Lord, 'Please, my Lord, I have never been eloquent, even since you have spoken to your servant;

for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.'

Reader 2: Then the Lord said to him, 'Who makes a person mute or deaf; gives sight or makes blind? Is it not I, the Lord?

Now go, I shall help you speak and instruct you what to say.'

Reader 1: But he said, 'Please, my Lord, send someone else.'

Reader 2: Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, 'What of your brother Aaron the Levite?

I know that he is a good speaker. Here he comes to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be full of joy.

You will speak to him and tell him what message to give.

I shall help you speak, and Aaron too, and I will teach you what to do.

He will speak to the people in your place; he will be your mouthpiece, and you will be as God inspiring him.

(pause...)

Reader 1: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: I invite you now to spend a few moments in silence. Let the reading resonate within you and call to mind times that you've felt unable to speak up or speak out.

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

*(Optional)* Leader invites group members to share something of their reflection on the reading or their own experience.

## We Respond

Leader: You each have a copy of the Be More Bio for Martin Luther King – one of the great 'voices' of justice in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.  
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.)*

Who are the 'voices' of justice today? *(Allow responses)*

Where are you called to 'Be a Voice'? *(Allow time for group to reflect.)*

## We Go Forth

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

All: God of the voiceless,  
You hear the cries of those who need your love and merciful goodness.  
Move in us.  
Call us forward to be your voice for those who have none.  
We make our prayer through Jesus, your Word. Amen.

Leader: Let's stand and pray our blessing prayer over one another.

All: As we go about our day, O God;  
As we strive to walk with Jesus as people who will speak up.  
Remind us that we are the voice 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.

Leader: We conclude our prayer now with the song, *Stand Up, Be More!*

## **Stand Up, Be More!**

MusicFire

Stand up for the faith within you; stand up for the hope you bear  
Listen to the voice that wants more of you; Stand up, be more!  
Won't you listen to the truth inside you; listen to the love that calls  
Go fulfil my purpose for you; Stand up, be more!

### **Chorus**

***So stand up be brave be more  
Shine the way that you're born for  
Be the light so bright within you  
Stand up! Be true! Be more!***

Can you see the broken world around you? See the difference you can make.  
See the face of Jesus 'round you; Stand up! Responsibility!  
Find you in the margins with my loved ones; find you in the streets, yes welcoming  
Find you in the grieving with my sad ones; Stand up! Solidarity!

Can you give to others just a little? Can you give to them your time and care?  
Can you give yourself to something greater? Stand up! Generosity!  
Can you be a voice in the throng of this world? Can you be a voice to those with none?  
Can you be a voice for the lost and hurting? Stand up! Empathy!

Can you act with justice with each other? Can you act with justice in your life?  
Can you act with justice out in this world? Stand up, be challenging!  
Can you care enough for the gift of sunrise? Can you care enough for the gift of life?  
Can you care enough for the universe? So stand up, for eternity!

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## 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:** God of justice and compassion,  
You have spoken through your prophets  
and through the most humble of men and women.  
You call each of us to be your voice in this world.  
Give us the wisdom to recognise  
where your voice is needed  
and the courage to speak your transforming truth.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus,  
your Word made flesh. Amen.

## We Listen *(Exodus 3:9-10; 4:10-16)*

The Lord said to Moses, 'The Israelites' cry for help has reached me, and I have seen the cruel way in which the Egyptians oppress them. So now I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.' But Moses said to the Lord, 'Please, my Lord, I have never been eloquent, even since you have spoken to your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.'

Then the Lord said to him, 'Who makes a person mute or deaf; gives sight or makes blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, I shall help you speak and instruct you what to say.' But he said, 'Please, my Lord, send someone else.'

Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, 'What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he is a good speaker. Here he comes to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be full of joy. You will speak to him and tell him what message to give. I shall help you speak, and Aaron too, and I will teach you what to do. He will speak to the people in your place; he will be your mouthpiece, and you will be as God inspiring him.'

## We Respond

Read the [Be More Bio for Martin Luther King](#).

Take a few moments to read the bio and reflect on the suggestions of ways in which you can 'Be More'.

Who are the 'voices' of justice today?

Where are you called to 'Be a Voice'?

## We Go Forth

**All:** God of the voiceless,  
You hear the cries of those who need your love and merciful goodness.  
Move in us.  
Call us forward to be your voice for those who have none.  
We make our prayer through Jesus, your Word. Amen.

## Blessing:

**All:** As we go about our day, O God;  
As we strive to walk with Jesus as people who will speak up.  
Remind us that we are the voice 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.

## Stand Up, Be More!

MusicFire

Stand up for the faith within you; stand up for the hope you bear  
Listen to the voice that wants more of you; Stand up, be more!  
Won't you listen to the truth inside you; listen to the love that calls  
Go fulfil my purpose for you; Stand up, be more!

### *Chorus*

***So stand up be brave be more  
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Can you see the broken world around you?  
See the difference you can make.  
See the face of Jesus 'round you; Stand up! Responsibility!  
Find you in the margins with my loved ones;  
find you in the streets, yes welcoming  
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# BEa

# voice

"A gentle reminder to stand – to speak up – for your ideals. Silence is an opinion."

Gil Atkinson