

PRAYER SERVICE FOR

Puerto Rico & the U.S. Virgin Islands

HURRICANE MARIA

INTRODUCTION:

CALL TO PRAYER AND GATHERING SONG

Song: "We Are Disciples," Steve Angrisano from the *Be My Disciples* music program,
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Leader: We gather together to pray with the promise of hope for our world. We especially remember in prayer the people of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and all the islands in the Caribbean who cry out amidst the devastation of Hurricane Maria. Let us hold in our hearts all our sisters and brothers affected by this disaster, especially those who died. In thanksgiving for the gifts left to us from the lives of those who died, in solidarity with those who must rebuild their lives, we invite the Lord into our presence.

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

All: Amen.

Reader: *Adapted from a Pastoral Letter from the Bishops of Puerto Rico*

After the storm, we must adopt three attitudes: rebuild, rediscover, and reencounter Jesus. We must rebuild houses, churches and roads, but also rebuild the damaged structures that prevent us from growing. We need to overcome the barriers, selfishness and divisions that may exist between us. May this time serve as a new beginning to rediscover the beauty and treasure of our land. Remember that Jesus comes to our encounter, to calm the storm and to give us confidence. He invites us to walk towards him, takes us by the hand and will never allow us sink. We can therefore say: 'We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained' (2 Cor 4:8).

Song: "Psalm 100: Nosotros somos su pueblo/We Are God's People" from the Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace music CD © RCL Benziger

Reader: Gospel Mark 4: 35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

- Reflection:**
- We, as disciples of Jesus, sometime find ourselves tossed about in storms. These storms could be problems, health issues, decisions we need to make, or negative feelings, such as sadness, or fear.
 - But this gospel reading, presents us with a relationship of trust. Trusing in Jesus does not mean that we are not going to feel fear during difficult situations, or that we are not going to doubt our faith.
 - In this reading, the disciples encountered the power of Jesus. They became more assured that Jesus is the Lord.

PRESENTATION OF SUPPLIES OR OTHER ITEMS FOR DONATION

Leader: After hearing the cries of the people in need, we ask the Lord to move our hearts to compassion so we may give to the relief efforts. We present these items that will be donated to help alleviate the pain and sorrow of those affected by the storm.

CANNED FOOD

Leader: Let us respond . . .

All: Lord of all creation, let your love and justice be planted in the hearts of all. Give us the courage to create new life in the world.

BOTTLED WATER

Leader: Let us respond . . .

All: Lord of all the seas and oceans, let your love and justice flow like water through the hearts of all. Give us the courage to bring your living water to those who are thirsting.



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FLASH LIGHTS

Leader: Let us respond . . .

All: Lord of all peoples, let your love and justice burn like fire and light the hearts of all. Give us the courage to shine your light into the darkness of despair.

CLOTHES

Leader: Let us respond . . .

All: Lord of boundless grace, let your love and justice clothes us with a generous heart to give to all in need. Give us the courage to shelter those who are naked and homeless.

Leader: Now, we our selves ask for our daily bread . . . Our Father . . .

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: Lord, we plead for your mercy because at times such as this, we realize that storms may come at us when we least expect them. When what we have built crumbles about us, we realize how small we truly are on this ever-changing, ever-moving, fragile planet we call home. Yet you have promised to be with us always. Protect us now, and especially bless and console the people of Puerto Rico and the other islands, and all who suffer. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

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