**Worship resources for the 2014 Social Justice Sunday**

**Gambling Its Impact in Australia**

**Is Nothing Sacred?**

*Prepared with assistance from Father Claude Mostowik, MSJ, Sydney*

**Gathering prayer**

Persistent God,

It is your love that directs our lives.

May that love,

which exceeds our everyday human longing

direct our thoughts and efforts, also when the going gets though

so that your presence shines in our world

and the peace you offer, encourages all to seek peace in their lives.

Or

God of Love,

You have revealed how we might fulfil your loving will.

Dispose us to respond to your love

from the depth of our heart to be faithful in all we do.

Make us attentive to the needs of people,

even when they have hurt us and remain difficult to reach out to

and bring to all of us your love and mercy.

**Intercessions**

Introduction: Let us pray to God who is kind and merciful to all people, to those people who are experiencing your blessings as well as to those who are feeling distant from you and to those for whom daily life has become a struggle.

Let us pray: R/ **Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love**

\* For the Church, God's people, that it may not be divided into factions: that it may preach and practice forgiveness, healing and rehabilitation, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\* For the Churches separated from one another by centuries of misunderstanding and disputes, that they may approach one another in Christ in mutual forgiveness, cooperation and love, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\* For all of us, that we may forgive one another from the heart, seek no revenge, find ways to respect one another and learn to see others as people loved by the same God, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\* For those who have hurt us and whom we find difficult to love, give us strength to find constructive ways to communicate with one another, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\* For our families, that we may be attentive to the goodness that is in each, be tolerant of shortcomings and seek together to grow in peace and happiness, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\*For those near us in our lives and who are carrying the burden of overwhelming addictions such as alcohol, drugs or gambling, bring them to your Church to ask for help, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

\* For our local communities, that they may be places of safety, friendships, good neighbours and opportunities to reach out to one another as people of faith, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love.

\* For our politicians and community leaders, we pray that they continue see all people of Australia as equally deserving in the share of our country’s riches and good fortunes and assist those who are already struggling, from becoming further disadvantaged: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love.

\* For countries and people who carry a historical memory of pain, suffering and conflict, may they seek to address these issues and seek peace, let us pray: R/ Show your loving kindness to your people, God of love

Prayer: Merciful God, fill our hearts with your love and help us to encourage one another to lead our lives in your image. May we rise above our human weaknesses, seek help when we need to and keep faithful in loving you and loving one another.

**Prayer over the Gifts**

God of tenderness,

we bring before you these gifts of peace

to celebrate the feast of love of your Son.

May we discover his presence within us

and be encouraged to seek your strength in us

with the same liberating and forgiving love

which you have shown us.

or

**Prayer over the Gifts**

Loving God,

Jesus gives himself to us in these signs of bread and wine.

May our participation in this celebration

help us to bear witness to Jesus,

that our sense of justice and sharing

may encourage us to live our lives in your image

and honour those around us.

**Prayer after communion:**

Heavenly Father, you have created all humanity

in your image and likeness,

and have revealed your plan and purpose

in calling us your friends and family.

As we have shared this holy meal,

inspire our hearts to see

every man, woman and child

given the dignity and value

which is your purpose and you gift;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

We thank you, God,

for people who have made themselves poor to enrich others,

whose house is always a place of welcome even to strangers.

We thank you, God,

for people who can listen to the miseries of others,

who heal wounds by making pain bearable,

for people who can console.

We thank you, God,

for people who spread peace and rest,

who are attentive to little things,

who are happy when others are great.

We thank you, God,

for people who hunger for justice

who crave to see every person free,

who suffer when injustice is done to their neighbour.

We thank you, God,

for people whose judgment is gentle,

who respect the mystery of all life,

who open their hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation.

We thank you, God,

for people whose intentions are straightforward,

whose words are sincere,

for people loyal to their friends.

We thank you, God,

for people who believe in roads to peace,

who turn their swords into instruments of friendship,

who work to make their faith credible

by committing themselves to one another.

We thank you, God,

for all the happy people

whose joy and sense of humor

bring smiles to those around them,

and whose liberating lifestyle

is a refreshing ray of hope to all.

*Amen.*

*W Brueggeman – G Zuidberg*