

***Prayer vigil for a just and compassionate federal budget,
which protects older Americans***

Thursday, July 21, 2011

Leader 1: As people of faith, we are called by God to care for older adults and vulnerable individuals. Even as we work to fulfill our responsibility as faithful stewards, we understand there is an important role for local, state and federal governments as well to end poverty and hunger, which none of us can accomplish alone. Regular income from Social Security prevents 13 million senior citizens from falling into poverty. Today, 7.5 percent of U.S. senior citizens are at risk of hunger and many rely on help from SNAP and local food pantries.

Leader 2: We gather to pray for the budget negotiation process to be just and morally faithful. As Congress considers options to reduce future deficits, they should reject proposals that would establish arbitrary spending caps. Furthermore, any deficit reduction must be thoughtfully constructed to protect services for low-income and vulnerable populations and allow Congress the flexibility to reach these targets in a way that preserves our shared commitment to justice for all God's children, including older Americans.

Litany for Aging

(adaptation)

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Leader: Honor you father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. (Ex. 20:12)

People: We pray that the long years will be good years.

Leader: The glory of youth is their strength, but the beauty of the aged is their gray hair. (Prov. 20:29)

People: Give us strength and experience.

Leader: Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you (Deut. 32:7)

People: Remind us to ask, and teach us to listen.

Leader: Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life. (Prov. 16:31)

People: Day by day, we strive to be more holy.

Leader: Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. (Prov. 23:22)

People: We are grateful for parents who teach and nurture in love.

Leader: So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come. (Psalm 71:18)

People: We love to tell the story of God and his love.

Leader: In old age they too produce fruit; they are always green and full of sap. (Psalm 92:14)

People: We are grateful for the spirit and wisdom of our elders.

Leader: You who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. (1 Peter 5:5)

People: Yes, we too will soon know and understand ... give us wisdom so that we may serve others as we have been served. Amen

Prayers of Petition

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:

Leader: Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Song of Praise and Hope

**This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**

**All Around the Nation - We're gonna let it shine
All Around the Nation - We're gonna let it shine
All Around the Nation - We're gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**

**Won't let no one put it out – no - We're gonna let it shine
Won't let no one put it out – no - We're gonna let it shine
Won't let no one put it out – no - We're gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**

**This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
This little light of ours - We're gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**