

# Morning Prayer

SVP   
1833



## Before you begin

- Create a space for prayer.
- Cut out a paper starfish attached to this pack. There should be enough for each participant.
- If you have the space and resources, create a beach display using blue and yellow materials, or even draw one on a big piece of paper (be as creative as you like).
- Take some time to settle and be still in the space.
- Light a candle.
- You will need pens.



## Ready to start

*We take a moment before we begin to settle ourselves. After our experience last night, we pause, and we reflect. For those who feel comfortable we begin:*



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



## Story

It was the night after a huge storm and an older woman was walking along the beach as the sun was beginning to rise. With the tide out and because of the power of the storm, she found the beach littered with starfish as far as the eye could see, stretching in every direction.

In the distance, the old woman noticed a young man approaching. As the young man walked, he paused every so often, and as he grew closer, the woman could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The young man came closer still and the woman called out: "Good morning. May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied: "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they cannot return to the sea by themselves. As the day gets warmer, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old woman replied: "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I am afraid you will not really be able to make much of a difference." The young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled, and said: "I made a difference to that one!"

*(Adapted from The Star Thrower, by Loren Eiseley 1907-1977)*



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## Story Debrief

Often the problems in our world can seem big, but little by little we can make a significant difference to those around us. Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, the founder of the SVP, said that it is our calling from God to set people's hearts ablaze, to do what the Son of God did, who came to light a fire on Earth, to set it ablaze with His love.

Last night through your act of sacrifice and your decision to stand in solidarity with all those who find themselves in need of help and support, you picked up another starfish and threw it back in the sea.



### Scripture:

In the book of Timothy we hear

You are young, but do not let anyone treat you as if you were not important.

Be an example to show the believers how they should live.

Show them with your words, with the way you live, with your love, with your faith."

1 Timothy 4:12



### Action:

For just a few moments let us turn to the people next to us and share a little about how it was to sleep [out/over/without] last night. How did you sleep? How do you think it would be if you were doing that every night? What would you be worried about?

*(After a few minutes of chatting, bring the room back together).*

Last night your simple action and fundraising means that the SVP can support more people who need help. You threw one more starfish into the sea.

Over the coming weeks when you speak with people, and when you share your experience from last night, you will be helping other people to understand the causes of homelessness and the support available for those who need it. Each time you will be throwing a starfish into the sea.

Every small act we make can have an important impact on our world.



A few at a time as the music plays, you are invited to come down to the front and to take a starfish from the beach.

Using the pens, write on the back of a starfish one small action you will take this week to continue to transform the world. You will pay attention to the person in the room who is struggling? You might look to take extra responsibility at home to help? You might want to explore ways to support those who do not have a home? You might just want to try and stay calm and kind this week no matter what you are faced with?

Once you have written on your star fish, place it in the sea.

*(Play music while the action is happening, and once the action is complete, continue)*



### **Closing Prayer:**

Loving God

Open our eyes to see the needs of the world around us.  
Open our ears to hear the truth and the needs of the most vulnerable.  
Open our hearts that you would transform the world around us through our simple actions inspired by you.

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



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# Night Prayer

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## Before you begin

- Find a quiet space.
- Adjust the lighting so it is low.
- Have some quiet music playing in the background.
- Think about how you are going to bring participants into the space.
- Take some time to settle the group and still the space.
- Light a candle .
- Give each person an unlit tea light.
- Something to play music on and a suitable prayer playlist



## Ready to start

We take a moment before we settle down for the night to reflect on what we are about to do and how we are feeling. For those who feel comfortable we begin:



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



## Reflection

As we listen to, or read this reflection, let's take a moment to look back on our day at the opportunities we have had. For the times we have succeeded and the times we could have done more

*Is anybody happier because you passed their way? Does anyone remember that you spoke to them today? Did you give a cheerful greeting to the friend who came along? Or a rushed and busy "Hiya" and then just like that your gone? Were you selfish pure and simple as you rushed along the way, or is someone really grateful for a deed you did today?*

*Can you say tonight, in parting with the day that's slipping fast, that you have helped a single person of the many that you passed? Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said; does someone whose hopes were fading now with courage look ahead? Did you waste the day, or lose it, was it well or sorely spent? Did you leave a trail of kindness or a wave of discontent? As you close your eyes to go to sleep do you think that God would say, You have made the world much brighter by the way you lived today.*

**Edgar Albert Guest**



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## Post Reflection Questions

It is a rare gift to be able to stop and think back from start to finish about how our day went. It is a rare moment in a life that can be busy to just stop and be still.

It is an even rarer moment to be able to put ourselves into the experience of another, and for a few hours begin to feel aspects of that experience. So, as we prepare to take part in this SVP Summer Sleep, let us take a few moments in silence to bow our heads or close our eyes and think about how we are feeling about tonight. (Pause between questions for reflection, play some quiet music in the background)

- How are we feeling about the day that has passed?
- Where were the moments of blessing? – the enjoyable conversation, the funny joke, the sense of belonging and care?
- Where were the moments of difficulty? – the disagreements, the harsh words, the anxiety, the frustration?
- As we prepare to sleep, how are we feeling about this evening and the night ahead of us?

*A suggested silence (try to hold for around 2 minutes)*



## Story

In the days before electricity... Each evening, as dusk came, a man would make his rounds with his ladder and his light. He would put the ladder against the lamppost, climb up and light the lamp, step back down, pick up the ladder and proceed to the next lamp. After a while, he would be down the street and out of sight. But you could always tell which way he had gone from the lamps he had lit and the glow he left behind. Each one of us leaves a trail wherever we go. The greatest success would be to live in a way which deserves these simple words, "I could always tell which way they went by the light they left behind." This is what real discipleship is about. It is about bringing light to the darkest places and lighting a path that leads to the Father of all – through our words and actions people come to know something of Jesus.



## Action

While the song plays (Pick a suitable song that fits with the mood of night prayer and talks about light) a couple at a time come forward and light a tealight and place it somewhere on the display.

Offer a prayer for those tonight who are sleeping rough across the country, then return to your seat and watch as the room is transformed.

(Once the action is completed and everyone has placed a candle, continue with the prayer)





## Scripture

In the bible John tells us that...

"No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us. If we love each other, God's love has reached its goal. It is made perfect in us." 1 John 4:7



## Final Prayer

So, tonight loving God we pray.

We pray tonight for all those who we join in solidarity through our action.

We pray that our efforts may shine a light on the situation many find themselves in.

We pray that our world would be a more patient and kinder place, and that tonight you would guard and protect all who are afraid or alone.

For this, and all our prayers. Amen.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

