



Columbus Day Prayer Service

Leader: Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. (pause)

All: Creator God, this day is charged with many meanings and emotions. For some it is a day of national pride. For others it marks the coming of Europeans to a land already settled. For some it merely is another day off school or work. Help us to discover the good that others have to teach us, their values and truths. Help us to use our minds and hearts to become aware of others and their needs so that this nation may unite in service of You. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

First Reading: from Introduction to *Rethinking Columbus* edited by Bill Bigelow et al.

What passes for discovery in the traditional Columbus myth was really an invasion. It deserves no celebration. However, the study of Columbus and the native peoples of America offers numerous opportunities for genuine discovery. Western economies have failed utterly to protect the earth. We can encourage students to discover from Native Americans new ways of understanding relationships between society and nature....Through critiquing textbook and other traditional accounts, students can begin to discover the excitement that comes from asserting oneself morally and intellectually -- refusing to be passive consumers of 'official' stories. And this is as true for 4th graders as for juniors in high school. They can continue to renew and deepen this personal awakening as they seek out other curricular silences and sources of knowledge.

Silent Reflection

Second Reading: From an interview with Suzan Harjo, Cheyenne Indian and activist

What should be the goal and perspective of teachers when telling their elementary and high school students about Columbus?

First, that no one knows the truth about Columbus. His story is a very complex history in and of itself. Too often, this history is posed as romantic myth, and the uncomfortable facts about Columbus are eliminated.

Explaining the unpleasant truths about Columbus does not take away from the fact that he was able to lurch over to these shores in three little boats. In fact, it gives the story of Columbus more dimension. It also makes it easier for kids in school to accept not only Columbus but other things.

Teachers need to respect the truth. . . .

Response – Isaiah 60:1-4, 19-22

Left: Arise, . . . and shine like the sun;
The glory of the Creator is shining on you!

Right: Other nations will be covered by darkness,
But on you the light of the Creator will shine;
The brightness of his presence will be with you.

Left: Nations will be drawn to your light,
And kings to the dawning of your new day.
Look around you and see what is happening. . . .

Right: “No longer will the sun be your light by day
Or the moon be your light by night;

Left: “I, the Creator, will be your eternal light;
The light of my glory will shine on you.

Right: “Your days of grief will come to an end.
I, the Creator, will be your eternal light,
More lasting than the sun and moon.

Left: “You people will all do what is right,
And will possess the land forever.
I planted them, I made them,
To reveal my greatness to all.

Right: “Even your smallest and humblest family
Will become as great as a powerful nation.

All: “When the right time comes,
I will make this happen quickly.
I am your God.”



Third Reading: Rev. 7: 15-17

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Prayers of Petition

Leader: In thanksgiving to our Creator for having bestowed on us the blessings of our

country
All: May we use with respect and generosity the magnificent bounty God has given us.

Leader: In thanksgiving for those who have come before us, for the explorers, discoverers, the inventors, the pioneers, the founders

All: May we also be courageous in finding a new world of peace and justice and in advancing the Kingdom of God.

Leader: For our country, for the unborn and elderly, for children and adults, for people of all the ethnic, racial and religious groups which compose our nation

All: May we respect the life each of us has been given by God and may we learn to love one another as Jesus has loved us.

Leader: For a deeper appreciation and respect of our environment

All: May we discover how to live in harmony with our surroundings without wasting the gifts of God.

Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

All: Creator God, hear our prayer this day as we observe this national holiday. Help us to discover a greater awareness of your magnificent gifts to us, the riches of our land, the splendors of the diverse peoples who form the unity of our country. Help us to view all your good gifts with respect and gratitude. We especially thank you for the gift of Jesus, your Son and our Brother. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Live, Jesus, in our hearts

All: Forever.



One Sky Above Us

Whenever the white man treats the Indian as they treat each other, then we will have no more wars. We shall all be alike — brothers of one father, and one mother, with one sky above us and one country around us, and one government for all. Then the Great Spirit who rules above will smile upon this land, and all people may be one people. Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekht has spoken for his people. —Chief Joseph