



## PRAYER SERVICE

# WE ARE ALL PRECIOUS IN GOD'S SIGHT

**Focus:** In this prayer service, the students explore cultural diversity, their own personal uniqueness, and how all people are precious to God.

**Isaiah 43:1–2, 4–5**

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- poster board with outline of a tree drawn
- small papers on which leaves will be drawn
- crayons or markers
- scissors for cutting paper into leaves
- instrumental music

### Leader:

In the name of our glorious Creator God, whose imagination dreamed up the beauty of our trees, bushes, and plants, I welcome you to this time of worship. We turn to God to hear words of comfort and love.

### Reader:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name: you are mine.  
When you pass through waters, I will be with you;  
through rivers, you shall not be swept away.  
When you walk through fire,  
you shall not be burned,  
nor will flames consume you...  
Because you are precious in my eyes,  
and honored, and I love you...  
Fear not, for I am with you.

*(Isaiah 43:1–2, 4–5)*

Adapted from Prayer Service 7, offered as part of the online resources for *The Catholic Youth Bible™*, 4th Edition. The original service can be found at <https://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/12884/>. The Blessing in this prayer service is adapted from *Inspiration from Indian Legends, Proverbs, and Psalms*, compiled and edited by R. L. Gowan (Rapid City, SD: American Ministries International, n.d.), page 59. The Scripture quotes are taken from the *New American Bible*, revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, D.C. All Rights Reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owners.

## Leader:

God knows each of us as a precious, unique, individual child who is loved, honored, and cherished.

There are billions of people in the world, and God knows each of us by name.

The world includes many different people. There are Africans, Asians, Europeans, South Americans, and Native Americans. There are married people, single people, and divorced people. There are stepsisters, half-brothers, godmothers, and grandfathers.

There are heterosexuals and homosexuals. There are infants, schoolchildren, teenagers, twenty-somethings, thirty-forty-fifty-sixty-seventy-eighty-ninety-somethings. How does God keep track?

Each of us is a precious, unique, individual child of God who is loved, honored, and cherished.

Imagine now, a leaf. Each leaf is a unique creation. The color, shape, pattern, and size are all one-of-a-kind. The veins, stem, and ragged edges all add to its beauty.

Each of you will receive a small piece of paper on which to draw a leaf. Make sure your leaf reflects the same diversity found in nature.

As you create your leaf, try to reflect your own uniqueness in the design. And remember that, while no leaf is perfect, every leaf is beautiful.

After you have finished your leaf, cut it out and wait for additional instructions.

***(Distribute the paper and supplies. Play reflective music while students create and then cut out their leaves.)***

I pray this semester, we become not just a class, but a community. Each of us brings a gift that will make our community strong, supportive, and unique. On your leaves, I would like you to write one gift you bring to this community.

***(Invite each student to share the gift they bring to this community. When they have finished sharing, ask them to tape their leaf to the outline of a tree drawn on poster board.)***

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## Reader:

A legend in the Sioux tradition explains why leaves turn color in the autumn.

Many, many moons ago, when the world was young, the grass and flower folk were enjoying the beautiful summer weather. But as the days went by, the weather became colder and colder.

The grass and flowers grew sad, for they had nothing to protect them from the sharp cold. Just when it seemed that there was no hope for living, the Holy One who created all things came to their aid. The leaves of the trees were told to fall to the ground and spread a soft, warm blanket over the tender roots that were about to freeze. To repay the leaves for their kindness, the Creator gave them one last bright array of beauty.

That is why the trees take on their pretty farewell colors of red, gold, and brown each year during Indian summer. Then the leaves turn to their task of covering the earth with a thick rug of warmth.

Most people want to be useful. Like the leaves in this old Sioux legend, they want to be of service.

May God bless our group as we follow the example of the leaves, looking for ways to be useful and to serve those created by the Holy One. Amen.

