

Scripture Readings **for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday & other occasions**

GOD: THE CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF LIFE

Leader: Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

Congregation: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things and by him all things consist.

Leader: I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:

Congregation: And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Leader: Marvellous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well.

Congregation: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Leader: My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Congregation: As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

Leader: Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect;

Congregation: But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.

Leader: And in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Congregation: When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Together: How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

(Ps. 139:13-17; Col. 1:16,17; Gen. 2:7, 1:27; Eccl. 11:5; Ps. 22:9-10, 8:3,4)

CHILDREN: THE LORD'S HERITAGE

Suggestions: A group of children could do this reading, or four parents with their children gathered around them on the platform.

Reader 1: **Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord:**

Reader 2: *and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

Reader 3: ***Jesus took a child, and set him in the midst of them:***

Reader 4: *and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,*

Reader 1: **Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me.**

Reader 2: *And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them:*

Reader 3: ***and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.***

Reader 4: *But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them,*

Reader 1: **Suffer the little children to come unto me,**

Reader 2: *and forbid them not:*

Reader 3: ***for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you,***

Reader 4: *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

Reader 1: **And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.**

Reader 2: *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones;*

Reader 3: ***for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.***

Reader 4: *Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.*

(Ps. 127:3; Mk 9:36,37a; 10:13-16; Mt. 18:10,14)

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY: TRUE WORSHIP

Leader: Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?

Men: *Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?*

Women: *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?*

Congregation: Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Leader: **He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**

Congregation: Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Women: *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*

Men: *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

Leader: **We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.**

Congregation: But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Leader: **My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.**

Congregation: What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

Leader: **If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.**

Men: *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

Women: If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;

Congregation: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not;

Leader: Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

All: Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

(Micah 6:6-8; James 1:27; I John 2:15; 3:14,17,18; James 2:14-17; Prov. 24:10-12; Romans 13:8)

LIFE: WORTH CELEBRATING

Suggestion: Designed for six, this reading could easily be altered to accommodate a smaller or larger group of readers.

- Reader 1** The LORD is the true God;
- Reader 2** He is the *living* God, the *eternal* King.
- Reader 3** In his hand is the *life* of every creature and the *breath* of all mankind.
- Readers 1,2,3** The Father has life in himself.
- Reader 4** In *him* we live and move and have our being.
- Readers 5,6** He is God;
- Reader 5** He did not create [the earth] to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited.
- Reader 6** God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.
- Reader 1** God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."
- Reader 2** God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.
- Reader 3** God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.
- Reader 4** The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*, and the man became a living being.
- Reader 5** The word of God is *living* and *active*.

Slight Pause

- Reader 6** You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power,
- Readers 5,6** For you created all things,
- Reader 6** And by your will they were created and have their being.
- Reader 4** When you hide your face, they are terrified;
- Reader 5** When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.

Reader 1 Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Reader 2 My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Reader 3 For with you is the fountain of life.

Slight Pause

Reader 4 Sin entered the world through one man, and *death* through sin,

Reader 5,6 And in this way *death* came to all men, because all sinned.

Reader 5 There is but one God, the Father, *from whom* all things came and *for whom* we live;

Reader 6 And there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, *through whom* all things came and *through whom* we live.

Reader 3 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

Reader 2 He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

Reader 1 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Readers 1,2,3 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

Reader 1 Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned;

Reader 2 He has crossed over from death to life.

Reader 3 I am the resurrection and the life.

Reader 4 He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.

Reader 5 I am the way and the truth and the life.

Reader 6 I am the Living One;

All Readers I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!

Slight Pause

Reader 5 We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men,

Reader 6 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.

Readers 5,6 Whether we *live or die*, we belong to the Lord.

Reader 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Reader 3 For he is the *living* God and he endures forever;
Reader 2 His kingdom will not be destroyed,
Reader 1 His dominion will never end.
Reader 4 He rescues and he saves.
All Readers The Father has life in himself.

(Jer. 10:10; Job 12:10; Jn. 5:26; Acts 17: 28; Is. 45:18; Gen. 1:11, 20, 24, 26, and 2:7; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 4:11; Ps. 104:29; Mt. 4:4, Ps. 84:2, 36:9; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Pet. 3:18; Jn 1:4, 5:26, 24, 11:25; Rev. 1:18; 1 Tim. 4:10; Lk. 20:38; Rom. 14:8; Col. 3:4; Dan. 6:26-27)