



## United in Prayer | January 2022

*Prepared by the Sisters of Charity, Halifax  
at the request of the Federation Vocation Core Team*

*A monthly prayer service is being prepared by each branch in our federation. The purpose is to pray for vocations, to help us learn a bit more about the charisms of each of our congregations, keep us engaged collaboratively in vocation ministry and bring us closer to seeing ourselves sharing a common Mission of Charity for the present and the future.*

**Intro:** The congregation of the [Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul \(Halifax\)](#) traces its foundation to Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. Mother Seton established her sisters at Emmitsburg in 1809. From Emmitsburg, a mission was opened in New York in 1817. In 1849 four of the New York sisters were sent to serve in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Because of the distance between Halifax and New York, *and in order to encourage local vocations*, the Halifax congregation was established in 1856 with the approval of the New York community.



*At the General Chapter of 1980, the Sisters of Charity, Halifax adopted this Congregational symbol. The symbol signifies **Conversion** (cross) and **Service** (basin and towel) in **Changing Times** (the irregular shape)*

**Call to Prayer:** “The Charity of Christ gathers us together to live in love so that the love of God may be made visible in the world.” (Constitution #31) Let us enter into this prayer, expanding our hearts to embrace our global community, our beloved planet, and all who are seeking a vocation to make the love of God visible in these changing times.

**Song: The Basin and the Towel** by Michael Card (Available on YouTube)

**Refrain:** And the call is to community,  
the impoverished power that sets the soul free  
In humility, to take the vow  
that day after day we must take up the basin and the towel.

**Reading:** John 13: 4 – 9

Jesus rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter.

Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but later you will understand.” Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”

**Reflection & Sharing:** The Chapter Statement 2020 of the Sisters of Charity, Halifax, calls us to “Embrace our vulnerability.” Foot washing presupposes vulnerability. Recall a moment when you allowed your feet to be washed or you washed the feet of another.

**Litany (Alternate):** Adapted from a prayer by Regina Bechtle, SC-NY

*(Quotes in italics are Elizabeth Seton’s Words)*

Elizabeth, teach us to trust

**-That** *“every good work we do is a grain of seed for eternal life.”*

Elizabeth, fill us with courage

**-To** *“push on... since the Providence of God turns out so often quite different from our calculations.”*

Elizabeth, empower us

**-To** *“resign the present and the future to Him who is the author and conductor of both.”*

Elizabeth, strengthen our confidence in God

**-Who** *“smiles at the anxious, calculating heart, and makes everything easy to the simple and confiding.”*

Elizabeth, keep us steady on the path of Charity,

**-Committed to** *“do what we can, and God will do the rest.”*

### **Closing Prayer: Federation Vocation Prayer**

From age to age, O God,  
you have ignited hearts  
impelled by the love of Christ  
to respond with the gift of their lives.  
In the name of the family of St. Vincent de Paul,  
we commend to you these women  
in serious discernment and initial formation  
with our Federation of Charity.

Through the intercession of Vincent, Louise, Elizabeth,  
and all our founders in the Company of Charity,  
may they experience clarity of call,  
generosity of heart,  
and the courage to respond in faith.  
Give us the grace to be joyful companions  
of the journey of discernment.  
From generation to generation  
may the love of Christ impel us!



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