Glenmary Vocation Novena

Through the Intercession of St. Isaac Jogues and Companions



Glenmary Home Missioners

Cover Art by Rev. George Mathis, "North American Martyrs" Back Page Art by Rev. Bruce Brylinski

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Introduction

The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all those who encounter Jesus... with Christ joy is constantly born anew... and so I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ... and I ask all of you to do this unfailingly every day." (The Joy of the Gospel; articles 1 and 3)

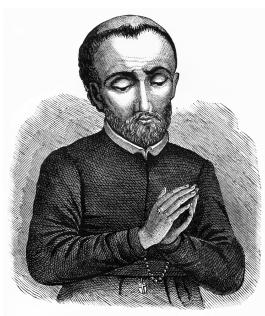
Imagine for a moment Pope Francis inviting you personally (perhaps writing you a letter or calling you) to participate in this novena as a way of renewing and deepening your relationship with Jesus Christ. In this encounter Pope Francis wants you to experience the joy that only our Lord Jesus can provide, for it is the joy of Jesus himself, "so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." (John 15:11)

In this novena booklet you will find a "call" for each day, a scripture passage related to that call, reflections on the call, a meditation and call to action, a quote from Glenmary's founder, Fr. William Howard Bishop, and Glenmary prayers.

What will you need? First and most important---- your commitment of 30 minutes a day for nine days. You will also need a bible and a journal to record your reflections. You may want to write about other things that surface while spending this time in prayer. You never know how and when God's grace will appear!

The nine calls which form this novena (discipleship, poverty, chastity, obedience, prayer, hospitality, service, evangelization, community) form the heart of Glenmary's identity and spirituality. Pope Francis himself embodies that spirituality when he urges ministers in the Church "to stay close to the marginalized and to be shepherds living with the smell of the sheep." And that is how we as Glenmarians try to live out our missionary ministry.

For those discerning a call to Glenmary brotherhood or priesthood the novena provides an excellent way of prayerfully examining our call.



Saint Isaac Jogues

As you begin this novena ask for the intercession of St. Isaac Jogues and Companions also known as the North American Martyrs. The bravery of these men who were both ordained and lay resonates down to our present day and challenges us in our missionary apostolate.

Finally each day begins with the Home Mission Prayer (inside front cover) written by our founder, Fr. William Howard Bishop in 1939. Each day closes with the

Our Lady of the Fields Prayer (inside back cover), who is the patroness of Glenmary. As you pray each of these prayers you are aligning yourself with both those serving in the missions here in the Untied States and also those who still wait for the presence of the Catholic Church in their community.

And so as we begin our novena pilgrimage let us renew our personal encounter with Jesus Christ!

-Father Dan Dorsey, Glenmary Missioner

A Call to Discipleship

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:18-22

Reflection

The response of the first disciples to Jesus' invitation was radical. They did not sit down to think about it. They did not ask questions. They did not return home to pack their bags and say goodbyes. They did not pull out a GPS to start plotting the course of action. They simply put their lives in Jesus' hands and let him lead them into the unknown. That radical response made all the difference in their lives.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions were missionaries from France. In the 1640s they sailed to the New World. They did not know a lot about the people or the place they were going. They remained dedicated and focused on the mission because of their strong faith in Jesus. Their mission among the indigenous tribes brought them unimaginable joys and unfathomable tortures. They eventually died as martyrs. They were canonized in 1930. These North American martyrs whose Feast Day is October 19 are among the primary patrons of Glenmary Home Missioners.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner means allowing Jesus to lead you into the unknown. Are you able to let go of the need to be in control? How do you handle uncertainty and fear? What is your greatest apprehension about answering Jesus' call? Discipleship is about a relationship with Jesus – a trusting relationship which you allow him to lead you along a road that you have not traveled before or probably would not choose to travel. And your response will make all the difference in your life.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Discipleship

"There was never a time when missionary activity was more needed in our beloved land than it is today." (1942)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Father Steve Pawelk

Following Jesus as a Glenmarian has been a wonderful adventure of **discipleship**. There have been many surprises, joys and challenges. After discerning foreign missions I decided to join Glenmary because the lowest grade I received in college was in Spanish class. Then at my first mission, I discovered a need to learn Spanish.

In 2001 I was asked to serve as Vocation Director which included receiving missionary prospects in other countries. Thus in ten years, I went from having only traveled to Mexico and Israel to adding pages to my passport. When I said "yes" to follow Jesus my life has constantly expanded just as it did for the **disciples**.

In 2011 I was assigned to open two new missions in U.S. counties that had never had a Catholic Church. This is the dream of most Glenmarians. We arrived in the mission with a folding table, chairs, and air mattresses. We have grown from 26 people at the first Mass held in a carport to 323 members and 85 youth in our faith formation program. This has only been possible because I have been open to where the Holy Spirit guides me as a **disciple**.

Meditation and Call to Action

Make a list of your apprehensions about following Jesus radically. Bring it to your prayer and ask Jesus to strengthen you during those moments of uncertainty.

Concluding Prayer

A Call to Poverty

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:21-23

Reflection

This rich man is a decent person. He has observed the commandments. He has lived a good moral life. Jesus looks at him with love and tells him what he can do to ultimately find what is lacking in his life; "Sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven." The rich man of course goes away sad because he cannot let go of his many possessions! Detachment from material things must happen first in order to follow Jesus. Letting go creates space for Him and when he occupies the central place in our life, we do not need much else.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions truly lived a call to poverty. Their black robes, the cross around their necks, and their Breviary were often the only possessions mentioned in books about their lives. Their detachment from material things led them to depend solely on God for everything. And it allowed them to freely give of themselves to the people they came to serve.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner begins with the painful but necessary task of letting go. Do you have a hard time detaching yourself from material things? Is your life too cluttered? Does Jesus occupy a central place? In your discernment, reflect on those things in your life that you can not detach from yet. Ask Jesus to help you detach yourself: Turn towards Him and turn away from everything else.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Poverty

"Poverty is exacted from the members in order to remove one of the greatest obstacles to perfection. It is difficult to think of a greater obstacle to perfection than riches." (1952)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Father Chet Artysiewicz

Discussion of how we practice **poverty** generates a variety of expressions: one missioner may use very little heat in the winter; another may use a clothesline instead of a dryer; another may sleep on the floor—to cite a few examples. While the particulars vary, there is a unified spirit. In our Glenmary life it often comes down to simplicity of lifestyle.

For those who take vows or promises of **poverty**, it is certainly not the equivalent of a truly poor person in a developing country or here in the U.S. We possess a security far beyond their reach. In utilizing this world's goods, a guiding principle is: "What is necessary to carry out our mission?" A truly poor person might not have a car or a computer. But it seems reasonable that a missioner have a vehicle to travel from one mission to another or to utilize a modern means of communication. There is a "luxury" in religious **poverty**, a freedom from the anxiety associated with accumulating more.

The call to be Christ-like requires an ongoing effort. That is likewise true for the practice of **poverty**. The tragedy of the story of the rich young man is not the things he possessed but that those things seemed to possess him.

Meditation and Call to Action

Examine your own life. Think about one thing that you seem to have a hard time letting go. Ask Jesus to help you and commit to detaching yourself from it, starting today.

Concluding Prayer

Day Three

A Call to Chastity

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:8

Reflection

Religious take a vow of chastity which is expressed in their celibate way of life. Chaste celibacy is more than not getting married. There is more to it than not having sex! It encompasses everything in one's life. It is about being intimate with others without being sexually active. It is about having close friends and nurturing healthy relationships with men and women. It is about embracing an active lifestyle and at the same time being comfortable alone. It is about having a strong prayer life that uplifts the spirit during the times of struggle.

The lives of **St. Isaac Jogues and Companions** proved that chaste celibacy is not just about the absence of sex. They were exposed to temptations; tribal leaders offered them women to marry. But they remained faithful to their vow of chastity because they valued their vow and had the discipline to say no.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner includes knowing and understanding your needs – spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially. A chaste life does not begin when you are officially accepted into the Glenmary formation. It starts when you forgive your past mistakes and believe that God makes all things new. When you know yourself, understand your personal needs and forgive your past mistakes, you are beginning to joyfully live out your call to chaste celibacy.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Chastity

"If our interior life is not kept on a high plane, our work in the various fields of activity can have only an apparent success and not that for very long. The fundamental requirement for true success is that we all strive daily to be saints." (1947)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Father Dan Dorsey

While I was in college I came close to getting married but before doing so I chose to "look into" Glenmary. One of the best gifts God has given me in my life has been my celibate **chastity**– not always easy and sometimes very challenging but what a gift it has been! My celibate **chastity** has formed and transformed me and taught me many lessons about love.

People have often remarked, "You are giving up so much" and I would think "yes I am but I have gained so much!" The richness of my life, the people that I have come to serve and to know would never have been possible in another way of life.

And one of the greatest joys that God gives us as Glenmary missioners – the relationship we have with the people we serve. It is a unique and special relationship – akin to the biblical image of a shepherd with his sheep. What a privilege it is to serve the people in our missions, to know them by name, and to love and be loved by them.

Meditation and Call to Action

Complete a life inventory. Write down your daily activities and hobbies and the time you spend on each one. Ask yourself if this inventory reflects a healthy balance in your life.

Concluding Prayer

Day Four

A Call to Obedience

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:1-8

Reflection

The Bible has many examples of people who obey God. Their obedience to God and his commandments ultimately bring tremendous blessings to their lives. St. Paul reveals Jesus as an example of obedience par excellence: Jesus "humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross." Humility and obedience go hand-in-hand.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions were obedient men. Their obedience most visibly showed in their relationship with their superiors. In humility they accepted the assignments their superiors gave them, even though sometimes they may have felt they wanted to do something else. This humility must have been grounded in a profound trust in God.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner includes cultivating the humility to surrender and submit your will to where God is calling you, trusting that God will lead you to where is best for you. Do you find it easy to obey others? Are you trusting of others? In your discernment ask Jesus to help you to obey. Practicing humility in daily situations may help you to become more open to hearing the will of God.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Obedience

"The trials that God sends us are usually fringed about with hope for better things. The greater the trial, the brighter the hope." (1942)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Brother Levis Kuwa

For me, **obedience** is first and foremost my responding to God's call. It is God who calls me to be a missioner where I represent Him rather than representing myself in serving the mission. This calls me to obey the Church, the custodian of this mission. And furthermore to trust in Glenmary Home Missioners whose mission is guided by the Spirit in order to identify and respond to the needs of the people of God.

Christ's humility and His surrender to death on a cross is the perfect model of **obedience**. He became like us except in sin, living our human experience, facing the hardships of life and even experiencing death. It was out of love that He responded to God's salvific mission. Christ understands and walks with us in those challenging times when we have to trust and obey the will of God.

As Glenmarians, our promise of **obedience** means that we live out our call not for selfish gain or glory but to dedicate our lives for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. We do this by sharing the gracious love of Christ with the people we minister. We consider the needs of those who are most vulnerable first and foremost and daily try to share Christ's love with these people living in rural and small town Mission Land USA, regardless of their background or faith tradition. And by joyfully serving them, we serve Christ.

Meditation and Call to Action

Open your Bible and read stories of men and women who trust and obey God. Reflect on the times in your life that you have humbly surrendered to the will of God and followed a different course than was originally desired.

Concluding Prayer

A Call to Prayer

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Reflection

St. Paul instructs St. Timothy, one of his disciples and a young convert, to pray for everyone, reminding him that our prayers guide us to lead a quiet and tranquil life. The hope is that the prayers may guide us all to become ministers of peace and concerned for all. A task which is "good and pleasing" to God who desires salvation for all.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions were men of prayer. Occasions of prayer were intended to lead themselves and others closer to God. As missioners they celebrated Mass and administered the sacraments even in dangerous settings. Prayer shaped them to be ambassadors of peace. They helped bring harmony and reconciliation to tribes in conflict. Prayer provided comfort and strength in their times of captivity and persecution.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner involves thinking about your own prayer life. Do you set aside regular time for prayer? Does it shape you to be a person of peace? Does it sustain you in times of hardships? It is important to maintain a regular and active prayer life during discernment. It attunes your heart and mind to the gentle voice of Jesus.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Prayer

"Dear Blessed Mother: Sanctify this retreat for me and obtain that I garner from it all the graces needed to overcome my own stubborn vices, develop strong virtues in their place, and particularly that I become a Superior General to thy own liking." (1952)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Brother Joe Steen

In my ministry with Glenmary on occasion folks have told me that I have been an answer to their **prayers** causing me to think to myself, "You were not asking for much." Other occasions I have asked volunteers to lead **prayer** and seen them look down at their shoes as if the **prayer** is printed there. We Catholics have a hard time with spontaneous public **prayer**. Why is that? Do we feel we have to have it perfect, all the right words?

Over the years in our missions I have prayed with many Christians of different denominations and more often than not, they have prayed with a great familiarity with our God. To speak with God as a parent, friend or more intimately as the One who dwells in our hearts is not a question of eloquence or intelligence but of love. Our Christian friends have the gift of praying publicly. But it is said that the language of God is silence, often the most difficult language to learn, at least it has been for me.

To be alone with God in a church, forest or even a bus station and listen with your heart. God does everything; all I have to do is be still and listen. That has been my experience; I am quiet and God will pray for me and through me and if words are needed God will supply those too. God knows my heart. Then I can share with others what has been put in my heart and not have to look at my shoes.

Meditation and Call to Action

Enter into a space of silence. Spend at least 10 minutes there. Listen with your heart.

Concluding Prayer

A Call to Hospitality

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:38-42

Reflection

Jesus' response to Martha conveys an important characteristic of biblical hospitality: What matters the most is what we do with the guest, not for the guest. Throughout the gospels Jesus often invites people to just hang out with him. Just staying with Jesus is okay! For him, the person's value is not in what they do, but in who they are.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions understood that lesson. Some of the people they encountered were not welcoming but hostile. They could have quickly run the opposite direction upon the first encounter. But they did not! Their gentleness, approachability, and kindness opened the door to conversion for many Huron natives. They saw Christ in the people they encountered.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner includes recognizing the need to nurture a welcoming and inviting heart. Who do you welcome into your life? Do people recognize gentleness in you? Do they approach you with their struggles? As you discern, make an effort to practice hospitality for others. You will find out that being welcoming, or your kindness, handshakes, greetings, and smiles could be what people need to begin experiencing God in their lives once again.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Hospitality

"The true missioner adopts all the people in his area, regardless of creed, for his own. His aim is to make all of them better

people and bring them nearer to God. Whether he ever makes a convert to the Church or not, the town, the county, the lives of the people must be better because of his example, his preaching, his activities among the poor, the sick, and the sinful of all creeds and none." (1948)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Father Vic Subb

One of the joys of being a Glenmary missioner is that God sends many people into our lives. One of the blessings in my life is that each time someone knocks on the door, a new adventure begins. Sometimes I may feel too busy to respond but I have learned that these are the times that I find God calling me to be open to the person knocking. The person who I least expect is often the one that leads me closer to the Lord. The poor and the disabled have led me to see more of the glory of God and the many ways that I can use my talents to build the Kingdom of God.

Mi casa es su casa. To offer **hospitality** to another has risks, as with any encounter, but if we freely give of our time there are blessings for the giver and the receiver. The encounter leads us into deeper relationship. If our time is a gift from God, then sharing that time with another is a wise use of it. As a Glenmary Missioner I witnessed the importance of relationships. I have experienced the joy and love of Christ in my encounters with my brothers and sisters. Each time someone knocks at the door, there is present another Christ.

Meditation and Call to Action

Today, be a minister of hospitality. Welcome those you find enjoyable and those you find obnoxious, those whom you want to spend time with and those you would rather not.

Concluding Prayer

A Call to Service

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:35-45

Reflection

James and John asked Jesus for a place of honor. They asked to be recognized as the first and the greatest among the disciples. Jesus tells them and us that servanthood is the true mark of greatness. Jesus emphasizes that to serve does not mean to exercise authority, but instead to sacrifice oneself out of love for others.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions understood the meaning of servanthood. They embraced the suffering which came from proclaiming the gospel as Jesus said that it would. They could have chosen to stay with their well-armed compatriots in order to guarantee their safety. Instead they spent their time serving the needy and defending the oppressed.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner includes having the willingness to serve. Do you feel joy when you see the need to serve? Do you empathize with those who are suffering? Have you done an act of self-sacrifice recently? In your discernment ask Jesus to inspire you to spend time with the people that He spent time and to learn to care about the people he cared.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Service

"No work will be so powerful for us as apostles of peace on earth than that which we are organized to do the temporal and spiritual works of mercy, feeding and clothing the hungry and naked, ministering the wounded and the sick... love the poor and the underprivileged." (1945)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Father Aaron Wessman

It's not uncommon for Glenmarians to prepare a liturgy or a service project for hours, sometimes days, and in the end, sometimes only a handful of people show up. Or, often, Glenmarians will drive fifty minutes over a mountain, down a valley, and across a stream to bring Communion to one homebound person; and upon arriving, find that the person is not home. It is even more the case for Glenmarians to mention our community to a new acquaintance, and the response is usually: "Oh, I have never heard of that community before."

It is hard to work for little results and with little recognition. From a human level, one can understand why James and John requested from Jesus what they did. Glenmarians sometimes are tempted to want this recognition and honor, too. Yet when all is said and done, it seems that what really matters is not recognition, nor is it honor. Rather, it is in knowing or being assured that we are trying to faithfully follow Jesus, who was willing to lay down his life for us. And so, in our own small way, we try to lay down our lives and be of **service** for the people of the missions.

Meditation and Call to Action

Who are the people that Jesus spent time with and cared about? The poor, the sick, the suffering, the forgotten, the marginalized, those who live on the periphery. How can you spend time with them today?

Concluding Prayer

Day Eight

A Call to Evangelization

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:19-20

Reflection

No one goes out and randomly starts making disciples or evangelizing for no reason! Our reason is because of our love for Jesus Christ. The Apostles proclaimed the Good News to all nations because their hearts burned with love for Jesus and trusted that he was with them always.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions' missionary zeal was the same. Their love for Jesus helped them to see that every person, regardless of race or culture, was worth giving their lives. Without fear they preached love, peace and unity, taught catechism, and administered the sacraments. They suffered unimaginable tortures, yet they remained faithful to their missionary work because they felt assured and emboldened by Jesus' promise that he would be with them always.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner challenges you to examine your personal relationship with Jesus and to recognize that love within you. Is your love for Jesus a priority? Can you remain faithful to him amidst hardships? Do your actions and words in your daily routines allow people to see your love of Jesus? In your discernment pray that you grow in your love for Jesus and others.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Evangelization

"Our work is to arouse America and make it convert-conscious and to turn the main force of its convert effort into the small towns and the open places, to make people realize that if we are going to convert America it must be done from the grass roots up and not from cities down." (1948)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Brother Craig Digmann

"Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations" is quite a commission that Jesus gave to his disciples. **Evangelization** may seem like an overwhelming task, but I don't think Jesus meant it to be so. **Evangelization** is simply living out and sharing the love we have for our Catholic faith through words and actions in our daily life.

We Catholics don't need to have a PhD in theology to share the "Good News." Who did Jesus choose for apostles? Look at the saints. God uses ordinary people in simple ways to build His kingdom.

Evangelization can be implemented in creative and varied ways. Genuinely sharing the love we have for Christ at our workplace, in school, or on the streets can be effective and practical ways to spread the good news.

Oftentimes the people we encounter in our daily lives have struggles going on in their life, so we need to be ready to give them a reason to be hopeful. We need to let the light of Christ shine through us for the people we meet, so that their hearts and lives might be drawn to God.

As we discern various ways of **evangelizing**, we might ask the question; Is this **evangelization** drawing people closer to Christ, or is it driving them away?

Meditation and Call to Action

Jesus tells his disciples to "go." Reflect on that same command. Where is Jesus asking you to "go" and preach the Good News?

Concluding Prayer

A Call to Community

n the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Home Mission Prayer (see inside front cover)

Scripture Reading: Acts 4:32-35

Reflection

The early Christian community was of one heart and mind. It was a caring community. Believers thought more about what they could give to it rather than what they might receive. They shared everything in common and used what they had to help those with the greatest needs. No one was left out.

St. Isaac Jogues and Companions lived as a community of one mind and heart. They cared about each other's well being. They served one another. They prayed together. They relied on each other for strength and support. They encouraged each other to remain resilient. They remained faithful to one another even to death.

Discerning a vocation to be a missioner involves recognizing and accepting the communal nature of religious life and ministry. Do you get along with others? Do you help those in need? During your discernment deepen your involvement in the life of your parish community. Not only will it give you a feel for the communal nature of mission ministry, but will also provide you opportunities to help make it a community of one mind and heart.

Rev. William H. Bishop on Community

"Our policy, as annunciated in our original plan, is to have not less than two priests in a parish, regardless of how few Catholics may be there. There is always more than enough work for two if they plan their activities and want to keep busy, as all of them do." (1948)

Reflection in a Glenmary Context By Brother Jack Henn

I am a Brother with the Glenmary Home Missioners for over 40 years. That includes several years training to be a missioner and many years serving in missions in the Deep South and Appalachia. I spent many years walking with men who were discerning a vocation, training men who were studying to be missioners and 12 years in a leadership role as Vice President of Glenmary. In those 40 years, I have never lived alone.

I am called in **community** to not only serve in the missions but also to serve my fellow Glenmarians. We pray together to sustain our life of faith. We share meals and recreate together. We listen to one another's joys and struggles in ministry. We challenge one another when the need arises to be more loving, more giving, more self-sacrificing. We support one another during difficult periods - a personal health crisis, a family member who needs help, a parishioner who has gone astray.

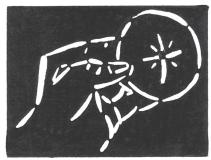
Glenmarians lean on each other and count on each other. We sacrifice for one another and we are graced by one another. **Community** life nurtures me so that I am able to reach out to others and share the Good News and be the person that Jesus Christ is calling me to be.

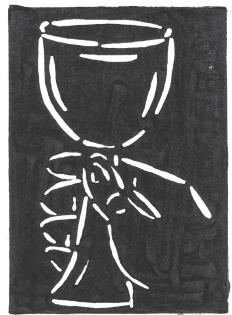
Meditation and Call to Action

Think of someone in your own parish community who might be in need. How can you reach out to the least in your community? How could you share your gifts to help?

Concluding Prayer







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