

## ***A Litany for Federal Budget Sunday***

**Leader:** In the coming weeks, our elected leaders will decide on our nation's budget—a critical moral document that will determine our future as Americans. Today, we pray to you, O God, to guide our leaders as they deliberate on the future of our country.

**People: God of Wisdom, pour your spirit upon the leaders and people of our nation.**

**Leader:** We have learned, however, that the proposed budget from President Bush challenges the core of our faith. It challenges our deeply held values as responsible citizens willing to invest in our nation's future. Instead of balancing the budget, it proposes more tax cuts that will increase the deficit. Instead of asking the wealthiest citizens to pay their share to reinvest in America, it proposes they pay less. Instead of a financial roadmap to peace and prosperity, it proposes more war, at the expense of the poor.

**People: God of Justice, hear our prayer and guide us through these trying times.**

**Leader:** We have learned about some deeply troubling consequences of the proposed budget, especially for our nation's children, seniors and the poor: we have learned that food stamps would be cut by one billion dollars over 10 years, affecting 300,000 people;

**People: O God of Mercy, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** That health care for low-income families and seniors would be cut by forty-five billion dollars over 10 years;

**People: O God of Mercy, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** That job training could be cut by five hundred million dollars; that literacy programs may be slashed by two hundred twenty-five million dollars; that funds to improve water quality would be reduced by three hundred sixty nine million dollars; and these are only a few of the cuts that would lead to immense suffering among us.

**People: O God of Mercy, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** As we pray about the federal budget, we remember that our Savior came with good news to the poor. We turn to Jesus for guidance and courage to walk the difficult path of faith. We turn to Jesus who said, "whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me."

**People: God of Love, we turn to Jesus our Christ who teaches us to care for the least of these.**

**Leader:** As witnesses to God's love, we are called to act with compassion to protect our nation's vulnerable and ensure our children's future. As active, faithful citizens let us speak out against the suffering and injustice in the proposed budget. Does the budget reflect our morality as people of faith? Will we care for the poor? Will we act responsibly and invest in our common future? Together, we can work to build communities that provide security and opportunity for all.

**ALL: God of All People, hear our prayer and guide us as we, your faithful people, act with justice and compassion in Jesus' name.**

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