

## **Thurgood Marshall**

Thurgood Marshall was a distinguished American jurist and the first African American to become an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Marshall was born in 1908. He attended Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore and Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Pushed toward other professions, Marshall was determined to be an attorney. He was denied admission to the University of Maryland Law School due to its segregationist admissions policy. He enrolled and graduated magna cum laude from the Law School of Howard University in Washington.

Marshall began the practice of law in Baltimore in 1933 and began representing the local chapter of the NAACP in 1934, eventually becoming the legal counsel for the national organization. He won his first major civil rights decision in 1936, *Murray v. Pearson*, which forced the University of Maryland to open its doors to blacks.

At the age of 32, Marshall successfully argued his first case before the United States Supreme Court and went on to win 29 of the 32 cases he argued before the court. As a lawyer, his crowning achievement was arguing successfully for the plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of*

*Education of Topeka*, in 1954. The Supreme Court ruled that the “separate but equal” doctrine was unconstitutional and ordered the desegregation of public schools across the nation.

President Lyndon Johnson appointed Marshall as the 96th Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court in 1967, a position he held for 24 years. Marshall compiled a long and impressive record of decisions on civil rights, not only for African Americans, but also for women, Native Americans, and the incarcerated; he was a strong advocate for individual freedoms and human rights. He adamantly believed that capital punishment was unconstitutional and should be abolished.

During his years in Washington, Marshall and his family were members of St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church, where he was affectionately known as “The Judge.” He is remembered as “a wise and godly man who knew his place and role in history and obeyed God’s call to follow justice wherever it led.”

*Leader:* Peace on each one who comes in need,  
*All:* ***Peace on each one who comes in joy.***

*Leader:* Peace on each one who offers prayers,  
*All:* ***Peace on each one who offers song.***

*Leader:* Peace of the Maker, Peace of the Son,  
*All:* ***Peace of the Spirit, the triune one.***

### **Psalm 34: 15 -22**

*O taste and see that the Lord is gracious.*

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the  
righteous •  
and his ears are open to their cry.

16 The face of the Lord is against those who do  
evil, •  
to root out the remembrance of them from the  
earth.

17 The righteous cry and the Lord hears them •  
and delivers them out of all their troubles.

18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted •  
and will save those who are crushed in spirit.

*O taste and see that the Lord is gracious.*

19 Many are the troubles of the righteous; •  
from them all will the Lord deliver them.

20 He keeps all their bones, •  
so that not one of them is broken.

21 But evil shall slay the wicked •  
and those who hate the righteous will be  
condemned.

22 The Lord ransoms the life of his servants •  
and will condemn none who seek refuge in him

*O taste and see that the Lord is gracious*

*Leader:* O God, for your love for us, warm and brooding, which has brought us to birth and opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty of creation,

*All:* ***We give you thanks.***

*Leader:* For your love for us, wild and freeing, which has awakened us to the energy of creation: to the sap that flows, the blood that pulses, the heart that sings,

*All:* ***We give you thanks.***

*Leader:* For your love for us, compassionate and patient, which has carried us through our pain, wept beside us in our sin, and waited with us in our confusion,

*All:* ***We give you thanks.***

*Leader:* For your love for us, strong and challenging, which has called us to risk for you, asked for the best in us, and shown us how to serve,

*All:* ***We give you thanks.***

*Leader:* O God we come to celebrate that your Holy Spirit is present deep within us, and at the heart of all life. Forgive us when we forget your gift of love made known to us in Jesus, and draw us into your presence.

## **Matthew 23:1-11**

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant.

### ***Sharing of the day***

#### ***Prayer***

*Leader:* We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today and for whom we want to pray; Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

*Leader:* We bring to God someone who is hurting tonight and needs our prayer; \_\_\_\_\_  
Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

*Leader:* We bring to God a troubled situation in our world tonight \_\_\_\_\_  
Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

*Leader:* We bring to God, silently, someone whom we find hard to like or forgive or trust  
Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

*Leader:* We bring ourselves to God that we might grow in generosity of spirit,  
clarity of mind, and warmth of affection. Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

Taste and see, taste and see, the goodness of the Lord,  
O taste and see, taste and see, the goodness of the Lord,  
Of the Lord  
(repeat three times)

### ***Closing responses***

*Leader:* O Trinity of Love, You have been with us at the world's beginning,

*All:* ***Be with us till the world's end.***

*Leader:* You have been with us at our life's shaping,

*All:* ***Be with us at our life's end.***

*Leader:* You have been with us at the sun's rising

*All:* ***Be with us till the day's end. Amen***

*All:*

**Lord make me an instrument of your peace  
Where there is hatred let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
Where there is sadness joy.  
O Divine master grant that I may**

**Not so much seek to be consoled as to  
console  
To be understood, as to understand.  
To be loved, as to love  
For it is in giving that we receive  
And it is in pardoning that we are  
pardoned  
And it is in dying that we are born  
To eternal life. Amen**

*Leader:* And now may the God of hope bring us such joy and peace in believing that we overflow with hope in the power of the Holy Spirit. *Amen*