



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

PRAYER FOR PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

This brief liturgy can be used in a variety of settings. It may be duplicated for free distribution.

Opening Prayer

God of mercy and peace, you created us in your image, forming one human family. You love all your children without discrimination, and invite us to love each of our neighbors as ourselves. In hope, we lift up to you for healing the tensions and racism that plague our nation, and pray for increasing harmony and peace within our communities, and in our hearts. Amen.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 85: 9-14

R. The Lord speaks of peace to his people.

I will listen for what God, the LORD, has to say;
surely he will speak of peace to his people and
to his faithful.

May they not turn to foolishness!

Near indeed is his salvation for those who fear him;
glory will dwell in our land. **R.**

Love and truth will meet;
justice and peace will kiss.
Truth will spring from the earth;
justice will look down from heaven. **R.**

Yes, the LORD will grant his bounty;
our land will yield its produce.
Justice will march before him,
and make a way for his footsteps. **R.**

Reading from Scripture

Colossians 3:12-15

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful.

Reflection

An individual or group reflection on the scripture readings or the theme of peace in our communities may take place here.

Petitions

God is the author of peace, and blesses all those who work for peace. Let us now lift up prayers for peace, saying: "Author of Peace, hear our prayer."

For an end to the violence perpetrated by harsh words, deadly weapons, or cold indifference. May our homes, our nation, and countries around the world become havens of peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language or culture, let us pray to the Lord.

For healing and justice for all those who have experienced violence and racism, let us pray to the Lord.

For the protection of all police and first responders who risk their lives daily to ensure our safety; for fair and just policing that will promote peace and wellbeing in all our neighborhoods, let us pray to the Lord.

For our public officials, that they will strive to work for fair education, adequate housing, and equal opportunities for employment for all, let us pray to the Lord.

For our agency, that we may cultivate welcome, extend hospitality, and encourage the participation of people of all cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds, let us pray to the Lord.

For the courage to have difficult conversations about racism, and for a better appreciation of how our words and actions – or even our silence – can impact our communities, let us pray to the Lord.

For solidarity in our global human family, that we may work together to protect those who are most vulnerable and most in need, let us pray to the Lord.

Other intercessions may be offered here.

Closing Prayer

“Lord, make me an instrument of thy 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;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.”

-Saint Francis of Assisi

Sign of Peace

All present may share with each other an appropriate sign of peace.

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