

A call from Pax Christi

Prayer, Fasting and Action for peace
in the Middle East and North Africa - Syria, Palestine & Israel, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen...

Join us in solidarity with others and fast and pray for one or more 24-hour period
between 28 September – 3 October

We offer these prayers and reflections for use with groups, in parishes or for personal reflection

A Cry for Peace

Words from Pope Francis on war and peace

Easter Message 2015

We ask for peace, above all, for beloved Syria and Iraq, that the roar of arms may cease and that peaceful relations may be restored among the various groups which make up those beloved countries. May the international community not stand by before the immense humanitarian tragedy unfolding in these countries and the drama of the numerous refugees.

We pray for peace for all the peoples of the Holy Land. May the culture of encounter grow between Israelis and Palestinians and the peace process be resumed, in order to end years of suffering and division.

We implore peace for Libya, that the present absurd bloodshed and all barbarous acts of violence may cease, and that all concerned for the future of the country may work to favour reconciliation and to build a fraternal society respectful of the dignity of the person. For Yemen too we express our hope for the growth of a common desire for peace, for the good of the entire people. And we ask peace for this world subjected to arms dealers, who profit from the blood of men and women.

Angelus message 2013

What is the use of waging war, so many wars, if you aren't capable of waging this profound war against evil? It is pointless! It doesn't work.... Among other things this war against evil entails saying "no" to the fratricidal hatred and falsehood that are used; saying "no" to violence in all its forms; saying "no" to the proliferation of weapons and to the illegal arms trade. There is so much of it! So much of it! And the doubt always remains: is this war or that war - because wars are everywhere - really a war to solve problems or is it a commercial war for selling weapons in illegal trade? These are the enemies to fight, united and consistent, following no other interests than those of peace and of the common good.

To you, Creator of nature and humanity, of truth and beauty, I pray:

Hear my voice,

for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.

Hear my voice,

for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

Hear my voice,

when I beg you to instil into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship.

Hear my voice,

for I speak for the multitudes in every country and every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.

Hear my voice

and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with sharing of self, to war with peace.

Oh God, hear my voice, and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.

(Pope John Paul II)

Now, more than ever:

- We confess the spiritual poverty within ourselves and our nation
- We mourn the victims of violence around the world
- We believe that the nonviolent will inherit the earth
- We hunger and thirst for justice for all
- We seek the courage to be merciful to all
- We pray for the Spirit to grant us purity of heart
- We recommit ourselves to be active peacemakers
- We pray to be ready to suffer persecution for the sake of justice
- We believe nonviolence is the light of the world

(Pace e Bene Franciscan Centre, Las Vegas)

For the people of the Middle East & North Africa

Almighty eternal God, source of all compassion, the promise of your mercy and saving help fills our hearts with hope.

Hear the cries of the people of Syria; bring healing to those suffering from the violence, and comfort to those mourning the dead.

Empower and encourage Syria's neighbours in their care and welcome for refugees.

Convert the hearts of those who have taken up arms, and strengthen the resolve of those committed to peace.

O God of hope and Father of mercy, your Holy Spirit inspires us to look beyond ourselves and our own needs.

Inspire leaders to choose peace over violence and to seek reconciliation with enemies.

Inspire the Church around the world with compassion for the people of Syria,

and fill us with hope for a future of peace built on

Asking for God's mercy

L: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Let us now bring our grief and sorrow to God, our refuge and strength.

O God, our God, we see pain, suffering, and terror in Syria, Iraq, Libya..

Towns and villages are torn apart by war, oppression, injustice, and hunger.

Refugee camps are springing up, and quickly fill to overflowing. In this war, many religious and ethnic communities,

including our Christian sisters and brothers, who are small in number, are in constant threat,

in danger of losing their lives and future, in danger of leaving their ancestral lands

and accelerating the loss of the ancient cultural and religious diversity of the region.

Terror reigns, human life seems worthless.

C: Why, O God?

L: People are crying: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

C: God, our God, why have you forsaken us?

L: Why must there be death and destruction?
Why must there be bloodshed and suffering?

C: Why, O God?

justice for all.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace and Light of the World,

who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Petition:

For the people of Syria, that God may strengthen the resolve of leaders to end

the fighting and choose a future of peace.

We pray to the Lord

From United States Conference of Catholic Bishops'

Pax Christi Prayer for Peace in the Middle East

We come to you, God Creator.

You are the source of life and beauty and power.

Your son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.

Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the bond of unity.

You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes, Witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and forgiveness.

You call us at this time, when war and rumours of war, weigh heavily on the peoples of the Middle East.

Their lives are already broken by suffering and violence.

We renew our acceptance of your call.

We promise to work:

To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,

To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair,

To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely, the disadvantaged, the marginalized,

And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.

Amen.

Stories and reflections from Jesuit Refugee Services may be helpful.

<https://en.jrs.net/prayers>

To Be Peacemakers

An Act of Dedication

*We come to you, God Creator.
You are the source of light and beauty and power.
Your Son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.
Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the
bond of unity.
You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes,
witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and
forgiveness.
Especially do you call us at this time of death and
destruction and broken lives,
of terrible violence and fierce hatred.
We renew our acceptance of your call.
We promise to work:
To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,
To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair
To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely,
the disadvantaged, the marginalized,
And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.*

Affirmation of justice and peace

All: I believe in God,
who is love and who has given
the earth to all people.
I believe in Jesus Christ,
who came to heal us,
and to free us from all forms of oppression,
whose suffering and death bring new life.
I believe in the Spirit of God,
who works in and through all who
are turned towards the truth.
I believe in the community of faith,
which is called to be at the service of all people and God's
creation.
I believe in God's promise to finally destroy the power of
sin in us all,
and to establish the kingdom
of justice and peace for all.

Men: I do not believe in the right of the strongest, nor the
force of arms, nor the power of oppression.

Women: I believe in human rights, in the solidarity of all
people, in the power of non-violence.

Men: I do not believe in racism, in the power that comes
from wealth and privilege, or in any established order that
enslaves.

Women: I believe that all men and women are
equally human, that order based on violence and injustice
is not order.

Men: I do not believe that war and hunger are inevitable

and peace unattainable.

Women: I believe in beauty of simplicity, in love with open
hands, in peace on earth.

All: I do not believe that suffering needs to be in vain, that
death is the end, that the disfigurement of the world is
what God intended. But I dare to believe, always and in
spite of everything, in God's power to transform and
transfigure, fulfilling the promise of a new heaven and a
new earth where justice and peace will flourish.

(Adapted from a creed from Indonesia.)

Prayers of intercession

*For the leaders of our communities, our church,
our country and our world,
that they may take decisions that are in accord with God's
commandments that bring life, justice and peace.*

We pray to the Lord

*For those who have died by acts of violence,
that they may be raised with Christ who died for them and
that they may know the unending life and glory of the
kingdom of peace and light.*

We pray to the Lord

*For those who have survived violence,
that they will be sheltered in the compassion of God and
our community and that, feeling the compassion of Jesus,
they may find healing and hope.*

We pray to the Lord

*For those who commit acts of violence against others, that
their hearts may be moved by Christ's grace,
and that they may be transformed by the Spirit of love,
peace and justice.*

We pray to the Lord

*For ourselves,
that we will work all together to end violence
and bring life, peace and security to our world.*

We pray to the Lord

Meditations for Peace

Saying the Rosary for Peace

We offer these meditations as an accompaniment to those who may wish to pray the Rosary for Peace. Reflect on the scriptural passage before beginning your decade of the Rosary

Justice Mysteries

1. For Justice in our hearts

'God... sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sin away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another.' 1 John 4:10-11

2. For Justice between us and other people

'How does God's love abide in anyone who has this world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. 1 John 3:17-18

3. For Justice within our society

'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me. q

Matthew 25:37-40

4. For Justice between nations

'Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?' Isaiah 58:6-7

5. For the coming of God's kingdom of Justice

'The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind new sight; to set the downtrodden free and proclaim the Lord's year of favour.' Luke 4:18-19

Peace Mysteries

1. For Peace in our hearts

'Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give - this is my gift to you. q

John 14:27

2. For Peace between us and other people

'I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. q

John 13:34

3. For Peace in our society

'You are God's chosen race...He loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same...And may the peace of Christ reign in your

hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body.'

Colossians 3:12-15

For Peace between nations

'But now in Christ Jesus, you that used to be so far apart from us have been brought very close, by the blood of Christ. For he is the peace between us.'

Ephesians 2:13-14

4. For the coming of God's kingdom of Peace

'I will hear what the Lord God has to say: a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people. His help is near for those who fear him, and his glory will dwell in our land. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced.'

Psalms 85:8-10

(Adapted from Pax Christi)

My Soul is Filled with Joy - Saying the Rosary for Peace)

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