

CATHOLIC PRAYER SERVICE FOR PEACE

June 13, 2025

WELCOME

L: Welcome to this special prayer service for peace in the United States and throughout the world.

In this time of great tension in our nation, we look to our loving Creator for comfort and guidance. We remember the words of nonviolent peacemaker Dr. Martin Luther King, "True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice." And we remember the teaching of Pope Paul VI who said, "If you want peace, work for justice."

Inspired by their prophetic witness, today we call on what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature." We ask God to touch the strained chords of our common life and strengthen our bonds. We lament the recent pain and alarm fomented by the worst demons of our nation – the hate, racism, anti-Semitism, white supremacy and white terror – that have shaken us to our core. We come together now, to pray for our brothers and sisters who cling to the false beliefs and the continuing lies about immigrants, refugees, Muslims, Jews. And we commit to redouble our efforts to speak truth, to work together to address systemic racism, to be nonviolent peacemakers, and to restore trust and integrity to our democratic system and institutions. Let us pray.

OPENING

L: We gather together, in the presence of the God of abundance, to remember that, throughout history, God has manifested love and care for those who suffer from violence, hatred, and oppression. We commend all those who have experienced such suffering in the United States to the healing mercy of God who binds up all our wounds and enfolds us in gentle care.

All: Amen.

CALL TO PRAYER

L: The arrests of immigrants have left many of us confused and afraid. What are we as Catholics to do?

All: Lord, show us your mercy.

L: The increasingly harsh rhetoric has damaged many of our relationships. What is ours to do?

All: Christ, teach us your love.

L: With the power of social media and money in politics, truth and the common good are lost in the public square. How do we go forward?

All: Lord, strengthen our hearts for peace and justice.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Isaiah 58: 6-12 The Fast that God Chooses

Is this not, rather, the fast that I choose:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke;
Setting free the oppressed,
breaking off every yoke?

the accusing finger, and malicious speech;
If you lavish your food on the hungry
and satisfy the afflicted;
Then your light shall rise in the darkness,
and your gloom shall become like midday;

Is it not sharing your bread with the hungry,
bringing the afflicted and the homeless into your house;
Clothing the naked when you see them,
and not turning your back on your own flesh?

Then the LORD will guide you always
and satisfy your thirst in parched places,
will give strength to your bones
And you shall be like a watered garden,
like a flowing spring whose waters never fail.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your wound shall quickly be healed;
Your vindication shall go before you,
and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Your people shall rebuild the ancient ruins;
the foundations from ages past you shall raise up;
"Repairer of the breach," they shall call you,
"Restorer of ruined dwelling."

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer,
you shall cry for help, and he will say: "Here I am!"
If you remove the yoke from among you,

The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L: God of mercy, forgive us our complicity in allowing hatred, violence, cruelty and division to collectively and individually take hold of our hearts.

All: Hear our prayer

L: God of righteousness, strengthen our national resolve to replace the evils of our racist legacy with a zeal to realize the potential of our ideals.

All: Hear our prayer

L: God of light, show us our own complicity in injustice and open our eyes to a path forward that is paved with truth, understanding, and nonviolence.

All: Hear our prayer

L: God of compassion, help us to recognize the suffering of our sisters and brothers so that we might inspire trust and contribute to the healing of our civic body.

All: Hear our prayer

L: God of new life, give us resilience and help us to be fruitful soil where the seeds of reconciliation can take root among people of goodwill.

All: Hear our prayer

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Matthew 5:3–12 The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of
righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you
and utter every kind of evil against you because of me.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in
heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were
before you.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.

CLOSING PRAYER (ALL)

Prayer of St. Francis

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,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

CONCLUSION

L: May God bless us with mercy, strengthen us with love, and enable us to walk in charity and peace.

ALL: Amen.

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