

# Prayer for Peace and Unity



January 7, 2020

The Ursuline School

## **Introduction:**

Welcome to our prayer service for peace and unity. Today, we are praying for peace throughout the world, and asking God for his gift of peace and safety for the whole human family. When it is hard for us to find peace in our hearts, peace with our neighbor or peace in the world, we turn to Jesus, Prince of Peace to show us the way. Let us take this time to reflect on Jesus' message of peace. Let us think about how Jesus calls us to live this message: by praying for peace, by working for peace, and becoming makers of peace, as sons and daughters of God. St. Angela reminded her daughters to pray for peace when she wrote, "Thus, from the great need we have of divine aid, we must pray always with mind and heart."

## **Candle Lighting for Peace**

**Leader:** At this time, we will light the Christ candle. The Christ candle reminds us that Jesus is our Light who guides our feet in the way of peace. Jesus guides us to peace through his word and the teaching of his Church. Jesus guides us to peace through everyone who helps us walk in faith. Let us now join together in song to celebrate the gift of Christ's light, which guides us to become makers of peace, singing our opening song.

## **Opening Song: Make Me a Channel of Your Peace**

Make me a channel of Your peace  
Where there is hatred, let me bring Your love  
Where there is injury, Your pardon Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in You

Make me a channel of Your peace  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, only light  
And where there's sadness, ever joy

Oh Master, grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul



Make me a channel of Your peace  
It is pardoning that we are pardoned  
In giving to all men that we receive  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life

### **Opening Prayer**

God our Father, you sent your Son Jesus to show us the way to a true and lasting peace. Open our minds and hearts to hear his message of peace, and follow it as his disciples. We ask you this in his name. Amen

Let us now be attentive, and listen to God's word.

### **Reader: A reading from the Prophet Isaiah (Is 2: 2-5)**

In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." ...He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God



### **Reader: A Jewish Prayer for Peace**

May it be your will, Eternal One, our God, God of our ancestors, that wars and bloodshed be abolished from the world, and bring into the world a great and wonderful and lasting peace. And let no nation lift a sword against a nation—let them learn no more the ways of war!

Let all who dwell on earth simply acknowledge the truth of truths: that we have not come into this world for the sake of quarreling and war, nor for the sake of hatred, jealousy, anger, or bloodshed; rather, we have come into this world only to know You—may You be blessed eternally!

Therefore, have mercy on us, and fulfill among us what is written in your Scripture: “I shall give peace upon the earth, and you shall lie down with none to make you afraid. I shall abolish from the earth the predatory beast. The sword shall never come upon your land. Justice shall roll down like the water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of The Omnipresent, as the waters fill the seas.”

### **Reader: An Islamic Prayer for Peace**

O Allah, unite our hearts and set aright our mutual affairs, guide us in the path of peace. Liberate us from darkness by Your light, save us from enormities whether open or hidden. Bless us in our ears, eyes, hearts, spouses, and children. Turn to us; truly you are Most Merciful. Make us grateful for Your bounty and full of praise for it, so that we may continue to receive it and complete Your blessings upon us.

### **Reader: The Universal Prayer for Peace**

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth.  
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust.  
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace.  
Let peace fill my heart, my world, my universe. Amen.

## **Message of Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53<sup>rd</sup> World Day of Peace**

### **“Peace is a Journey of Hope, Dialogue, Reconciliation and Ecological Conversion”**

**Reader:** Pope Francis says: "The peace process requires enduring commitment. It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honor the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance (1-1-20)." (The Assisi Project)

**All:** As we light a candle for Peace let us make the commitment to work for peace in all we do. May we use words of compassion and encouragement in our dealings with one another.

**All:** We light a candle for Peace

**Reader:** Pope Francis acknowledges how “the terrible trials of internal and international conflicts, often aggravated by ruthless acts of violence, have an enduring effect on the body and soul of humanity”. “Mistrust and fear weaken relationships and increase the risk of violence, creating a vicious circle that can never lead to a relationship of peace”.

**All:** As we light a candle for Courage let us always act with integrity. Let us be men and women of conscience who work for the betterment of our world and see the good in all people.

**All:** We light a candle for Courage

**Reader:** On the other hand, writes Pope Francis, “Peace emerges from the depths of the human heart and political will must always be renewed, so that new ways can be found to reconcile and unite individuals and communities”. That journey of reconciliation “calls for patience and trust”, says the Pope. “Peace will not be obtained unless it is hoped for”.

**All:** May we always be people of Hope seeking reconciliation and understanding. May we always seek to make peace with others rather than harbor ill will.

**All:** We light a candle for Hope

**Reader:** The world does not need empty words, continues Pope Francis, “but convinced witnesses, peacemakers who are open to a dialogue that rejects exclusion or manipulation”. Peace is a process that requires enduring commitment, he adds. “It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honor the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance”.

**All:** May we always seek to listen to our brothers and sisters. May we hear the cries of the poor, the victims and those who are seeking a better life.

**All:** We light a candle for Peace Makers

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

Let us pray for the Church, that it will always be a faithful sign and instrument of Christ’s peace. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the world, that the peace of Christ might take root in every human heart. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our world leaders. That the Holy Spirit will guide them to promote the peace and understanding of Christ’s Gospel. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the peace and safety of all persons who suffer due to war and violence. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for ourselves, that we might become peace-makers with our families, our neighbors and communities. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who suffer from anti-Semitism, may we always strive to appreciate the gifts and beliefs of all. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for an end to all military violence. May those who defend our land be safe and protected from all danger. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the people of Australia, that the wildfires will cease and that there will be no further destruction and loss of life. We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

And for what else shall we pray? (please say aloud)

Leader: Let us unite all our intentions with the prayer of Jesus, Prince of Peace, using the words he gave us. Our Father ....

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord, you sent your Son Jesus into the world that we might enjoy your peace always. Give us the strength to live as your children and be makers of peace. Grant that all peoples might put aside their differences, and seek the unity of your Kingdom. We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Closing Song: Let There Be Peace on Earth**

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me

Let there be peace on earth the peace that was meant to be

With God as our Father we are family let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me let this be the moment now. With every step I take  
Let this be my solemn vow to take each moment and live each moment in  
peace eternally let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

