

12 Hour Virtual Prayer Vigil for Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation



Offered by the Community of Deacons
in the Diocese of Virginia
April 8, 2017, from 8am to 8pm

Greetings and be welcomed in the name of Jesus.

On behalf of the Community of Deacons of the Diocese of Virginia, we welcome you to this prayer vigil for peace, justice, and reconciliation. We hope and pray this time of prayer will help ground you, your community, and this Diocese as we enter Holy Week.

This prayer guide is composed of sections, with scripture and reflections to provide context for our prayer time. These reflections were written by deacons in the Diocese of Virginia. We hope that these reflections will help us all see how peace, justice, and reconciliation is occurring, today, in our communities.

This prayer guide is simply that. It is a guide to assist you in prayer and in your watch. You may use any portion of this guide to assist you. You may also want to fashion a vigil that works for you. We encourage you to engage in whatever means is best for you and your community.

Some suggestions to consider:

- Find a quiet place without distractions
- Candles may help set the space apart from “normal time”
- Silence can be helpful in centering oneself and help us hear God’s voice in a noisy world
- Intersperse prayer with times of silence
- Prayer beads may assist in focus
- Simple, repeated prayers, such as “Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us” may help ground you if you have trouble centering

There is no wrong way to hold watch. The most important part is our intentionality to hear God’s voice, to engage in prayer, and to prepare ourselves for the work that God has given us to do in this world.

We thank you for committing to this time of prayer and watch. Our prayer for you is simple:

May the peace of God that passes understanding be with you this Holy Week.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Deacon David Curtis

The Rev. Deacon Theresa Lewallen

Prayers for Peace

Be still, and know that I am God!

I am exalted among the nations,

I am exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10 (NRSV)

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. John 14:27 (NRSV)

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is discord, union;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we 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. (BCP. p. 833)

A Collect for Peace

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP p. 99)

For Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen. (BCP p. 815)

For Peace among the Nations

Almighty God our heavenly Father, guide the nations of the world into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness, that they may become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP p. 816)

For Peace (Church of England)

God, our refuge and strength,
bring near the day when wars shall cease
and poverty and pain shall end,
that earth may know the peace of heaven
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-for-peace.aspx>

A Prayer for Peace in Our Communities

Gracious God,
We pray for peace in our communities this day.
We commit to you all who work for peace and an end to tensions,
And those who work to uphold law and justice.
We pray for an end to fear,
For comfort and support to those who suffer.
For calm in our streets and cities,
That people may go about their lives in safety and peace.
In your mercy, hear our prayers,
now and always. Amen

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-for-peace.aspx>

A Prayer for Those who Help Keep the Peace

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women in law enforcement in our neighborhoods, cities, and on our highways. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; protect their families; strengthen them in their trials; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

<http://www.stpaulsbellingham.org/frjonathanblog/a-prayer-for-all-in-law-enforcement>

Taking Peace Into The World

I started “Drive-Through Ashes” three years ago at St. Thomas', with The Rev. Deacon Marty Hager. Marty and I were trying to keep from freezing while praying with the few people who ducked out of heavy traffic long enough for a quick prayer and the imposition of ashes. Blessed with a C-shaped driveway, cars can enter from the two busy roads that flank our church, allowing an easy return to the bumper-to-bumper mess heading to the western suburbs. Promoted through signage and the local paper, not many people stopped, but we persevered.

Year Two saw a few more folk, and more openness in their prayer requests. I remember one woman, estranged from her family, who asked for God's help in finding new family. We prayed, and I told her I found about my truest family in church. I hope she took that to heart.

This past Ash Wednesday was profound. So many carloads of people came through, we were very busy for over two hours. Prayers for health were offered, prayers for family, prayers for our country, prayers for a Holy Lent. In many instances tears were shed, hands were held and I know hearts were lifted. Mine was.

Many of the people who came through told me that they were unchurched or had not been members of a church for some time. All who came through were effusively grateful, and some were astonished that we would do anything like this without asking for something in return.

Sometimes one does not have to go very far to bring Christ's love to people starving for it. “We invite you, therefore, to the observance of a holy Lent ... Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Let these ashes be a reminder of your humanness and mortality, and of your dependence on Christ Jesus alone. A few short steps outside our church building; a profound encounter to people searching for meaning.

The Rev. Deacon Mary Beth Emerson, St. Thomas', McLean

Prayers for Social Justice

For Social Justice

Almighty God, who created us in your image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP, p. 260)

For Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 823)

A Prayer for Justice

Living God, deliver us from a world without justice and a future without mercy; in your mercy, establish justice, and in your justice, remember the mercy revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

<http://episcopalmigrationministries.org/sites/www/Uploads/Prayers%20for%20the%20World.pdf>

Episcopal Litany for Social Justice

Brothers and Sisters: God commands us through Jesus Christ to love one another. In baptism, we promise to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves and to strive for justice and peace, and respect the dignity of every human being.” Let us now honor those vows and pray for our nation in this election season, for wise and just leaders, and for the needs of others throughout our country and the world.

We pray for continued blessings on all peacemakers, on leaders who value peace, and on everyone who promotes nonviolent solutions to conflict. We pray for a speedy end to all violence and warfare around the world.

God of peace and gentleness,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the strength of heart and mind to look beyond ourselves and address the needs of our brothers and sisters throughout the world; for the rural and urban poor; for the rebuilding of our communities; and for an end to the cycles of violence that threaten our future.

God of generosity and compassion,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all nations, that they may live in unity, peace, and concord; and that all people may know justice and enjoy the perfect freedom that only God can give.

God of liberty and freedom,
Hear our prayer.

We pray that the Holy Spirit may embrace the most vulnerable members of our society; we pray also for an end to the growing disparity between the rich and poor; and for the grace and courage to strive for economic justice.

God of all gifts and blessings,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for an end to prejudice throughout our country and the world; that we will respect all people as precious children of God; and that racism, sexism, and all other forms of discrimination will be forever banished from our hearts, our society, and our laws.

God of fellowship and equality,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for a reverence of creation; that we will have the tools and the will to conserve it; that we will use its bountiful resources in the service of others; and that we will become better stewards of all that has been entrusted to us.

God of nature and the universe,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all immigrants, refugees, and pilgrims from around the world, that they may be welcomed in our midst and be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.

God of outcasts and wanderers,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick, the aged and the infirm; for those with physical or mental disabilities; that all may have access to proper health care; and that God's loving embrace may be felt by all who suffer.

God of comfort and healing,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all prisoners and captives; that a spirit of forgiveness may replace vengeance and retribution; and that we, with all the destitute, lonely, and oppressed, may be restored to the fullness of God's grace.

God of absolution and mercy,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all children and families, and particularly for the orphaned, neglected, abused, and those who live in fear of violence or disease; that they may be relieved and protected.

God of children and families,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the reconciliation of all people, and for the Church throughout the world, that it may be an instrument of your healing love.

God of outreach and restoration,
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who have died as a result of violence, war, disease or famine, especially those who died because of human blindness, neglect, or hardness of heart.

God of eternal life and resurrecting love,
Hear our prayer.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear what we ask in the name of your Son. Watch over our country now and in the days ahead, guide our leaders and all who will vote, guide them in all knowledge and truth and make your ways known among all people. In the passion of debate give them a quiet spirit; in the complexities of the issues give them courageous hearts. Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

Prepared by the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations
http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/eppn/107568_43992_ENG_HTML.htm

A Litany For Sound Government

O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth.

Lord, keep this nation under your care.

To the President and members of the Cabinet, to Governors of States, Mayors of Cities, and to all in administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their Duties.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To Senators and Representatives, and those who make our laws in States, Cities, and Towns, give courage, wisdom, and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To the Judges and officers of our Courts give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy Name.

For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Amen. (BCP, p. 821-822)

Prayers for Those in Authority

For the President of the United States and all in Civil Authority

O Lord our Governor, whose glory is in all the world: We commend this nation to your merciful care, that, being guided by your Providence, we may dwell secure in your peace. Grant to the President of the United States, the Governor of this State (or Commonwealth), and to all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do your will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness, and make them ever mindful of their calling to serve this people in your fear; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. (BCP, p 820)

For Congress or a State Legislature

O God, the fountain of wisdom, whose will is good and gracious, and whose law is truth: We beseech you so to guide and bless our Senators and Representatives in Congress assembled (or in the Legislature of this State, or Commonwealth), that they may enact such laws as shall please you, to the glory of your Name and the welfare of this people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 821)

For Courts of Justice

Almighty God, who sittest in the throne judging right: We humbly beseech you to bless the courts of justice and the magistrates in all this land; and give unto them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, that they may discern the truth, and impartially administer the law in the fear of you alone; through him who shall come to be our Judge, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BPC, p. 821)

Reflection and Prayers for Victims of Violence, Perpetrators of Violence, and the Incarcerated

Serving and visiting women in a state prison just about every Thursday night for the last 17 years has been my passion ministry. Being ordained as a deacon last year, my ministry to the women has been as a lead facilitator for a bible study. As a deacon, I now am able to take my volunteer team members into the prison chapel and lead Sunday afternoon church services four times a year and to have the opportunity to read the Gospel with passion to them, which takes my breath away. Another area of work I am involved in with the offenders at the Virginia Correctional Center for Women is spiritual direction. I am a certified spiritual director and frequently offer individual spiritual direction to women offenders in need.

This ministry is a difficult one because of the many rules and regulations given to us by the Department of Corrections, and also because of the great need to be flexible in case of last minute changes within the class bible study and with possible last minute program cancellations at the prison. There is also the concern of a lockdown of the grounds while I am there. Most importantly, there is the issue of how to offer sustaining words to so many who have been forgotten by family and friends.

Becoming a deacon and serving in my present church, St. Mark's Episcopal, Richmond, and also serving more visibly and more openly at VCCW has raised my level of awareness about how much education, and love of God needs to be made known between those people behind bars and those of us who live freely on the outside of the bars. I know and am very humbled that this ministry to women in prison is a gift from God to me. It is not only about me being present to them, but it is so clear to me, that they are very present to me and have taught much about life and about being real. Simply being a fraction of help to these women offenders as they establish a relationship with Jesus Christ is the key to hope for a better life now and forever. I feel so blessed by God to be able to bring a little light of hope into a very dark and lonely place filled with precious lives that have been damaged themselves. We are all called as followers of Christ to "feed the hungry and the thirsty, to welcome the stranger, to clothe the naked, to care for the sick, and to visit those in prison." (Mt.25:35,36)

Submitted by The Rev. Deacon Sally W. P. Gunn, St. Mark's Episcopal Church,
Richmond, VA

For Prisons and Correctional Institutions

Lord Jesus, for our sake you were condemned as a criminal: Visit our jails and prisons with your pity and judgment. Remember all prisoners, and bring the guilty to repentance and amendment of life according to your will, and give them hope for their future. When any are held unjustly, bring them release; forgive us, and teach us to improve our justice. Remember those who work in these institutions; keep them humane and compassionate; and save them from becoming brutal or callous. And since what we do for those in prison, O Lord, we do for you, constrain us to improve their lot. All this we ask for your mercy's sake. Amen. (BCP, p. 826)

For Prisoners

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, you are the only One who creates each one of us to have life. And you are the only One who can forgive us of our sins no matter what we have done or will do because you are the only One who truly loves us. Some of children, Lord, are spending time in prison to try to correct themselves. Often times, Lord, some of us on the outside become aware of conditions in prisons that are unacceptable and harsh. Lord, we ask for justice to be done but done with the rights of compassion and humanness to be carried out with care by those with authority, and that the living conditions be acceptable. We also pray, Lord, that you will strengthen those of us who are in prisons around the world to come to know You and to walk the path of love. All this we pray through Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. AMEN. (Submitted by The Rev. Deacon Sally W. P. Gunn, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Richmond, VA)

Prayers in Time of Conflict

For those in the Armed Forces of our Country

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BPC, p. 823)

For those who suffer for the sake of Conscience

O God our Father, whose Son forgave his enemies while he was suffering shame and death: Strengthen those who suffer for the sake of conscience; when they are accused, save them from speaking in hate; when they are rejected, save them from bitterness; when they are imprisoned, save them from despair; and to us your servants, give grace to respect their witness and to discern the truth, that our society may be cleansed and strengthened. This we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, our merciful and righteous Judge. Amen. (BCP, p. 823)

In Times of Conflict

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 824)

For our Enemies

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth: deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BPC, p. 816)

For the Oppressed

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p 826)

Prayers for Refugees

You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans. Exodus 22:21-24 (NRSV)

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 19:33:34 (NRSV)

Prayer for Refugees Shared by the Refugee Community Center at the Episcopal Church of the Mediator (Allentown), Diocese of Bethlehem God our Creator:

We ask for your loving presence and for your peace to be with refugees in our local communities and around the world. Be with all who are in fear. Be with those whose lives and livelihoods are under threat, and whose religious freedoms are being compromised. Be with us as we strive to enact your will in our welcome and support of refugees. Be with those in positions of leadership, that their decisions may bend toward peace and not division, and that they might realize the power they hold to do justice. Give us all strength and courage. Equip and empower us to be witnesses to your love – as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and bearers of hope, especially for those seeking refuge. In your Holy name we pray. Amen.

(<http://episcopalmigrationministries.org/sites/www/Uploads/Prayer%20from%20Church%20of%20the%20Mediator.pdf>)

For Refugees

Dear Lord, you know what it means to be a refugee. You also lost all and perhaps remembered how you came to be hungry and naked, thirsty and cold, prisoners in a camp or prisoners in our own minds. They even took your cloak and you had nothing left, except some people who came by to quench your thirst, to give you a blanket and to help carry your burden.

Lord Jesus, for God's sake, let us be those people who bring comfort, food and water, and an encouraging word. And may we then hear the words softly spoken: "insofar as you did it unto these people who are the least of my brothers, you did it unto me. Go in peace!"

By Brother Andrew L. de Carpentier, Jordan

- From <http://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/worship-resources/prayers-and-liturgies#disaster>

For Refugees

Our Gracious Lord,

There are many in Your world today who have been forced from their homes by persecution and violence.

Keep them in your constant care, and bring them to a place of safety.

Be the Good Shepherd to refugees who are in flight. Guide them to the green pastures of safety.

Be the Everlasting Father to refugees who have lost home and loved ones. Lead, protect and provide for them.

Be the Great Physician to refugees who are suffering. Grant them healing and hope.

Be the Hiding Place to refugees who are languishing in camps. Shelter their souls as well as their bodies.

Be the Deliverer to refugees who have been able to return home. Restore their lives so that those who have sown in tears may reap in joy.

Be the Wonderful Counselor to refugees who have been resettled. Help them find their way in a new land.

Be the Giver of all good gifts to those who serve refugees. Empower them to do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with You.

Be the Lord of lords to all the earth, that those who rule would do so in justice and righteousness, and no one would have to become a refugee anymore.

We ask these things in the precious and powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

From Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (<http://lirs.org/learn/world-refugee-day/a-prayer-for-refugees/>)

Making Amends and Reconciliation - A Reflection

Addiction is destructive. It impacts not only the addicted but those around him or her. Over the years, I have welcomed many folks as they entered a 12-step fellowship, and I have yet to meet anyone who arrives at a recovery meeting on his or her A game. Relationships are harmed or in tatters. Family life is usually in disarray. The sense of self is wounded and in shambles. Trust is broken. One wears guilt and shame like an awkward fashion.

I have also witnessed these same people recover from a seemingly hopeless and helpless condition. Through the 12 Steps, and a relationship with a Higher Power, individuals are able to return to God and are able to return to themselves, to their families, and to their relationships. I have seen the miraculous happen as people gain sobriety.

Part of this process involves the making of amends. Step 9 states: "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others." (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 83). When we make amends, we do not say that we are sorry. We do not ask for forgiveness. We seek to make things right. We "mend" relationships. When a 9th step amend is made, one may say, "I have harmed you. How can I make this right between us?" And, then one mends the relationship, if possible.

Jesus has made the amends between God and us. His Death has "mended" the broken relationship between God and sinners. And God calls us to be reconcilers in this world. We are to be witnesses to Jesus' love. When we err (and we will), we are called to make things right again. And when institutions err (and they will), we are to share Jesus' reconciling love to call them back to God, to make things right, to mend relationships.

The Rev. Deacon David Curtis, St. John's Church - Henrico Parish, Richmond, VA

Prayers for Those in Recovery from and Suffering from Addiction

For the Victims of Addiction

O blessed Lord, you ministered to all who came to you: Look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery; and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love. Amen. (BCP, 831)

Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee — to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of your Power, your Love, and your Way of life. May I do your will always! (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 63)

Seventh Step Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good & bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you & my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here to do Your bidding. Amen. (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 76)

Serenity Prayer

God, give me grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.

Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.

Original Version from Reinhold Niebuhr (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serenity_Prayer)

Prayers for Reconciliation

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24

Psalm 90

Lord, you have been our dwelling-place* in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us* back to dust, and say, 'Turn back, you mortals.'

For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;

in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end* like a sigh.

The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span* is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to you.

So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

Turn, O Lord! How long? Have compassion on your servants!

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil.

Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children.

Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—

O prosper the work of our hands.

For the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 815)

The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
FATHER FORGIVE

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,
FATHER FORGIVE

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,
FATHER FORGIVE

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
FATHER FORGIVE

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,
FATHER FORGIVE

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,
FATHER FORGIVE

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,
FATHER FORGIVE

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

(<http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/ccn2/the-coventry-litany-of-reconciliation/>)



<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54900>

May the Almighty God grant us forgiveness of all our sins,
and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.* (BCP, p. 128)

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.



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Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.



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A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless me with discomfort, at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships so that I may live deep within my heart. Amen.

May God bless me with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that I may work for justice, freedom and peace. Amen.

May God bless me with tears, to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war, so that I may reach out my hand to comfort them and to turn their pain to joy. Amen.

And may God bless me with enough foolishness to believe that I can make a difference in the world, so that I can do what others claim cannot be done: to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor. Amen

Dismissal

Our time of prayer has ended. Our true worship begins. Let us go into this world in peace, to love and to serve the Lord!