

Prayer Service for Peace

Virtues: Faith, Hope, Love, Justice, Fortitude

(Needs: Emcee [Leader]; Musicians, Readers for readings and intentions; Paschal candle or large candle; smaller candle for each classroom representative or one for each person if praying as small group; Overhead projector, screen or blank wall to show *Credo for Peace* [p. 3])

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our prayer service for peace. 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 neighbour or peace in the world, we turn to Jesus, Prince of Peace to show us the way.

Let us take the next few minutes 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.

OPTIONAL: 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 our Pastors, our parents and families, our teachers, and 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 ...

OPENING SONG (Sugg: *Prayer of St. Francis; Children of the Light; You are the Voice, Shine, Jesus Shine*)

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us begin our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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. (One or both of the readings below can be used)

READING

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!

(Pause)

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

RESPONSE (Sugg: *Peace Prayer* Glory & Praise No. 652 vv. 1-3)

Gospel

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 5, 1-11)

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

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

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

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

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

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

(Pause)

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OPTIONAL RESPONSE (*Blest are They* Nol. 522 CBW III)

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 our bishops, pastors, teachers, parents and all who guide us in our Catholic faith. That they might have the wisdom and courage to preach the peace of Christ’s Gospel with their lives. *We pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

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

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

OPTIONAL: HOLDING THE LIGHT OF PEACE

Leader: I would ask one representative from each classroom to come forward to take a candle, light it from the Christ candle and stand at the front of the group as a sign of our commitment to live in Christ’s Peace. (Representatives of each classroom come forward to light candles and remain at front of assembly, facing front.)

CREDO FOR PEACE

(With lights turned down, *Credo for Peace* can be shone on overhead screen or suitable wall.)

Leader: Let us now together recite the *Credo for Peace*.

CREDO FOR PEACE

We believe in God:

A communion of three Persons,

A communion of Life

A communion of Love

A communion of Peace

We believe in Jesus:

God and human

Prince of Peace

We believe in his Gospel

The Good News,

God's message of peace.

We believe Jesus died, rose,

And sent us the Holy Spirit

So we could live in his peace.

We believe in Baptism

That makes us one family in Jesus,

Crucified and risen from the dead

To lead us to eternal peace.

He is our hope.

Through him, we pray for peace;

With him, we work for peace.

In him, we live for peace:

The peace of God's children

To the glory of God.

Amen

OPTIONAL: EXCHANGE OF PEACE

Leader: Please extinguish your candles. As a sign of our commitment to the peace of Christ's gospel, let us exchange a sign of peace.

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.

FINAL SONG: (Sugg. *Peace Prayer*, Vv. 4-6)