

Prayer Service of Solidarity: (In Light of the Tsunami Disaster)

Introduction: (All are seated.)

Leader: Welcome, everyone, to this prayer celebration. We gather as a community, in prayer and solidarity, joining our voices to many throughout the world, to remember the victims and survivors of the Tsunami disaster in Southeast Asia.

It is so difficult for all of us to imagine destruction, death and sadness of such great magnitude.

Our hearts struggle with the unbearable grief and devastation of so many people, especially children.

So many lives have been broken; so many dreams have been lost; so many homelands have been levelled into wastelands!

Etched upon our minds as well, however, are the faces of courage, the hearts of generosity and the hands of compassion of people all over the world, doing what they can to help mend the crippling desolation and bring hope and healing to the struggling survivors.

Today we gather then, sensitive to the overwhelming misery of so many and yet believing and trusting in God's mercy and love.

Today, we call on our God to comfort us and all who suffer as a result of these events.

Let us take a moment to still our hearts and place ourselves in God's presence.

Please stand as we begin with our gathering song, *Here I Am, Lord*, #152 in *Spirit and Song*.

Opening Prayer:

Leader: We begin with the sign of our faith ...

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray ...

God of compassion, we gather in your name and turn to you for comfort, direction and help.

We place before you all the people who have been affected by the Tsunami disaster.

Have mercy on all who have died. Bring them into the fullness of your joy.

Console the broken-hearted and all those who have lost loved ones; hold them in your arms.

Strengthen those who are working amongst the suffering; give them hands of compassion, healing and hope.

May your justice, understanding and peace prevail as people strive to confront and heal their pain and

restore their livelihoods, in the face of this destruction.

This we ask through Jesus your Son and our crucified brother, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Please be seated as we listen to God's Word.

First Reading: (Lamentations 3: 47-51, 55-58)

... panic and pitfall have come upon us, devastation and destruction. My eyes flow with rivers of tears because of the destruction of my people. My eyes will flow without ceasing, without respite, until the Lord from heaven looks down and sees. My eyes cause me grief at the fate of all the young people in my city.

I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit; you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear to my cry for help, but give me relief!" You came near when I called on you; you said, "Do not fear!" You have taken up my cause, O Lord, you have redeemed my life.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: The Cry of the Poor (#63 in *Spirit and Song*).

Please stand.

Gospel: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (25: 37- 40)

Litany - Jesus, Pour Mercy ...

Reader A: On all who grieve and all who died in the devastating earthquake and tsunami and their aftermath,

All: Jesus, pour mercy.

Reader B: On those whose homes, livelihood, and emotional well-being

have been destroyed or compromised,

All: Jesus, pour mercy.

Reader A: On those displaced and those still needing refuge,

All: Jesus, pour mercy.

Reader B: On all children left frightened, sleepless, and parentless since

the disaster,

All: Jesus, pour mercy.

Reader A: On the devastation of city and countryside throughout the nations bordering the Indian Ocean.

All: Jesus, pour mercy.

Reader B: When we fail to take to heart your Word of grace,

All: Jesus, awaken justice.

Reader A: When we bind up our own wounds only, and forget the suffering of strangers,

All: Jesus, awaken justice.

Reader B: When in our fear we retreat and isolate,
All: Jesus, awaken justice.

Reader A: When we seek security based only our own needs might
and not on right-relationship among peoples,
All: Jesus, awaken justice.

Reader B: That all who have suffered as a result of these natural
disasters may heal; that individuals, families,
communities, and nations may be restored to peace and
a viable future,
All: Jesus, we labour with you.

Reader A: That growing understanding among faithful peoples will
lead to a shared vision of justice and peace,
All: Jesus, we labour with you.

Reader B: That profound cooperation among nations, which share
God's earth, may lead to structures of justice and
peace,
All: Jesus, we labour with you.

Reader A: That inequitable economic, social and political
structures may be transformed and structures may
grow that lead to your vision of justice and peace in
the lives of all people.
All: Jesus, we labour with you.

Leader: Jesus, we labour with you.
O God, hear our hopes and make us faithful in your
ways of love and justice.
We ask this in your name, Jesus, the source of
compassion, justice and authentic peace. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Leader: Let us join together in praying in the words that Jesus taught us ...

All: Our Father ...

Leader: Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Sign of Peace

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles: I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

Lord Jesus, the world hungers for your healing and hope. Pour out your spirit upon the victims and survivors of the Tsunami. Strengthen aid workers in the disaster areas to mend what is broken.

May our classrooms and hearts continue to be places where God's healing and compassion are our guide and model of love. May we be sensitive to the needs of those around us and respond with generosity and kindness.

This we ask through Jesus, your son who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Amen.

Please stand for our closing song.

Closing Song: *The Summons (# 137)*