

Prayers for Peace in the World

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Peace on Earth - Day 1

In 1963 Pope John addressed his great encyclical *Pacem in Terris* to a world living under the shadow and threat of war. He spoke fearlessly of a divinely established order in human affairs which is the basis of peace.

The world will never be the dwelling place of peace till peace has found a home in the heart of each and every person, till every person preserves in himself the order ordained by God to be preserved. (*Pacem in Terris*)

Peace begins with me. Praying at Sacred Space, today, I can be especially open to the gift of Peace in my heart. It is a gift and can't be forced.

As we long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of all faiths who share our longings.

A Buddhist Prayer

Evoking the presence of the great compassion, let us fill our hearts with our own compassion - towards ourselves and towards all living beings.

Let us pray that all living beings realise that they are all brothers and sisters, all nourished from the same source of life.

Peace on Earth - Day 2

Forty years ago Pope John reminded the world of the Four Pillars of Peace. They are the basis of right order in our world.

It is an order that is founded on truth, built up on justice, nurtured and animated by charity, and brought into effect under the auspices of freedom.

As we join together at Sacred Space over these days we might express our hope for our world, that we may re-establish the divine order in our own hearts and in our world. Still, we remember that the Lord speaks to each person according to their own situation and needs.

Our brothers and sisters of many faiths - and none - share our longing for peace.

A Muslim Prayer

O God! O our Master! You are eternal life and everlasting peace by your essence and attributes. The everlasting peace is from You and it returns to You. O our Sustainer! Grant us the life of true peace and usher us into the abode of peace. O Glorious and Bounteous One! You are blessed and sublime.

Peace on Earth - Day 3

Pacem in Terris (1963) spoke to everyone about their belonging to the one human family and it shone a light on the shared aspiration of people everywhere to live in security, justice and hope for the future.

Forty years later we are more obviously than ever the children of one global family. Today let me open my heart to the deep aspirations of those people who seem furthest away from me.

As we Christians long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of other faiths who share our longings.

A Jewish Prayer

Cause us, O Father, to lie down in peace, and rise again to enjoy life. Spread over us the covering of your peace, guide us with your good counsel and save us for the sake of your name. Be a shield about us, turning away every enemy, disease, violence, hunger and sorrow. Shelter us in the shadow of your wings, for you are a God who guards and protects us, a ruler of mercy and compassion.... Blessed are you, Lord, who spreads the shelter of peace over us, over His people Israel, and over all the world.

Peace on Earth - Day 4

Pope John Paul 2nd reflected on Blessed John 23rd's Four Pillars of Peace:

- * Truth will build peace if every individual sincerely acknowledges not only his rights, but also his own duties towards others

- * Justice will build peace if in practice everyone respects the rights of others and actually fulfils his duties towards them.

- * Love will build peace if people feel the needs of others as their own and share what they have with others.

- * Freedom will build peace and make it thrive if, in the choice of the means to that end, people act according to reason and assume responsibility for their own actions.

A Jain Prayer

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 our heart, our world, our universe.

Satish Kumar

Peace on Earth - Day 5

The International community, which since 1948 has possessed a charter of the inalienable rights of the human person, has generally failed to insist sufficiently on corresponding duties. It is duty that establishes the limits within which rights must be contained in order not to become an exercise in arbitrariness. A greater awareness of universal human duties would greatly benefit the cause of peace. (John Paul 2nd)

As I pray today at Sacred Space we remember that the Lord never forces me. His voice is one of love.

As we Christians long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of other faiths who share our longings.

A Sikh Prayer

By the grace of God's name

May humanity find itself lifted higher and higher.

In thy dispensation O Lord

Let there be good in all humanity

Peace on Earth - Day 6

Blessed John 23rd was a man unafraid of the future. Moved by his trust in Providence, even in what seemed like a permanent situation of conflict, he did not hesitate to summon the leaders of his time to a new vision of the world. Let us all resolve to have this same outlook: trust in the merciful and compassionate God who calls us to brotherhood, and confidence in the men and women of our time because, like those of every other time, they bear the image of God in their souls. (John Paul 2nd)

As we long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of all faiths - and none - who share our longings.

Prayer of an 11 year old Indian boy
on hearing of Sino-Indian border fighting

Lord, make this world last as long as possible

Peace on Earth - Day 7

Everyone who has joined the ranks of Christ must be a glowing point of light in the world, a nucleus of love, a leaven of the whole mass. He will be so in proportion to his degree of spiritual union with God. (Pacem in Terris)

As we long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of all faiths - and none - who share our longings.

A Hindu Prayer

Oh God, lead us from the unreal to the Real. Oh God, lead us from darkness to light. Oh God, lead us from death to immortality. Shanti (Peace), Shanti, Shanti unto all. Oh Lord God almighty, may there be peace in celestial regions. May there be peace on earth. May the waters be appeasing. May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring peace to all. May all beneficent beings bring peace to us. May thy peace itself bestow peace on all, and may that peace come to me also.

Peace on Earth - Day 8

May Christ inflame the desires of all people to break through the barriers which divide them, to strengthen the bonds of mutual love, to learn to understand one another and to pardon those who have done them wrong. Through his power and inspiration, may all peoples welcome each other to their hearts as brothers and sisters, and may the peace they long for ever flower and ever reign among them. (Pacem in Terris)

At Sacred Space today can I allow the Word of God to stir up the authentic desires and longings of my heart?

The men and women of the whole world long for peace.

A Baha'i Prayer

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be fair in thy judgement, and guarded in thy speech. Be a lamp unto those who walk in darkness and a home to the stranger. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light to the feet of the erring. Be a breath of

life to the body of humankind, a dew to the soil of the human heart and fruit upon the tree of humility.

Peace on Earth - Day 9

Let us pray then, with all fervour for this peace which our Divine redeemer came to bring us. May he banish from the souls of all people whatever might endanger peace. May he transform all people into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. May he illumine with his light the minds of rulers, so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace. (Pacem in Terris)

How does the Lord want to transform me into a 'witness'? Can I be open to this as I ponder God's Word today?

As we long for peace we remember our brothers and sisters of all faiths - and none - who share our longings.

Prayer of St Francis of Assisi

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.