

Litanies for Peace in Our Nation: Pentecost, June 1, 2020

NOTE: The following litanies were adapted by Pastor Michael Linderman, the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Ramsey NJ, from “Litanies for Peace in our Communities”, published by the Diocese of Dallas/Office of Worship/Litanies for Peace in Our Communities, 2016. They were amended to reflect the interfaith national day of mourning set for June 1st to mark the milestone of 100,000 deaths due to the Corona Virus in the US, and also the past 7 days of protests, rioting and chaos in our nation in response to the death of George Floyd at the hands of police in Minneapolis, MN.

[A litany is petitionary prayer that is easy to follow, and usually has an aspect of intercession connected with it. A litany allows the congregation to focus on the words of the litany text, rather than the response. A litany can shape devotional prayer that follows it or happen before and/or after a time of meditation. When used privately, you may add as many of the invocations as you wish. If doing it in a group, you may also ask for group members to add their own invocations to litanies.]

Hear the words of Jesus, in the Beatitudes, from his Sermon on the Mount:

‘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.

Prayer to open our hearts: Based on Psalm 88
(response: **God of peace, hear us and help us.**)

By night we cry out, by day we rage at each other,
God of peace, hear us and help us.

Calm us, quiet us, settle us,
to hear the cry of those who are hurting, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Steady us, balance us, ground us,
let us listen to the troubles around us, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Root us in patience, embed your love within us, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Plant us in the soil of sorrow, and re-create us in empathy, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Forgive us, pardon us, free us from bigotry and blindness, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Support us, sustain us, protect us,
as we begin again to seek justice, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Restore us in charity, refresh us with hope, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Enfold us with unity, enrich us in love, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Embrace us with courage, temper us with gentleness, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Help us see You in those around us, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

Help us in this nation to re-build communities of health and wholeness, of unity and justice, **God of peace, hear us and help us.**

So that someday we may rejoice in your welcome, and enter your Kingdom singing your praise, for ever and ever. R. **Amen.**

Litany of Forgiveness*

(response: **O Lord, have mercy on us.**)

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:

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

Yet we are preoccupied with power and worldly goods and fail to protect the most vulnerable among us, from disease, contagion, or injustice.

R. Have mercy on us,

O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:

Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.

Yet we are so concerned about our own rights and self-interest that we are deaf to the pain and anger of others.

R. Have mercy on us,

O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

Yet we are impatient under our burdens and unmoved by the grief of others.

R. Have mercy on us,

O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.

Yet we do not thirst for you, the fountain of all holiness, and do not seek reconciliation with who suffer from racism and bigotry.

R. Have mercy on us,

O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive
mercy. Yet we are so quick to condemn, so slow to forgive.
R. Have mercy on us,
O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:
Blessed are the pure of heart,
for they shall see God.
Yet we have often regarded persons
created in your image as objects of our own discrimination and cannot raise our eyes to you.
R. Have mercy on us,
O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said:
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called the children of God.
Yet we are so often ruthless with each other,
and our homes and our world are full of discord and resentments.
R. Have mercy on us,
O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, Jesus Christ. you said:
Blessed are those who suffer persecution for holiness' sake,
for the Kingdom of God is theirs.
Yet we suffer no opposition because we have been ashamed of you, our Crucified Savior,
and have lived worldly compromises of your Gospel.
R. Have mercy on us,
O Lord, have mercy on us.

Let us Pray: Gracious God, creator and loving parent of all people, remind us in this time of national pandemic, outrage, pain, and grief, that you are with us in the presence of Jesus Christ through your Holy Spirit. In the face of our dual crises of disease contagion and systemic racism, let your Spirit of peace descend on our nation. Help those who suffer the effects of the virus, console those who mourn the dead, give hope to all who seek justice for those facing discrimination and neglect in our economic system, our health system, our education system, and our justice system. Bring healing to those who are sick. Protect those who are dying. Inspire those protesting peacefully. Calm those who would foment chaos and destruction. Help us heal the wounds of racial division and help all those who trust in you to bring the Spirit of Christ to their every word and deed, so that your church might be a beacon of hope in a weary land. For these and all other petitions, we humbly ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and savior, Amen.

Finally, let us pray the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us to pray:
**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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

BLESSING

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise us to new life, fill us with hope,
and turn our mourning into dancing.

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless us now and forever.

Amen.

[*With due gratitude to an author unknown, © Catholic Doors Ministry.

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