

# Pax Christi

## Prayer and Fasting at a Time of War and Rumours of War

We invite members and supporters around the country **to fast for peace every Friday.**

*Our simple fast can be an act of penance at this dangerous time.*

*We offer these prayers for use with groups, in parishes or for personal reflection*

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### A Cry for Peace

To you, Creator of nature and humanity,  
of truth and beauty, I pray:

*Hear my voice,*

for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence  
among individuals and nations.

*Hear my voice,*

for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer  
when people put their faith in weapons and war.

*Hear my voice,*

when I beg you to instil into the hearts  
of all human beings the wisdom of peace,  
the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship.

*Hear my voice,*

for I speak for the multitudes in every country  
and every period of history who do not want war  
and are ready to walk the road of peace.

*Hear my voice*

and grant insight and strength so that we may always  
respond to hatred with love, to injustice  
with total dedication to justice,  
to need with sharing of self, to war with peace.

Oh God, hear my voice, and grant unto the world  
your everlasting peace.

*(Pope John Paul II)*

#### Now, more than ever:

- We confess the spiritual poverty within ourselves and our nation
- We mourn the victims of violence in our land and around the world
- We believe that the nonviolent will inherit the earth
- We hunger and thirst for justice for all
- We seek the courage to be merciful to all
- We pray for the Spirit to grant us purity of heart
- We recommit ourselves to be active peacemakers
- We pray to be ready to suffer persecution for the sake of justice
- We believe nonviolence is the light of the world

*(Pace e Bene Franciscan Centre, Las Vegas)*

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### To Be Peacemakers

#### An Act of Dedication

*We come to you, God Creator.*

*You are the source of light and beauty and power.*

*Your Son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.*

*Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the bond of unity.*

*You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes,*

*witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and forgiveness.*

*Especially do you call us at this time of death and destruction and broken lives,  
of terrible violence and fierce hatred.*

*We renew our acceptance of your call.*

*We promise to work:*

*To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,*

*To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair*

*To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely,*

*the disadvantaged, the marginalized,*

*And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.*

#### Love is the only force

Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that...

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity. By its very nature, hate destroys and tears down; by its very nature, love creates and builds up. Love transforms with redemptive power. May we solemnly realise that we shall never be truly children of our heavenly Father until we love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

*(Martin Luther King, Strength to Love)*

Oh God,  
 All Holy One,  
 You are our Mother and our Father,  
 and we are Your children.

Open our eyes and our hearts so that  
 we may be able to discern Your work  
 in the universe  
 and be able to see Your features in  
 every one of Your children.

May we learn that there are many paths,  
 but all lead to You.

Help us to know that you have created us  
 for family, for togetherness.

Help us to know that you have created us  
 members of the same family,  
 Your family, the human family.

Help us to beat our swords into ploughshares  
 and our spears into pruning hooks,  
 so that we may be able to live  
 in peace and harmony,

Wiping away the tears from the eyes of those  
 who are less fortunate than ourselves.  
 And may we know war no more, as we  
 strive to be what You want us to be:  
 Your children.  
 Amen.

(Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus,  
 Cape Town South Africa)

## Peace

Peace is in our hands,  
 hands once clenched  
 in anger or anxiety,  
 the body eloquent of the mind.

Peace is in our hands,  
 empty of weapons,  
 open in generosity,  
 the body eloquent of the heart.

Peace is in our hands  
 outstretched in welcome,  
 clasped with others' hands,  
 the body eloquent of the soul.

Peace is in our hands  
 tooled with gentleness,  
 tending the good earth,  
 the body eloquent of the spirit.

Peace is in our hands,  
 affirming the views of others,  
 receiving their gifts;  
 the Body inclusive of us all.

(Alan Horner April, 2000, Associate staff member,  
 Living Spirituality Network)

## Meditations for Peace

### Saying the Rosary for Peace

We offer these meditations as an accompaniment to those who may wish to pray the Rosary for Peace.  
 Reflect on the scriptural passage before beginning your decade of the Rosary

#### Justice Mysteries

##### 1. For Justice in our hearts

'God... sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sin away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another.'

1 John 4:10-11

##### 2. For Justice between us and other people

'How does God's love abide in anyone who has this world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.'

1 John 3:17-18

##### 3. For Justice within our society

'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Matthew 25:37-40

##### 4. For Justice between nations

'Is not this the fast that I choose:  
 to loose the bonds of injustice,  
 to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
 to let the oppressed go free,  
 and to break every yoke?'

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
 and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
 when you see the naked, to cover them,  
 and not to hide yourself from your own kin?'

Isaiah 58:6-7

##### 5. For the coming of God's kingdom of Justice

'The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind new sight; to set the downtrodden free and proclaim the Lord's year of favour.'

Luke 4:18-19

## Peace Mysteries

### 1. For Peace in our hearts

*'Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give - this is my gift to you.'*

John 14:27

### 2. For Peace between us and other people

*'I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another.'*

John 13:34

### 3. For Peace in our society

*'You are God's chosen race...He loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same...And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body.'*

Colossians 3:12-15

### 4. For Peace between nations

*'But now in Christ Jesus, you that used to be so far apart from us have been brought very close, by the blood of Christ. For he is the peace between us.'*

Ephesians 2:13-14

### 5. For the coming of God's kingdom of Peace

*'I will hear what the Lord God has to say: a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people. His help is near for those who fear him, and his glory will dwell in our land. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced.'*

Psalms 85:8-10

(Adapted from Pax Christi's  
My Soul is Filled with Joy - Saying the Rosary for Peace)

## Prayers of intercession

*For the leaders of our communities, our church, our country and our world, that they may take decisions that are in accord with God's commandments that bring life, justice and peace.*

### **We pray to the Lord**

*For those who have died by acts of violence, that they may be raised with Christ who died for them and that they may know the unending life and glory of the kingdom of peace and light.*

### **We pray to the Lord**

*For those who have survived violence, that they will be sheltered in the compassion of God and our community and that, feeling the compassion of Jesus, they may find healing and hope.*

### **We pray to the Lord**

*For those who commit acts of violence against others, that their hearts may be moved by Christ's grace, and that they may be transformed by the Spirit of love, peace and justice.*

### **We pray to the Lord**

*For ourselves, that we will work all together to end violence and bring life, peace and security to our world.*

### **We pray to the Lord**

## Prayer with other faiths

### **Pax Christi Interfaith Prayer for Peace**

*God, you are the source of life and peace.  
Praised be your name forever.  
We know it is you who turn  
our minds to thoughts of peace.  
Hear our prayer in this time of crisis.*

*Your power changes hearts.  
Muslims, Christians and Jews remember,  
and profoundly affirm,  
that they are followers of the one God,  
children of Abraham, brothers and sisters;  
enemies begin to speak to one another;  
those who were estranged join hands in friendship;  
nations seek the way of peace together.*

*Strengthen our resolve to give witness  
to these truths by the way we live.*

*Give to us:*

***Understanding*** that puts an end to strife;  
***Mercy*** that quenches hatred, and  
***Forgiveness*** that overcomes vengeance.

*Empower all people to live in your law of love.*

*Amen.*

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