

## In the Face of Unexpected Violence

For people who have always tried to work for peace, what we saw this past week in Washington and in numerous state capitals around the country, was appalling and shameful. Part of being human is that we do not all agree on everything. However, using force and violence to get your way is never acceptable.

For one who believes that life is a gift from God and that there is value of every human being, it was painful to watch a group of people become a mob, cause serious injury; threaten and take life; and cause such wanton destruction. Some in the mob clearly let recent inflammatory political rhetoric carry them away while others used the situation as an excuse to unleash long harbored plans for more selfish and sinister schemes to gain control and power for their own purposes by any means.



On January 6<sup>th</sup>, we saw the power of hate expressed in ways many of us never expected to see. We must all examine our role in this tragedy and ask for forgiveness where we enabled it by turning a blind eye or keeping silent when we should have spoken up for the value and rights of all people, for peaceful behavior, and for nonviolent solutions to disagreements. Lord help us examine our motives where we have let our frustrations turn to anger and make amends if we let that anger be used to cause or encourage harm and destruction. Because we are human with wills of our own, we will disagree at times, but God calls us to remember that even when we disagree, we are all God's children and should treat each other as such. Pray for the wisdom to understand this, and the humility to acknowledge that we are not always right and are not the center of the universe. Lord, remind us that it is God's will we must seek not our own. Pray for the wisdom to know the difference.

Particularly in the days and weeks ahead, pray for our leaders that they will seek not confrontation or to ferment more discord and violence, but reason, dialog, and constructive efforts to work together to deal with the issues that face all of us. Also pray for those who would seek further violent upheaval. Change their hearts and make us instruments of your peace to and for them.

### **This week, do not forget to pray for:**

- the **COVID-19 pandemic**.
- **Nigeria & other places** in the world where people live with violence.
- **Refugees & emigrants**
- **Other places in the world** where anger and frustration may be pushing people to consider violence or destruction

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