

May I Help Bring Peace

For some, this third week of Advent will be the week to light the peace candle. Every day we hear news of the devastating war in Ukraine and violence in so many other places around the world. We see and hear mean spirited political rhetoric and the damage it does. We watch as bigotry and prejudice breed the hate and fear that tear communities apart. We watch the daily human tragedies of people uprooted by violence, politics, hunger, drought, storms . . . The longing for peace is ever present! We are called to hold these people and situations always in our prayers, but we are also called to action. The words of a much-loved prayer come to mind:



*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
O Master, let me not seek as much
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love,
for it is in giving that one receives,
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,
it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.*

This call-to-action prayer speaks to the many daily bits of living through which we can change the world for the people around us if we truly seek to be peacemakers in this world. As you light the peace candle, let it be the first of many acts of peacemaking in the weeks, months, and years to come!

Remember in Prayer:

- **Iran** – peaceful protests against the extreme Islamic government continue.
- **China** – where all opposition the government's policies is met with violence.
- **People still recovering from storms & flooding in the U.S. & elsewhere.**
- **Those recovering from earthquakes** – especially a deadly one in Indonesia.
- **Ukraine as the war continues** – attacks against Ukrainian civilians are leaving them without power, heat, water as winter comes. Anti-war protests in Russia are still met with repression.
- **Haiti** – continuing to dealing with cholera, gang violence, & political unrest.
- **Uganda** – give thanks that the Ebola outbreak seems to be under control.
- **The People of Somalia** – facing a major famine & violence.
- **Victims of Gun Violence** – 41,371 people have died in gun violence in 2022 (up 947 from last week), including 1,572 children (up 35 from last week). 36,391 people have been injured (up 608 from last week) including 4,216 children (up 84 from last week). 22,506 of the deaths are suicides (up 528 from last week). There have been 622 mass shootings in 2022 (5 were last week). (Statistics from the Gun Violence Archive.)
- **The continuing COVID Pandemic, & the outbreak of the RSV virus. Also, the CDC has declared that flu is now an epidemic in the U.S.**

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