

Prayers for Our Nation, 2021

saint mark's episcopal church, palo alto

DAILY DEVOTION: IN THE MORNING *BCP p.137*

From Psalm 51

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading

I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you so that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. God makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous. [...] Just as your heavenly Father is complete in showing love to everyone, so also you must be complete. *Matt. 5:44-45,48 CEB*

Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The Collect for Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECTS FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

FOR OUR COUNTRY

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND ALL IN CIVIL AUTHORITY

O Lord our Governor, whose glory is in all the world: We commend this nation to thy merciful care, that, being guided by thy Providence, we may dwell secure in thy peace. Grant to the President of the United States, the Governor of this State, and to all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do thy will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness, and make them ever mindful of their calling to serve this people in thy fear; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

FOR THE HUMAN FAMILY

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR OUR ENEMIES

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth: deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THOSE WHO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION

Almighty God, you proclaim your truth in every age by many voices: Direct, in our time, we pray, those who speak where many listen and write what many read; that they may do their part in making the heart of this people wise, its mind sound, and its will righteous; to the honor of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IN TIMES OF CONFLICT

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THE NATION

Almighty God, giver of all good things: We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land. They restore us, though we often destroy them. Heal us.

We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them. Forgive us.

We thank you for the men and women who have made this country strong.

They are models for us, though we often fall short of them. Inspire us.

We thank you for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. It has drawn people from every nation, though we have often hidden from its light. Enlighten us.

We thank you for the faith we have inherited in all its rich variety. It sustains our life, though we have been faithless again and again. Renew us.

Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and to abolish poverty and crime.

And hasten the day when all our people, with many voices in one united chorus, will glorify your holy Name. Amen.

POETRY

BLESSING THE BOATS

Lucille Clifton

may the tide
that is entering even now
the lip of our understanding
carry you out
beyond the face of fear
may you kiss
the wind then turn from it
certain that it will
love your back may you
open your eyes to water
water waving forever
and may you in your innocence
sail through this to that

A BLESSING OF THE INCARNATION

Jan Richardson

Ancient One
who makes all things new,
may we receive with gentleness
and touch with hopefulness
and protect with fierceness
and love with tenderness;
and may we celebrate with gratefulness
and welcome with humbleness
and tend with gracefulness
all that you give
into our care.



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