

Be Peace.

Peace is Essential to Achieving Racial Justice

Acts 10:34-36: “[God] shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to the Lord. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—who is Lord of all.”

Song: [Prayer for Peace by David Haas](#)



Opening Prayer:

God, in your infinite love you created all the nations of the world to be a family. You sent your son, Jesus, to teach us that we are all called to love one another as sisters and brothers. Yet your family is divided by violence, injustice and the many “isms” prevalent in our world today, including the sin of racism. God of Justice, enlarge our hearts with love and mercy that we may learn to respect each other in our diversity. May your Spirit strengthen our resolve to continue to strive for peace and justice among all people.

Reflection:

A meaningful slogan that appears during many protests is the saying, “No Justice...No Peace” or “Know Justice...Know Peace.” The statement that more clearly articulates the meaning behind these words is, [“If you want peace, work for justice.”](#) Peace is essential in achieving justice, whether the goal is realizing economic, social or racial justice. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. understood this truth. It was the foundation of his commitment to non-violence in the struggle for civil rights. In fact, King said often in his writings and in his speeches, “True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.”

The relationship between peace and justice cannot be overlooked as we continue to strive for racial justice in our world today. As Christians and people of good will, the message of love is a core part of our faith and our values. It is through love that the spirit of peace and justice will flow. Another quote from King about the power of love puts it this way: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” Love is, indeed, the only force that will drive out the darkness of violence and injustice, including the sin of racism.

Reflection Questions: *Because of divisions in the world and our society, we all have prejudices or biases within us that keep us from seeing each other as we really are. [How can I explore my own implicit bias?](#) How can I explore becoming more culturally competent? Do I have friends who are culturally different from me? *In scripture, we are called to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves.* Who do I consider to be my neighbor?*

(Pause for a moment of silent reflection)

Prayer Intentions:

Response: God hear us.

- For peace in our families, in our communities, our nation and the world, we pray.
- For the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language or culture, we pray.
- For the strength and wisdom to resolve differences non-violently and respectfully, we pray.
- For public officials, that they will strive to work for the common good and social justice, we pray.
- For the courage to have difficult conversations about race, and for a better appreciation of how our words and action—or even our silence—can impact our local, national and world communities, we pray.

(USCCB Prayers of the Faithful for Day of Peace in our Communities)

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, in our efforts to dismantle racism, we understand that we struggle not merely against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities – those institutions and systems that keep racism alive by perpetuating the lie that some members of the family are inferior and others superior. Create in us a new mind and heart that will enable us to see brothers and sisters in the faces of those divided by racial categories.

Give us the grace and strength to rid ourselves of racial stereotypes that oppress some of us while providing entitlements to others.

Help us to create a Church and nation that embraces the hopes and fears of oppressed People of Color where we live, as well as those around the world.

Heal your family God, and make us one with you, in union with our brother Jesus, and empowered by your Holy Spirit.

Amen.

(Written by the Pax Christi- USA Anti-Racism Team)

Dominican Blessing: May God the Creator bless us, May God Redeemer heal us and May God, the Holy Spirit, fill us with peace.

Join us to Be Peace, Build Peace, and Preach Peace. Reach us via email at vocation@oppeace.org.

Please share this Novena on your Facebook page and forward it to at least 5 people. The Sixth Day of this Novena will be a Prayer for Peace through Eco-Justice.

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