

Prayers of the People for Prison Ministry Awareness Month

*Based on an adaptation of a prayer attributed to St. Francis
as developed by Rev. Phebe L. Mcpherson, The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
and Rev. Kim Crecca, The Episcopal Diocese of Arizona*

Leader: Lord Jesus, for our sake you were condemned as a criminal: Visit our jails and prisons with your compassion and peace. Remember those who are guilty and those who are being held unjustly; teach us to improve our justice system. Remember those who work in these institutions; keep them safe and respectful of the people entrusted to them. Assist us in seeing you in them and in everyone.

All: Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Leader: Lord, we pray especially for all those who live with injustice and terror in our neighborhoods and schools, in our towns and cities, in our country and in the nations of the world. Help our leaders and each of us to comfort one another without hatred or bitterness and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect.

All: Where there is hatred, let us sow love.

Leader: Lord, we pray for all those who are in trouble, suffering, or have been injured; especially the victims of violence and the families of those who are imprisoned.

(The people are invited to add their own petitions.)

Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit.

All: Where there is injury, let us sow pardon.

Leader: Lord, we pray especially for those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all.

All: Where there is discord, let us sow union.

Leader: Lord, make the hearts and minds of your holy and universal Church, including its' leaders, clergy, and people, ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit that they may be filled with the strength of your presence.

All: Where there is doubt, let us sow faith.

Leader: Lord, enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship that bring us into unity with all peoples. Show us your presence in those who differ the most from us until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children.

All: Where there is despair, let us sow hope.

Leader: Lord, look with compassion on all who have lost their health, their freedom or who suffer want and anxiety from lack of work. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery and restoration; and to those who care for them give patience, understanding, and persevering love.

All: Where there is darkness, let us sow light.

Leader: We pray for those who have died (*silence*). Lord, grant us in the midst of our sadness the grace to ask what you would have us to do and the comfort of your Holy Spirit so that in your light we may see light.

All: Where there is sadness, let us sow joy.

Leader: Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

All: For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Collect at the Prayers

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbor and encouraged us not to forget those who are vulnerable. Be with us as we seek to make changes to systems that violate the dignity of others so that they will foster restoration rather than retribution. Help us to be compassionate toward all of your people that they may experience your peace. Lead us to seek justice, love mercy and walk humbly with you now and forever. Amen.