

Pray with Women and for Women

The Importance of Women in Society - March 2013

Introduction to time of prayer:

« A peace negotiated without women is condemned to failure »

Today, violence against women is recognized more for what it really is: a threat to democracy, an obstacle to durable peace, a burden for national economies and a shameful violation of human rights. Then when more and more people think that violence against women is not acceptable or inevitable, when more and more perpetrators of violence are punished, the challenge to put an end to violence against women is growing and consolidated (Michelle Bachelet 2012-11-25).



There is now concrete evidence that more inclusive peace processes are more likely to succeed. The participation of women in peace processes ensures that their own priorities are included in the peace agreement. This contributes to a more solid and lasting peace, which protects all human rights, ensures justice and establishes democracy (Michelle Bachelet 2013-01-9).

The “declaration of the rights of women” is the cornerstone of all programmes of the United Nations on behalf of women. More than 185 countries are parties to CEDAW.

Hear what Jean Paul II said... “I wish to speak on this Day of Peace, especially to women, asking them to become, with all their being and all their force, peace educators: they are witnesses, messengers and teachers of peace in the relationship between people and generations, in the family, in the cultural, social and political life of the nations, especially in situations of conflict and war. May they continue the journey of peace travelled before them by many courageous and far-sighted women... truth, justice, love and freedom (...) It is an educational project that concerns life and it is forever” (Message of the Day of Peace. JP II 1995).

Time of prayer...



« Faith is the strength of the heart »

We pray with all women struggling very bravely for their well-being and that of others. Pray with all women who, in their families, give life true meaning by the gift of free love, by the maternal qualities they develop each day. Let us pray also with women teachers, educators and all those engaged with others.

(We can choose to take some readings from the Old Testament or the New Testament. or other people known...) Examples: Exodus 15:20 - 21, Judges 4:4-10, Esther 4:17 a - 17z, Judith 9:1-14, Madeleine Delbr el, Teresa of Calcutta or other...

With Judith we can pray to the Lord: *O God, my God, hear me... You who were the author of those events and of what preceded and followed them... “Your strength is not in numbers, nor does your might depend upon the powerful. You are God of the lowly, helper of those of little account, supporter of the weak, protector of those in despair, savior of those without hope.* (See Judith 9:5.9)

Intercessions: (We can put on background music)

Lord, make me an instrument of peace

Bless all women who work every day to bring peace to their community, their homes and their hearts.

Give them the strength to continue to change swords into ploughshares.

Where there is hatred, may I bring love

We pray for all the women who face prejudice, inequality and gender discrimination. Help us to see and deal with discrimination against women, regardless of the form it takes.

Where there is injury, may I bring pardon

Comfort women who suffer the pain of war, violence and abuse. Help them to become the instruments of their own reconciliation and appeasement.

Where there is discord, may I bring harmony

Forgive all the women and men who have left differences feed hatred and discrimination. May the example of your respect for all creation help us to see that we are equal partners in the stewardship of our world.

Each person in the group, who wishes can speak freely and share their intentions... It is possible that each carries a lighted candle or lights a candle in expressing the intention.

When all those wishing to speak have finished, we repeat: O God, my God, hear me... You who were the author of those events and of what preceded and followed them.... "Your strength is not in numbers, nor does your might depend upon the powerful. You are God of the lowly, helper of those of little account, supporter of the weak, protector of those in despair, savior of those without hope. (Judith 9:5-9)

We pray also with women of the N.T. 'Jesus takes the initiative in conversation with women, announcing healing, forgiveness and peace. (Mk. 5:27-34)

Mark 5:41 "Talitha Kum" Give a hand to all those who need assistance. To all those who are suffering in our society...

Moment of silence... then we can read the following text or another one....

Where there is error, may I bring truth

Comfort women who are struggling in the darkness of abuse, poverty and loneliness. May we keep us with them in the light, to acknowledge their pain and try to remove the burden of shame or embarrassment.

Where there is doubt, may I bring faith

We pray for all the women who live in fear of their husband, their brother, their father... and forces that control their lives. Help them to be able to be themselves in truth with your eternal love and faith in You.

Where there is despair, may I bring hope

We pray for all the women who live in despair, poverty, violence, trafficking, slavery and abuse. That the light of your love may bring them hope.

Where there is sadness, may I bring joy

Help us to see the strength and goodness in every woman and every man. Transform our hearts so that they celebrate the love and grace of all persons. And may we be blessed with the courage of Saint Clare of Assisi, Sainte Marie Euphrasia, Saint Catherine of Siena and other Saints of each of our countries, to follow our own path of love for You and all our sisters and brothers...

*« Then Jesus went from that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, “Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon.” But he did not say a word in answer to her. His disciples came and asked him, “Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us.” He said in reply, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But the woman came and did him homage, saying, “Lord, help me.” He said in reply, “It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs.” She said, “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.” Then Jesus said to her in reply, “**O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.**” And her daughter was healed from that hour. (Matthew 15:21-28)*

Prayer of a Mother...

Lord, we give you thanks for the gift of motherhood. It is a vocation so great and so blessed. Lord, we often forget how much You trust in us placing your precious children in our hands. Help us to always appreciate the importance of being a mother.

Lord, give me your eyes to see you in my children, your heart to love them, and your sweetness to help them grow. Give me your wisdom to advise and your strength to let them go when needed. Amen.

Our Father or Hail Mary...

Final song to the Virgin Mary

Submitted by sister Gloria Baptista, JP contact- Hungary

