



A Prayer for Just Peace and Non-Violence

We live in a time of tremendous suffering, trauma and fear stemming from wars in different countries and continents, terrorism, organized crime and unforeseen acts of violence, the abuses suffered by migrants and victims of human trafficking, the harm of economic injustice, and the devastation of the environment. In this context of structural and systemic poverty, racism, environmental destruction, and gender violence, present in every person's life, we are called to recognize the centrality of active nonviolence to our long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet.

Let us pray for the areas of our world that need peace today.

Candle Ritual:

As you pass the lighted candle, the person holding the candle prays aloud for one area of our world today that needs peace.

After each person, respond with "Lord, make us a means of your peace."



Let us now, in a spirit of peace, commit ourselves to furthering the understanding and practice of active nonviolence on the road to just peace.

While persistent, active nonviolence can be difficult and even dangerous, history and current events are full of examples of effective peace building through dialogue, mediation and non-violent resistance, illuminating the creativity and power of nonviolent practices in many different situations of potential or actual violent conflict. Communities of faith are central to the development and practice of other routes than violent ones to solve crises.

From the Message of Pope Francis for the celebration of the Fiftieth World Day of Peace:

"Christ's message in this regard offers a radically positive approach. He unfailingly preached God's unconditional love, which welcomes and forgives. He taught his disciples to love their enemies (*Matthew 5:44*) and to turn the other cheek (*Matthew 5:39*). When he stopped her accusers from stoning the woman caught in adultery (*John 8:1-11*), and when, on the night before he died, he told Peter to put away his sword (*Matthew 26:52*), Jesus marked out the path of nonviolence."





Neither passive nor weak, Jesus' nonviolence was the power of love in action. Active nonviolence as a way of life is a positive and powerful force for social change, and a process for ending violence without violence, transforming conflict, and protecting vulnerable people.

Closing Prayer:

God of love beyond measure, we hear your call to open our arms wide to let the suffering of the world come into our lives. We cannot remain passive in the midst of the challenge. We desire to live your love with total abandon without counting the cost or the reward. We long to care deeply for all of your creation and to make a difference where we can. Help us to dedicate ourselves prayerfully and actively to banishing violence from our hearts, words and deeds, to becoming nonviolent people and to building nonviolent communities that care for our common home. Grant us strength and wisdom; we pray to enter live in justice and peace every moment, everywhere. Amen.



Prepared by the GSIJP Office, and influenced by [Pax Christi's An appeal to the Catholic Church to recommit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence](#) and [Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Peace 2017](#). We invite you to share these documents with your communities and Units, and to use them as a basis for further reflection and prayer.

