

A Prayer in Time of Need

God of Peace, Love, Justice and Mercy,

Father of all on this earth,

we come before you as a people troubled and in need;
we acknowledge our weakness, sinfulness, and faults of the past,
our lack of concern for others and our selfishness.
Fill us now with signs of hope and light.

You created a world in which people of all nations, races, and religious beliefs
are called to live in peace and harmony –
as brothers and sisters, children of one Father,
as people all equal in dignity and all worthy of respect and love.
Show us how to create such a world now in these unsettled times.

When we were lost and without a sense of purpose,
You showed your love for us by sending us Your Son, Jesus Christ;
he taught us by word and example to love You and one another.
He showed his love for us by becoming one with us in our misery.
Through his death and resurrection he taught us to hope.

We believe that he continues to be present among us in these troubled times,
in the Eucharist – the great sign of his love –
and in acts of kindness and concern for others.
Show us how to find him in that Eucharist and those in need.
Let us be signs of his presence to others.

You sent Your Holy Spirit upon us to guide us, to inspire us, to comfort us.
May we now experience, as never before in our lives,
the presence and power of that same Spirit of love among us.
Make us strong and courageous, but loving and compassionate.
Give us the Spirit of courage, but a strong desire for peace.

As we seek a just response to acts of evil in our midst,
we beg the gifts of wisdom and prudence,
a sense of justice, but tempered with your gift for peace.

Shower now on all who make decisions that touch our lives
wisdom and understanding from that same Spirit.
Help them – and us – see that our ultimate goal must be one of peace and harmony.

Bless, Lord, those who must be concerned about our safety and security –
about the safety and security of all on this globe.
Keep them and us all safe from harm.

Remember our dead, especially the unsung heroes of that horrendous event.
Remember the families and loved ones of those who have lost their lives.

Root out any sense of vengeance or hatred from our hearts
and from the hearts of all called to serve our nation;
lest we or they, through passion and uncontrolled zeal,
fall into the same kind of evil acts against innocent people
that we set out to combat.

At this decisive moment, loving and just God,
keep us focused on Your will:
namely, that evil must not triumph,
that we can all live on this globe as one human family without fear,
and that goodness, peace, freedom, and justice for all will reign on this earth.

Free us all from worry, anxiety, and fear.
Help us root out the causes of dissension, hatred, and hopelessness.

In our grief, let us not forget those who have so little in life,
who live in conditions that foster despair and loss of hope.
Give us rightful indignation about those conditions
in our society and in the world
that force others to live in poverty, surrounded by violence.
Help us root out all sense of hopelessness that spawns irrational deeds.

Then, as we heal our grief and calm our fears,
give us the courage to ask yet deeper questions about ourselves,
about how we live out your gospel in our daily lives;
how we relate to others, those near and far away from us;
how we can share more justly the gifts you have given us.

Give us a deeper understanding of those who differ from us;
help us to understand their hopes and desires, their fears and anxieties.

We ask that the presence of Your Son, Jesus, our Savior,
the power of your Spirit of peace,
continue to be our support and our challenge
now and into the future.

Amen.

+ *Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.*
Archbishop of Milwaukee
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