

# PRAYER SERVICE FOR ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

## OPENING HYMN

### MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE (Cohen/traditional)

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is hatred let me bring your love  
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord  
And where there is doubt true faith in You

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there is despair in life let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Make me a channel of your peace  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
It is in giving to all men that we receive  
And in dying that we are born to eternal life

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Make me a channel of your peace  
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness only light  
And where there's sadness ever joy

## INTRODUCTION

These days, we hear a lot of news about conflict, violence and war, and although it is far away, it affects all of us. In a perfect world all the fighting would stop, and everyone, everywhere would be living in peace and safety. During this time, we pray for those who govern our world, those who make decisions about war and

peace. We pray that God will give them courage and wisdom to make the right decisions; to consciously work for peace. We pray for the many innocent civilians, men, women, and children who are caught up in a conflict not of their making. We pray for their security, freedom and peace and ask the Lord to bless them with his protection. We pray for the many agencies throughout the world who are provide shelter, food, water, and medical supplies. We pray for their safety; may the Lord reward their selfless generosity. We pray for the agents of the conflict in Israel and Gaza, those who follow ideologies which indiscriminately destroys innocent lives. Transform their hearts with your all-powerful love, that they may pursue the paths of peace.

### **OPENING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus,  
You said to Your disciples,  
“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”  
You know how much our world needs Your gift of peace,  
especially in Gaza and Israel.  
Help us through the power of the Holy Spirit  
to transform human hearts  
and build a world of lasting peace.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **FIRST READING**

1.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

(32:15-18)

There will be poured on us  
the spirit from above;  
then shall the wilderness be fertile land  
and fertile land become forest.

In the wilderness justice will come to live  
and integrity in the fertile land;  
integrity will bring peace,  
justice give lasting security.

My people will live in a peaceful home,  
in safe houses,  
in quiet dwellings.

The word of the Lord.

**OR**

**2.**

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

2, 2-5

In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains  
and shall be raised above the hills;  
all the nations shall stream to it.  
Many peoples shall come and say,  
"Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."  
He shall judge between the nations,  
and shall mediate for many peoples;  
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.  
O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

The word of the Lord.

**OR**

**3.**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

(61:1-2, 12)

For Zion's sake I will not be silent,  
for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,  
until her vindication goes forth like the dawn,  
and her victory like a burning torch.

The nations will see your vindication,  
and all kings your glory;  
you will be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the Lord will bestow.

They will be called the Holy People,  
the Redeemed of the Lord;  
and you will be called Sought After,  
the City No Longer Deserted.

The word of the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 84:9-14. R./ v.9

**1.**

**R./ The Lord speaks peace to his people.**

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,  
A voice that speaks of peace.  
His help is near for those who fear him  
And his glory will dwell in our land. **R./**

Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
Justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth  
And justice look down from heaven. **R./**

The Lord will make us prosper  
And our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march before him  
And peace shall follow his steps. **R./**

**OR**

**2.**

Ps. 121. R./ cf. Ecclus 36:18

**R./ Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you.**

I rejoiced when I heard them say:  
'Let us go to God's house.'  
And now our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem. **R./**

Jerusalem is built as a city  
strongly company.  
It is there that the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the Lord. **R./**

For Israel's law it is,  
there to praise the Lord's name.  
There were set the thrones of judgement  
of the house of David. **R./**

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:  
'Peace be to your homes!  
May peace reign in your walls,  
in your palaces, peace!' **R./**

For love of my brethren and friends  
I say: 'Peace upon you!'  
For love of the house of the Lord  
I will ask for your good. **R./**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Happy the peacemakers:  
They shall be called sons of God.

**Alleluia!**

## **GOSPEL**

**1.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

14:23-29

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Whoever loves me will keep my word,  
and my Father will love him,  
and we will come to him  
and make our home with him.

Whoever does not love me  
does not keep my words.

And the word that you hear  
is not my own,  
but that of the Father who sent me.

“I have told you these things  
while I am still with you.

However, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,  
whom the Father will send in my name,  
will teach you everything  
and remind you of all  
that I have said to you.

“Peace I leave with you,  
my peace I give to you.

Not as the world gives  
do I give it to you.

Do not let your hearts be troubled;  
be not afraid.

“You have heard me say to you,

'I am going away,  
and I will come back to you.'  
If you loved me,  
you would rejoice  
that I am going to the Father,  
for the Father is greater than I.  
And now I have told you this  
before it happens,  
so that when it does happen  
you may believe.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**OR**

**2.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

5:38-48

Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*A brief homily follows or a moment of silent prayer and reflection.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

### 1.

**Presider:**

With trust and confidence, we unite our hearts and prayers for peace.

1. We pray for the Christian communities in the land where Jesus walked and where the church was born. May their witness to your love and peace burn bright among their Muslim and Jewish neighbours. **Lord, hear us.**
2. God of all nations, guide governments across the world as they respond in ways that support the legitimate rights of all, especially those who are most vulnerable, those who are dispossessed, those denied their basic human rights, and those who fear for their safety. **Lord, hear us.**
3. God of mercy and compassion, bestow your peace on the people of the Middle East. Turn hatred into love, fear into trust, despair into hope, occupation to liberation, and oppression to freedom. **Lord, hear us.**
4. God of the vulnerable, we pray for the children of this conflict, the elderly and infirm, and those held hostage. Return them to the refuge and safety of their families where they will experience protection and healing. **Lord, hear us.**
5. God of hope, we pray for the churches of Gaza, may they offer refuge to the many who are displaced, frightened, distressed and abandoned. May their compassion and love provide sanctuary and shelter to all in need. **Lord, hear us.**
6. God of all-providence, open corridors of hope and relief to the people of Gaza. Provide urgent provisions of food, water, and medical supplies for the innocent embroiled in this conflict and for those unable to leave Gaza. **Lord, hear us.**
7. God of peace, we pray for an end to all acts of terrorism and conflict. Restrain the hostility of warring factions, and may they pursue the paths of justice, peace, and reconciliation. **Lord, hear us.**

8. God of healing, bring comfort to those who are grieving the death of their loved ones. Heal the broken hearted and console them in their grief. **Lord, hear us.**

**OR**

**2.**

**Presider:**

With trust and confidence, we unite our hearts and prayers for peace.

Let us pray for the Church, that it will always be a faithful sign and instrument of Christ's peace. **Lord, hear us.**

We pray for our bishops, priests, religious and all who guide us in our Catholic faith, that they might have the wisdom and courage to preach the peace of Christ's Gospel with their lives. **Lord, hear us.**

We pray for the world, that the peace of Christ might take root in every human heart, and put an end to all forms of violence, greed and division. **Lord, hear us.**

Let us pray for our world leaders, that the Holy Spirit might guide them to promote the peace and understanding of Christ's Gospel. **Lord, hear us.**

For all who suffer because of the war and violence in Gaza and Israel, that they might find hope in people's efforts to bring Christ's peace to the world. **Lord, hear us.**

We pray that we might become peace-makers with our families, our neighbours and communities. **Lord, hear us.**

**HYMN**

**PEACE IS FLOWING**

Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out of you and me,  
Flowing out into the desert Setting all the captives free.

Love is....

Hope is....

Peace is....



Our Father.....

## **REFLECTION**

### **MOTHER TERESA REFLECTS ON WORKING TOWARD PEACE**

The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service; the fruit of service is peace.

Let us not use bombs and guns to overcome the world. Let us use love and compassion. Peace begins with a smile. Smile five times a day at someone you don't really want to smile at; do it for peace. Let us radiate the peace of God and so light His light and extinguish in the world and in the hearts of all men all hatred and love for power.

Today, if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other—that man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister. If everyone could see the image of God in his neighbour, do you think we would still need tanks and generals?

Peace and war begin at home. If we truly want peace in the world, let us begin by loving one another in our own families. If we want to spread joy, we need for every family to have joy.

Today, nations put too much effort and money into defending their borders. They know very little about the poverty and the suffering that exist in the countries where those bordering on destitution live. If they would only defend these defenceless people with food, shelter, and clothing, I think the world would be a happier place.

## **FINAL PRAYER**

God of peace,  
you sent your Son Jesus into the world  
to show us the way to a true and lasting peace.  
Help those involved in the conflict in Gaza and Israel  
tear down the fences of indifference and hatred.  
Forgive the sins that divide us,  
help us overcome prejudices and fears,  
and give us the courage to open their hearts to others.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL HYMN

### WHEN THE GUNS OF WAR FELL SILENT

Andrew Moll

On a dark Judaeen hillside  
crosses silhouette the sky,  
where the Son of God was taken,  
crucified and left to die.

He was wounded for our healing,  
gave his life that we might live,  
deepest mercy, reconciling  
peace, that nothing less could give.

When will all the guns be silent?  
How we long for war to cease.  
From the ruins of each conflict  
rises up our prayer for peace.

May the selfless love of Jesus  
give us hope at last to see  
all the nations, celebrating  
peace, when all the world is free.

*(The above hymn can be sung to the melody of 'Come, O Long Expected Jesus')*

**OR**

### SHALOM MY FRIEND

Hooper/Hustad

Shalom, my friends,  
shalom, my friends,  
shalom, shalom!  
God's peace go with you,  
God's peace go with you.  
Shalom, shalom!

May Blessings attend you,  
Angels defend,  
shalom, shalom!  
God's mercies befriend you,  
Unto the end.  
Shalom, shalom!

Till we meet again,  
Till we meet again,  
Shalom, shalom!  
May God be with you,  
His peace be with you,  
Shalom, shalom!