

EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER OF THE CHURCH FOR RECONCILIATION, UNITY AND PEACE

SOLEMN TRIDUUM CYCLE OF PRAYER FRIDAY PRAYER

(AT 5 P.M. IN THE HOLY LAND OR AT 4 P.M. LOCAL TIME,
THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD)



The second day of the triduum cycle of prayer is based on the theme of Christ's Passion. While in adoration of the Cross, the Church is called to participate in the *submissive abandonment of Christ to the Father on Golgotha*, and to *offer to the Father its present and past sufferings and those of mankind*, and especially, those sufferings related to the lack of Peace and the division of the Church.

Christians, however, are already certain of Christ's final victory over evil. Spiritually associated in a spirit of loving offering to Christ's suffering transfigured by Love, Christians find a sense to their own sufferings, with faith in Christ's redemptive promises.





Introduction

Jesus himself speaks of His Passion as birthpangs preceding the birth of a new people, the Church, who will be born after the Resurrection, on the day of Pentecost:

²⁰Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. ²¹When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. ²²So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.**

John 16: 20-23

The Church herself, the body of Christ, and with her the whole of creation groan and suffer from birthpangs, while awaiting the restoration of Jerusalem as a privileged place of Unity between Christians and for the diffusion of Faith and Peace (Is 2: 1-5) (the eschatological times¹), in expectation of the heavenly Jerusalem at the end of history (the end of the world²), with the second coming of Christ:

¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!'¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness* with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.*

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes* for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God,* who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit* intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.**

Rom 8: 15-27

¹ Cf. 1 John 2: 18 ss.

² Cf. Matt 25: 31-46.

The Holy Land suffers in these times more than ever. Jerusalem, chosen by God to be a privileged place of Peace and of gathering of all peoples, is today a city of contradictions, divisions and suffering, in which the new and ancient promises seem to be repudiated. One might indeed say that the Holy Land, in general and Jerusalem, most especially, are suffering from birthpangs. Precisely for this reason, however, we faithfully await, in prayer, the new birth of the Holy City, the realisation of God's promises:

⁴*You shall no more be termed Forsaken,*
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;**
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;**
*for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.*

⁵*For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder* marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.*

⁶*Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.*

*You who remind the LORD,
take no rest,*

⁷*and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.*

Is 62: 4-7



Adoration of the Cross

(The celebrant decides on the time and mode of the adoration of the Cross).

During the adoration of the Cross, the participants are invited to offer to God their sufferings and those of their families, communities, peoples, nations, indeed of the entire world, associating with the Love of Christ, who has suffered for the world.

Participants are invited to be particularly mindful of the sufferings of children and of the innocent, with consciousness that it is they who uphold the world³.

³ Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, cf. "Divine Mercy in my Soul: The Diary of Sister M. Faustina Kowalska" (Stockbridge, MA: Marian Press, 1987), page 135.



Readings and Intentions

An alternate reading of the Passion of Christ in the four evangelical accounts of the Passion is proposed, with an exposition of the intentions of the extraordinary prayer for Reconciliation, Unity and Peace.

This prayer may be accompanied by other prayers typical of the Christian community to which one belongs (acathistos hymn, rosary, etc.), and by hymns, adoration or silent prayer.

Readings

January, May, September:

Matt 26: 36-68

Matt 26: 69-27, 26

Matt 27: 27-31

Matt 27: 32-44

Matt 27: 45-56

February, June, October:

Mark 14: 32-52

Mark 14: 53-15,15

Mark 15: 16-20

Mark 15: 21-32

Mark 15: 33-41

March, July, November:

Luke 22: 39-71

Luke 23: 1-12

Luke 23: 13 -25

Luke 23: 26-43

Luke 23: 44-49

April, August, December:

John 18: 1-11

John 18: 12-19, 1

John 19: 2-16

John 19: 17-27

John 19: 28-37

Principal prayer intentions

- 1) For Peace in Jerusalem, for Peace in the Holy Land;
- 2) For the Mother Church of Jerusalem, that she might fully respond to its vocation of inspiring and promoting Unity among Christians and of inspiring and promoting inter-religious dialogue;
- 3) For the unification of the date of Easter among Christians, in view of Unity in Spirit.

Particular prayer intentions at the end of the readings

Let us pray for Peace in Jerusalem and in the Holy Land, so that from Jerusalem, Peace may diffuse into the Church. Let us pray for Peace in the Church, for Peace in the various Christian families and communities; for Peace in the Church between the different Christian communities; for Peace among the various Christian denominations. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit, that He might bring Peace into our hearts, from whence Peace must precede and be diffused.

Let us pray for Peace in Jerusalem and in the Holy Land, so that from Jerusalem, Peace may diffuse into the world. Let us pray for Peace in the world, for Peace within civil societies; for Peace between nations, peoples and cultures; Let us pray for Peace within and among all religious denominations of the world, and in particular, for Peace among the three monotheistic religions who profess a common faith in the God of Abraham. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit, that He may bring Peace into our hearts, because it is within the heart that one decides for Peace.

Let us pray for the Mother Church of Jerusalem, that she may fully respond to her vocation of inspiring and promoting Unity within the Church; let us pray for all Christian denominations present in Jerusalem to lower their voices, so that the Voice of the Lord, the Almighty, might be heard and heeded; let us pray for the Unity of the Church to be realised in Jerusalem and from Jerusalem. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit, so that He may dispose our hearts for Unity, because God's Love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray for the Unity of the Church, that Christians may hear the suffering cry of Christ due to the laceration of His Mystical Body, the Church; let us pray so that Unity in Spirit may be achieved, all in respecting the treasures of the different Christian traditions, as a source of richness for the whole Church; let us pray so that Unity may be accomplished around One Tabernacle, according to Christ's desire. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit, that He may dispose our hearts for Unity, because it is within the heart that conversion takes place.

Let us pray for the unified celebration of the holy feast of Easter; let us pray for Christians, that they might unanimously decide upon a common date for celebrating the Mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection; Let us pray that Christ might sustain this first step of bringing the Church to full Unity in Spirit. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit, that He might dispose the hearts of those to whom is entrusted the decision for a unified celebration of Easter among Christians, so that the Love of God might be manifested in their hearts.



Eucharistic Adoration (for those Christian communities who celebrate it)

The time and mode of adoration are decided by the celebrant.