

Text of Pope Benedict's prayer at ground zero in New York

NEW YORK - Here is the text of the prayer Pope Benedict XVI offered during a visit to ground zero in New York April 20.

O God of love, compassion and healing,

look on us, people of many different faiths and traditions,

who gather today at this site,

the scene of incredible violence and pain.

We ask you in your goodness

to give eternal light and peace

to all who died here -

the heroic first responders:

our firefighters, police officers,

emergency service workers and Port Authority personnel,

along with all the innocent men and women

who were victims of this tragedy

simply because their work or service

brought them here on Sept. 11, 2001.

We ask you in your compassion

to bring healing to those

who because of their presence here that day

suffer from injuries and illness.

Heal, too, the pain of still-grieving families

and all who lost loved ones in this tragedy.

Give them strength to continue their lives with courage and hope.

We are mindful as well

of those who suffered death, injury and loss

on the same day at the Pentagon and in Shanksville, Pa.

Our hearts are one with theirs

as our prayer embraces their pain and suffering.

God of peace, bring your peace to our violent world:

peace in the hearts of all men and women

and peace among the nations of the earth.

Turn to your way of love

those whose hearts and minds

are consumed with hatred.

God of understanding,

overwhelmed by the magnitude of this tragedy,

we seek your light and guidance

as we confront such terrible events.

Grant that those whose lives were spared

may live so that the lives lost here

may not have been lost in vain.

Comfort and console us,

strengthen us in hope,

and give us the wisdom and courage

to work tirelessly for a world

where true peace and love reign

among nations and in the hearts of all.