



## Prayers

### **Prayer for Justice- Pope Benedict XVI**

God grant that violence be overcome by the power of love, that opposition give way to reconciliation and that the desire to oppress be transformed into the desire for forgiveness, justice and peace...

May peace be in our hearts so that they are open to the action of God's grace...

May all members of the family community, especially children, the elderly, the weakest, feel the warmth of this feast, and may it extend subsequently to all the days in the year. Amen.

### **Prayer by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw**

Grant us, Lord God, a vision of your world as your love would have it: a world where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor; a world where the riches of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them; a world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect; a world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love. Give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

### **Prayer for Racial Justice (From Education for Justice- Christopher Smith, SJ)**


God, our Father, Your church was born on a great miracle of unity. All of the people of the many nations, tribes, and places of Earth, who were fathered in Jerusalem were divided by the plurality of their different languages, customs, and experiences, when suddenly you brought coherence to their cacophony. At once, every woman and man understood one another: the gift and sign of your Holy Spirit, which had descended in tongues of fire that Pentecost day.

Although some wanted to restrict their fellowship, your spirit consistently widened the bounds of community. First to include Samaritans, then extending to include gentiles of every nation.

Propelled by your spirit, your apostles spread the good news to all of the world: that the kingdom of God is for all of us, belongs to all of us, belongs to all of us, and will only come about if we all make it so.

Sadly, our history is one of resistance to your spirit's call of inclusion, and this resistance continues to the present. We have polluted your church with racial, sociological, and political ideologies, at times. The disease of division and derision in the Church has caused great harm to our brothers and sisters of the different parts of the Body of Christ. For this, we ask you for mercy and healing. We ask you for help as we go forward, because the way to reconciliation is untrod and the path to healing is unknown.

Lord, pour out your spirit upon us today: the Spirit of union that brought understanding amidst differ-



ence to the first Christians on Pentecost. Help us to include, respect, and love one another. Give us the grace to listen. May our words and actions this day widen the boundaries of the Church a little more, that all may know that they have a place at your table because all are your beloved children. Amen.

*This prayer was written for the 2021 Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice.*

### **Shake Us From Our Slumber- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

When our eyes do not see the gravity of racial justice, shake us from our slumber and open our eyes, O Lord. When out of fear we are frozen into inaction, give us a spirit of bravery, O Lord.

When we try our best but say the wrong things, give us a spirit of humility, O Lord.

When the chaos of this dies down, give us a lasting spirit of solidarity, O Lord.

When it becomes easier to point fingers outwards, help us to examine our own hearts, O Lord.

God of truth, in your wisdom, enlighten us. God of hope in your kindness, heal us. Creator of all people, in your generosity, guide us.

Racism breaks your heart, break our hearts for what breaks yours, O Lord. Ever present God, you called us to be in relationship with one another and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered. In our community, we are many different people; we come from many different places, have many different cultures. Open our hearts that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us. We pray in faith.

### **Prayer**

God, you have created every person in Your image. Help us recognize this gift by rejecting fear and rejecting the sin of racism, so we can welcome and include all our brothers and sisters as members of the human family.

Guide us through the words of our Church leadership. Open our minds and our hearts to discern how we can live together in harmony and in unity.

Forgive us our sins, what we have done and what we have not done. Make us active bridge builders, to be witness to your word, to the diversity you have created and blessed. Amen. (From Education for Justice).

### **Prayer for Tolerance**


Dear Lord, we who are divided, unloving, prejudices at times, inclined to misunderstanding, intolerant. Make us instead united, loving, open to learning, understanding and forgiving, tolerant. May your Spirit be present in us as you are in all peoples. Amen. (Education for Justice)


### **Deliver Us From Evil**

We hear words of prejudice, fear, and anger in our communities. We see acts of discrimination and bloodshed in our streets. We cry out to you, O Lord, to deliver us from the evils of racism that cause great pain and anguish, dividing our nation.

Deliver us from the evil of active racism, the outspoken language of hate, the visible acts of violence, the clear calls to divide and destroy. Deliver us from the evils of racism, O Lord.

Deliver us from the evil of passive racism, the attitudes and actions that allow racism to continue to exist because too many people say nothing and do nothing to stop active racism. Deliver us from the evils of racism, O Lord.





Deliver us from the evil of systemic racism, the biases that have long been a part of so many systems, in education, housing, health care, jobs, and in our court and penal structures, creating disadvantages that remain for generations. Deliver us from the evils of racism, O Lord.

Deliver us from the evil of cultural racism, from attitudes of superiority and privilege, from stereotyping and devaluing a culture even as we appropriate cultural expressions of those different from us without sensitivity or concern. Deliver us from the evils of racism, O Lord.

In your mercy, O Lord, deliver us from the evils of racism so that our communities can be renewed by the rejection of all prejudice, all violence, with a new awareness of those different from us and with deep respect for every human person, so the healing bonds of solidarity may grow and the common good may flourish in this land. Amen.

*Jane Deren, Ph.D., (Education for Justice).*