

Prayers for Racial Justice



Lamentation I

We are tired, O Lord,
Overwhelmed by the violence and death
That has ravaged this country,
Fed by prejudice and mistrust.

We are tired,
And yet we are called to mourn
together,
To lament and to remember the names:
May the dead rest in your peace,
May our acts of solidarity with the living
Be a memorial to the dead.

We are fearful, O Lord,
As we see the violence and death
That plagues our nation,
So infected with the racism that remains
An open wound that has not healed.

We are fearful,
And yet we are called to embrace
And to embody Gospel values
So we commit to work
For positive change and racial justice.

May our voices calling together for this
Justice

Be a part of our lament for those
Who have suffered and died unjustly.

May our voices calling to transform
Sinful structures of racism and violence
Become a healing chorus for the living.

Hear our sorrows, our laments,
O Lord,
And as we strive to follow
The loving wisdom of Christ:
Hear our calls for solidarity and healing.

Amen.

Lamentation II

Oh God, with anguish
we pray that we may find ways
to move forward toward the light,
not back into the shadows
of hatred, violence,
and the silence that protects us.

We pray for the wisdom
to know how to move ahead.

We recognize that evil
can overtake a nation,
as history reveals;

We recognize too that
reconciliation is possible,
that peace can flourish
where once hate and violence reigned.

We pray that all citizens of good will
speak out again and again
so the sound of Your justice
drowns out the cries of hatred,
the deafening silence that protects it.

May we as a nation form a circle,
inclusive, with no top or bottom,
where we can welcome everyone
with outstretched hands.

May our circle grow ever larger,
more hands open, holding one another's palm,
realizing we are holding on to the hope
Pope Francis calls us to
if we can see we are all connected. Amen

Jane Deren, Ph.D
Printed with permission: Education for Justice
Ignatian Solidarity Network

The Spirit's Surprises

May the Spirit
bless us with discomfort
at easy answers, half-truths and
superficial relationships so that
we will live deep in our hearts.

May the Spirit
bless us with anger
at injustice and oppression
and exploitation of people and the earth
so that we will work for
justice, equity and peace.

May the Spirit
bless us with tears to shed
for all who suffer so that we reach out our hands

to comfort them.

And may the Spirit
bless us with the foolishness
to think that we can make a difference in the world,
so that we will do the things
which others say cannot be done.

(Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice)