



Prayer for Peace

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Every morning, I read thru the headlines of the day from the New York Times and the Washington Post and they are often filled with stories of conflict. More than 2 years of fighting in Ukraine. Almost a year of war in the Mideast from the attack in Israel last October followed by months of assaults on Gaza in retaliation against Hamas. Civilians there, including tens of thousands of children, are starving and wonder each night if their current place of safety will become tomorrow's military target. Meanwhile the ongoing civil war in Sudan has created a famine where people are likewise fying, yet with little talk of western countries coming to their aid. For all these places of large tumult and the many smaller ones elsewhere in the world, my heart cries out for peace.

Beyond prayer, which is no small thing, there is little I can do to help bring peace to our troubled world. But I can pray to bring peace where my life intersects others'. The words of the Peace Prayer attributed to St. Francis come to mind. Not just that I might be an instrument of God's peace, but that I may work toward the welfare of others before seeking my own good. You may say this is a lofty goal, but I'm not trying to be lofty. I just ask that God may let me do at least a little bit of good here and there. And that God will forgive me when I get in the way of God's shalom instead of being a channel of it. [I often imagine myself as a pipe thru which God's Word and God's love can flow. I pray that I won't get in the way, only I worry sometimes that the pipe is getting a bit gunked up!]

If you don't know it or can't remember it, here is the St. Francis Peace Prayer (known by other names, too).

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

Grace and Peace.

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