



Prayer

Sunday, 27 June 2021

O God, Creator and Sustainer,
we offer thanks for the richness of creation, for the hidden treasures of earth,
fruitful, extravagant, and boundless.
With joy, we receive them from your hand and wonder,
“Who are we, your creatures, that you are mindful of us?”
Yet, we confess that we respond to your bounty with greed rather than a spirit of sharing,
joining field to field and house to house.
In ways both open and hidden, we collaborate with the builders of empire,
and we profit from the wages of oppression.
The list of victims seems like an endless refrain:
in spite of the efforts of the good and the righteous,
the rich get richer, the poor get poorer,
the powerful still exploit, and the cruel kill and maim.
Wars and rumours of wars send people on the run,
create rivers of migrants and whole cities of refugees,
while the few profit from selling weapons, and skimming money meant to help those in need.
We pray for a valiant, prophetic proclamation against those who create violence and pain,
and the power of love without conditions for those who suffer.
Help us, O God of compassion,
to open our eyes to injustices in our own context,
to work for justice in our own places,
to persist in co-operating in building networks of peace,
to keep marching on, in the light of God.

We give you thanks, Eternal One,
for you created us in your image, with dignity,
and gave us the ability to create language, culture, and build family and community.
We thank you for your mighty works of salvation,
works that we remember and re-tell to our children and our children’s children.
Yet, we confess that we have often imposed one language, one colour, and one story on others,
fallen prey to racism and tribalism, and have used clan and caste to create fear and distrust,
and to turn people against each other.
We build walls and towers, not to offer refuge and protection, but to keep out the unwanted.
We pray that this time of making new companions and connections,
this time of widening of vision and horizons,
would strengthen our determination to continue our pilgrimage together.
Lead us, O God, to justice and peace,
to a clear vision of your will shown in faithful building of open, vital communities.
We pray that in the midst of these difficult and impossible COVID-19 pandemic circumstances,
we would continue to pray and to work together in true co-operation.

Thank you, Creator and Sustainer, who through Wisdom shaped the universe.
We thank you for the Logos, the Word made flesh, who pitched a tent among us.
We answer his call to pick up a cross and walk with him,
 who for us is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
We thank you also for wisdom from many scriptures,
 for different revelations, for stories re-invented, for truths renewed,
 for the witness of good words, true words, life-giving words.
We bless you for prophets of yesterday and today
 that speak words of truth and hope in in the midst of lies and despair.
Yet, we confess that in grasping truth we often claim exclusive ownership over it,
 and use the power of media to promote our narrow vision and our version of the truth.
We have turned neighbour into stranger, and stranger into fearful threat.
We have not spoken loudly against lying narratives.
We have not done enough to prevent the fear of “the other”:
 the stereotyping, the slurs, the demonization.
Give us courage not to be silent, but to be witnesses, even at our own cost.
Teach us to look beyond our own borders
 to see the world, and you through the eyes of another,
 and then to act with solidarity and compassion.

We thank you for the leadership of women and men, young and old,
 official and unofficial, leaders in government, temple, mosque, and church,
 those who took risks, who did the unexpected, who saw through the official version,
 who did not do what they were told, and thus led us to what is right.
Yet, we know how often we raise up a Pharaoh,
 a Caesar, a dictator who promises life and deals only in death.
We have let the small seeds of tyranny grow, especially when we are not affected,
 and we become complicit, and complacent, until it is too late.
Teach us again the way of life, the way of the servant.
God of life, lead us in your Way, lead us on.
O Holy One, Alpha and Omega,
 we thank you for the paths we have already explored,
 the roads not yet taken, and the ways that lie ahead.
Thank you that they call us on to further journeys,
 pilgrimages with companions in the Way, and that, of all our ways,
 You remain our Beginning and our End. **Amen**

(Pilgrim Prayer, 244 – 246, adapted)