



**A Prayer for the U.N. World Day of Peace
September 21, 2007**



A Word from St. Julie: “The peace of the Lord in your soul is always of greater value than all the desires for good that you might have. Do reasonably all you can, with great peace.” (Letter 259)

Introduction & a Quiet Moment to touch the peace of God within...

First Reading & Lighting of Candle: MT 5:14-16

Reflection: What can I do to be the light of peace to those around me?
(Time for quiet reflection)

Let us pray: Good and gracious God, let your peace rest so gently on our hearts and minds that we may have the strength to work for peace in our world today, tomorrow and for ever. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

Second Reading and Prayers of Petition: Phil 4:6-9

Response to Petitions: God of Peace, hear our prayer.



In Unity with others around the world: Let us join our hearts and minds to our brothers and sisters around the world as we pray for the light of peace to illumine all the earth:

O God, who would fold both heaven and earth in a single peace, let the design of your great love enlighten and heal the relationships in our world so torn by misunderstanding, violence and war. Give peace to your people, peace among nations, peace in our dwellings, and peace in our hearts. We ask this through Jesus, your Son and our brother. Amen.

Suggested Guidelines:

On page 1 of this document you'll find an outline for a prayer service to be used to celebrate the World Day of Prayer for Peace on (or around) September 21st.

Please feel free to adapt this outline to the needs of your students.

Materials needed:

7 candles and something to light them

The introduction and readings (below)

Copies of page 4 for the students—or the parts of it you want them to have.

Music for the quiet time—instrumental music or appropriate songs can be used. You may also want to add music/songs at the beginning or end of the prayer.

Have the same person read the Word from St. Julie and the Introduction. This person can be the “leader” of the prayer: inviting the students to reflect on how they can be lights of peace, inviting the students to pray the two prayers for peace, inviting the students to enter into the petitions, etc.

During the time of silence following the introduction quiet music or a song can be played. Possible songs could include: Peace is Flowing Like a River, Let Peace Begin with Me or the Prayer of St. Francis. There may be other appropriate songs that are more familiar to your students.

Readings needed:

Introduction: Today we join people around the world to pray for peace for our earth. Why do we need to pray for peace? Without peace there is hunger, disease, malnutrition and poverty. Without peace children cannot go to school, cures cannot be found, justice cannot prevail. According to the United Nations these countries are currently involved in war or civil unrest: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Brazil, Britain, Burma, the Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Darfur, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, the Ivory Coast, Korea, Kurdistan, Laos, Lebanon, Mexico, Moldova, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United States, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe. We hold these countries, and all people experiencing violence and war, in prayer as we pray for peace. Our faith tells us that true peace comes from God, and that God gifts each of us with peace. So we take a moment to turn to our good God who dwells with us, to ask for the gift of peace.

First Reading:

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew:

You are the salt of the earth. But what if salt were to lose its flavor? How could you restore it? It would be fit for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. You don't build a city on a hill, then try to hide it, do you? You don't light a lamp, then put it under a bushel basket, do you? No, you set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, your light must shine before others so that they may see your good acts and give praise to your Abba God in heaven. (MT 5:14-16)

Second Reading:

A reading from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians:

Dismiss all anxiety from your minds; instead, present your needs to God through prayer and petition, giving thanks for all circumstances. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, my sisters and brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, decent, admirable, virtuous or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you. (Phil 4:6-9)

Petitions:

That each of us may know your peace in our hearts and share the gift of your peace with those around us, we pray....

For all families, that they may experience your peace and love, we pray...

For all neighborhoods, that they may be places of respect and peace, we pray...

For all the peoples of Asia, the South Pacific, Australia and Indonesia: that they may know true peace and see an end to all abuse, violence and war, we pray... (light a candle and pause for a moment of silence)

For all the peoples of Europe: that they may know true peace and see an end to all abuse, violence and war, we pray... (light a candle and pause for a moment of silence)

For all the peoples of South America: that they may know true peace and see an end to all abuse, violence and war, we pray... (light a candle and pause for a moment of silence)

For all the peoples of Africa: that they may know true peace and see an end to all abuse, violence and war, we pray... (light a candle and pause for a moment of silence)

For all the peoples of North and Central America: that they may know true peace and see an end to all abuse, violence and war, we pray... (light a candle and pause for a moment of silence)