

A PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY and OUR PEOPLE

We are one nation under God
and we work for liberty and justice for all peoples.

Coming together as the family of God, we pause and
remember that our loving God continually dwells among us.
In the name of God our Creator, Jesus our Brother and Redeemer,
and the Holy Spirit Who calls us to holiness and wholeness.
Amen.



GOD of OUR FATHERS

God of our fathers Whose almighty hand
leads forth in beauty all the starry band
of shining world with splendor in the skies
our grateful songs before Your throne arise.

Your love divine has led us in the past
in this free land by You our lot is cast
May You be our ruler, guardian and stay
Your word our law, Your paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence
My Your strong arm be our everlasting defense
Your true religion in our hearts increase
Your bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Your people on their toilsome way
Lead us from night to ever ending day
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine
and glory, laud and praise be forever Yours.

Let us pray:

Almighty and Eternal God,
may your grace enkindle in all
a love for the many unfortunate people
whom poverty, misery or war
reduce to a condition of life
unworthy of human beings.

Arouse in the hearts of those who call You, Father,
a hunger and thirst for justice and peace
and for charity in deeds and in truth.

Grant, O Lord, peace in our days,
peace to souls,
peace to families,
peace to our country,
and peace among nations. Amen.

— Pope Pius XII (1876-1958)

+

Deuteronomy 10: 17-21

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords,
the great God, mighty and awesome,
Who is not partial and takes no bribe,
Who executes justice for the orphan and the widow,
and Who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing.

+

Isaiah 2:1-5

In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple
will be established as chief among the mountains;
it will be raised above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob.

He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Psalm 85

Response: The glory of the Lord will dwell in our land.

I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD—for he proclaims peace to his people.
Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

Response: The glory of the Lord will dwell in our land.

Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.
Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

Response: The glory of the Lord will dwell in our land.

The LORD himself will give his benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.
Justice shall walk before him,
and salvation, along the way of his steps.

Response: The glory of the Lord will dwell in our land.

Happy are the peacemakers
for they shall be called daughters and sons of God.

— Matthew 5: 9

Peace I leave with you, says the Lord,
My own peace I give you.

— John 14: 27

Reflection

Only Jesus can set us free.

Do you believe in freedom? According to Jesus, true freedom is freedom from sin. True slavery is a life not given to Christ. You can live in the most repressive nation in the world and if you have the truth of Christ you are free. And the opposite is true too. You can live in the freest nation of the world but without Jesus you are a slave.

That is the truth. The freedoms we are granted as American citizens are great. We should celebrate the freedom to vote, to practice our religion, to say what we believe, to gather peacefully. But let us not forget that true freedom is more than that.

If you truly believe in freedom then spread the truth of Jesus the Christ. It is right to spread democracy around the world. It is proper to stand up for human rights around the world and civil rights in our country, but let us not forget about spiritual freedom.

We hold up people like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln who worked to set people free. Would you like to free some slaves? Then tell others about Jesus Christ. Yes, fight for their political and physical freedom but don't forget that people need Jesus to make that freedom worth living.

— Alex Stevenson

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore
Send these, the homeless and tempest-tossed to me
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”
— Inscription on the Statue of Liberty

+

Intercessions

We ask You, O God, to continue to bless our country and her people.
Watch over us and let us continue to proclaim liberty, justice and equality for all.

We pray that we as a nation may always be cognizant of the needs of the orphan and the widow, the downtrodden and those in need.

Lord, give us generous hearts that reach out to others especially in their desperate times.

We pray for all the leaders of governments on the national, state and local levels.

Lord, may You guide their deliberations as they work for justice and peace for all people.

We pray for all those who are newcomers to our land.

May they be readily accepted and incorporated into our country and our neighborhoods.

We pray that we may learn how to be peacemakers and show by our words and actions, the love of God for all men and women.

Lord, let peace come to our world and let it begin with us.

We pray that all contention, bitterness and injustice cease within politics, governments and peoples.

Lord, help us to put on Your mind and heart and show others the and respect we have for ourselves.

We pray that the patroness of the United States of America, Mary, our Immaculate Mother, will watch over our country and intercede with her Son on our behalf.

Lord, help us to follow the path of righteousness and let us always be a generous and morally and ethically upright nation.

We pray that we may always cherish our freedoms, rights and responsibilities.

May we never forget the men and women who gave their lives so that we might be free.

Let us pray:

O God of freedom and joy, we humbly ask You to hear our prayers and answer them as only You know best for us. May we live as your daughters and sons liberated through Jesus. May we continually strive to make Your Kingdom a reality here and now as we work for justice, peace, equality, and love. Amen.

God bless America
Land that I love
Stand beside her
And guide her
Through the night
With the light from above
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans white with foam
God bless America
My home sweet home.

+

Let us pray:

Liberate me, Lord,
from the slavery of sin,
from the prison of prejudice,
and from the bonds of bigotry.

Break down the barriers, Jesus,
separating me from all my brothers and sisters
throughout the world.

Deliver me from deceit and self-deception
and set me free from hurtful habits
that I might love and serve You
in everyone I meet this day.

Freed by your grace,
may I extend Your liberating love
to people still enslaved, oppressed or forgotten
till everyone on earth reclaims their dignity
as daughters and sons of God.

— Christ of Maryknoll, Joseph Veneroso, MM

Saint John Baptist de La Salle and
all you holy brothers who have gone before us,
inspire us to be grateful for the gift of freedom
and that our work of Catholic education
will bring justice and peace to all peoples.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!