

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you (*especially John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we commemorate today*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Celebrate

Sunday, September 13, 2020
15th Sunday after Pentecost

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?"¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died,¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when

they spoke to him.¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves."¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God?²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today.²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Holy Cross Day) John 3:13-17. **Tuesday** Romans 14:13—15:2. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died around 258) Genesis 50:22-26. **Thursday** (commemoration of Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179) Psalm 145:1-8. **Friday** (commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died 1961) 2 Corinthians 13:5-10. **Saturday** Zephaniah 2:13-15. **Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost** Jonah 3:10—4:11; Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

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