

Pray for Peace with Old St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, PA

Week #8

We gather to pray for peace in the world, particularly for a swift end to the conflict between Israel and Gaza, for the release of the hostages taken on October 7, for an immediate and definite end to the war in Ukraine, for peace in Africa, Asia, and all the nations of the world. And as we pray for peace, we also pray for an end to terrorism, for an end to the slaughter of civilians and an end to the use of civilians as shields of war. We pray for a time when we can all live in peace with one another.

Reflection: *For Peace* by John O'Donohue from the book, *Benedictus*

As the fever of day calms towards twilight
May all that is strained in us come to ease.

We pray for all who suffered violence today,
May an unexpected serenity surprise them.

For those who risk their lives each day for peace,
May their hearts glimpse providence at the heart of history.

That those who make riches from violence and war
Might hear in their dreams the cries of the lost.

That we might see through our fear of each other
A new vision to heal our fatal attraction to aggression.

That those who enjoy the privilege of peace
Might not forget their tormented brothers and sisters.

That the wolf might lie down with the lamb,
That our swords be beaten into ploughshares

And no hurt or harm be done
Anywhere along the holy mountain.

Music: [Let There be Peace on Earth at 9/11 Memorial, Youth Choir, 2015](#)

Blessing:

Lord Jesus Christ, You said to your apostles, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your church and the world's people, and grant us peace and unity in accordance with your will. We pray in a very special way for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and Russia; Israel and Gaza; the many warring nations in Africa; and all peoples engaged in war and armed conflict. We pray for the swift release of the remaining Israeli

hostages, and for civilians whose homes, families, and livelihoods have been destroyed in Gaza, Israel, and Ukraine. Bless all those caught in the vise of war.

Holy Spirit, visit the hearts and minds of those leaders who have chosen the path of war and terrorism for their people, to enlighten their souls and soften their hearts with the seeds of love instead of wrath. Open our eyes and the eyes of all people to see our similarity with one another, our common humanity, and not our differences. Lord, Bless us as family – as brothers and sisters, as your sons and daughters. And help us to see that the road to peace begins with each one of us.

Music: [Make Me a Channel of Your Peace](#) performed by Susan Boyle