

A SACRED DIALOGUE ON RACE AND PACISM

"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr

Litany for a Beautiful, Diverse Creation 18 May 2008



Creator God, you have made a beautiful and diverse creation and it is your desire that people live together in unity; however, racism continues to fragment, break and destroy us. We pray that racism's power over our human family, community, nation and world would be relinquished.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Cleansing God, we are divided today because of our history. Caucasians defined, named and spoke for people of color — calling them Indians, Slaves, defining others as less than human. This inheritance goes on today. Today, White people call others suspicious, illegal aliens, enemies, and a host of other names meant to de-humanize. We ask that you continue to transform those who are White - that we may be filled with humility in the face of this history. We ask that you continue to transform those of us who are White that we may recognize the privilege that comes with being White. We ask that you continue to transform those of us who are People of Color—that we might define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves. Lead us to that day when we will lift every voice and sing in harmony.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Saving God, bind us together so that we might see how we are responsible for each other. Help us to work together to build and maintain community - not in an unquestioning peace but in a peace built on justice for all. If anyone does not have family, food, shelter, access to education, medical care, work - that is everyone's concern. But systemic racism has allowed us to separate from one another to the degree that we have forgotten this deep connection - but you have called us to bear one another's burdens, that we might fulfill the law of Christ. Help us to practice more deeply love of neighbor.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

We envision a church where all people are equal, at all levels, as God intended!

God of the poor, so many people in our communities are not paid a living wage. This disproportionately affects communities of color. Fill us with a new vision of cooperative economics and the power to use our money to build community rather than destroy it.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Powerful God, you have called each one by name and chosen each one for a purpose. May we work together for the building and developing of community to restore dignity, safety and justice. We especially lift to you our children throughout the synod - who face violence at school and in the community and who are targeted by those whom they ought to be able to trust. Give your church this sense of purpose - that we might communicate to everyone your deep love and their great purpose. Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Beautiful God, we see your creative work everywhere. In the bird singing above the noise of trains and sirens. In a flower bursting through a cement crack. In the turquoise-blue of Lake Michigan. In a stranger's help in a moment of need. In the smile of a child on the bus. May we see your creative work in the face of every person that we encounter.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Holy and Life-giving Spirit, you enliven, irritate, call and sanctify us - and you know we need it. Help us to believe with all our heart that you are calling us to a new way of living and being as your church. While there is still a church divided between those who are White, African Descent, Latino/Latina, Asian, American Indian and Arab, you are not finished with us yet. We have faith - because of who You are - and because the sacred dialogue on race has begun. Help us to believe with all our heart that a new way of being church is possible—let your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

In the name of Jesus we pray,
Amén



Litany prepared by the
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