

When praying for peace at our borders

As you know, Lord,
I'm writing this while sitting on my porch, by some candle light,
with a mild breeze brushing my bare arms, as your Spirit brushes my soul...

But the peace of the moment is burdened by the rancor, anger and division kindled by the daily news
and the plight of those who have no porch or home where they might shelter and find rest...

The issues are neither as easy as some would make them out to be
nor so complex that they couldn't be resolved without causing further hurt and harm...

I offer you this sad story, Lord, and pray for your wisdom to help those on all sides work
to find a way, a middle way, respectful of the most vulnerable
and respectful of the laws and rights of everyone involved...

I lift up our shameful name calling, our hatred of people we've never met,
our prejudice in favor of our own stances, our failure to listen to your word,
and our rush to judgment on issues about which we might know next to nothing...

Give us your counsel, your wisdom, your insight, Lord...
Give us the strength we need to stand firm for what we believe...
Give us a compassion for the truly poor and an empathy to override our selfishness and greed...
Give us the will to act with courage when we hear the cry of the poor...
Give us a respect for just laws, statutes that protect both those whose tables overflow with feasting
and those who ask that we make room at ours for them, their children and their needs...

Give us hearts fashioned after your heart, Lord:
hearts neither slow nor unafraid to empty themselves out for those in need,
hearts ready to name the truth, to stand by those who ask a share of all we have...

Give us hearts ready to open wide to receive those with no place to go,
no home to call their own, no food to give their children, no strength to bear their burdens
and little hope beyond the welcome we might, in your name, offer...

Lord, I'm offering you the mess we're in, begging for you to pardon our sins
and to heal and mend anything and everything that keeps us apart,
that keeps us from welcoming you when you come knocking on our door
seeking a place in our hearts and in our neighborhoods,
all of us brothers and sisters in your name...

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil and graciously grant peace in our days
that by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ
who knocks on our doors and on the doors of our hearts...

Make us just and generous, compassionate and challenging and faithful and fair in all that we do...
Receive our prayer, O Lord, and open us to any and all the gifts you might leave
on the door steps of our hearts and at the borders of our nation's land...

Amen.