

Prayers for Peace in the Middle East

Dear God, we pray for the suffering nations of the world, and for their people. We pray especially for the leaders of these nations, and for the diplomats and negotiators. Lord, give them the wisdom to know that fairness is the only path toward a just and lasting peace. Help them to set aside fear, national interest, and personal ambition, and to stand for truth and a just solution for all people. Turn them away from violence, and toward peace. *Amen.*

We ask your grace on all the people who are suffering as a result of war, hatred, and violence, in the United States, and throughout the Islamic world. We pray especially for the poor, for the wounded, for the widows, widowers, and orphans, and all those who have lost loved ones. We pray for the refugees, for prisoners, for the oppressed, for the soldiers, for those who have lost hope, for those whose frustration and anger leads them toward terrible acts of violence. We pray for all who are afraid, especially the elderly, and the parents of young children. Comfort, relieve and protect them. And we pray for all those who have died. *Amen.*

We pray today for all places in the world where peace is tenuous or shattered, where people live in fear, where the basic necessities of life are threatened, where grief and frustration lead to despair. Let us remember that this reality occurs in our own community as well. Help us to put ourselves in solidarity with suffering wherever it exists. As we observe and feel it, help us not become hardened by despair or hatred, but to grow in compassion and willingness to help. Help us to discern the ways in which each one of us is being called into service.

And finally, God, please bless each of us in our own struggles. Teach us to seek out diversity, rather than taking refuge in the comfort of the familiar. Open our hearts that have been wounded by prejudice, stereotypes, and injustice. Help us to work against intolerance, and to embody love.

May peace begin in each of our hearts, and through faith may we come to better know and love one another, and be strengthened to carry that love out into our community and the world. *Amen.*

— Elizabeth Adams