

**Prayer for Peace**  
**Journeying with young people toward May 9**  
**SECOND WEEK – 03.04. – 09.04. 2022 - IRELAND**

**OPENING HYMN ST FRANCIS PRAYER** *Gen Verde*

<p>Make me a channel of your peace Where there is hatred let me bring your love Where there is injury, your pardon Lord And where there is doubt true faith in You.</p>	<p>Oh, Master grant that I may never seek So much to be consoled as to console To be understood as to understand To be loved as to love with all my soul.</p>	<p>Make me a channel of your peace It is in pardoning that we are pardoned It is in giving to all man that we receive And in dying that we are born to eternal life.</p>
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**PRAYER FOR COURAGE**

God of a deep and deepening peace, God of a calm that steadies our pace:  
may we take whatever moment we need to gather ourselves for the journey ahead.  
May we feel the rock of your presence beneath us; the assurance of shelter you provide in embrace;  
and the promise of company gathered close by your spirit; so that as we approach the unknown  
ahead we remember a strength that can never give way. Amen.

(From A.Wimberly, *God of the Fallen Grain*, Corrymeela Press, Ballycastle, 2021, p.63. With the kind permission of the author Rev Dr Alexander Wimberly, leader of the Corrymeela Community, Ballycastle, Northern Ireland.)

**READINGS FROM ST JOHN'S GOSPEL**

**John 14: 27 – 29** Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace which the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me say: I am going away and shall return. If you loved me you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe”

**John 16:32 – 33** Listen; the time will come -- indeed it has come already -- when you are going to be scattered, each going his own way and leaving me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you all this so that you may find peace in me. In the world you will have hardship, but be courageous: I have conquered the world.

**REFLECTION**

In the context of Ireland, of our troubled history over the past hundreds of years, many lessons have been learnt about peace, peace-making and peace building.

In recent months we have had events that have highlighted one of the defining factors of peace on the island of Ireland: forgiveness to help heal the open wounds that still need justice and love to rebuild a future of trust for future generations. The following text for reflection is an extract from the Homily of Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, delivered at the Bloody

Sunday 50th anniversary Mass on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in Saint Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, Northern Ireland.

"Oh Heavenly Father, God of love and peace, send your blessed peace into our hearts, our homes and our country." Some of you will remember those opening lines from the *Peace Prayer* often offered by the people of Derry in the 1970s during the darkest days of the Troubles. [...] I remember the day in the mid '70s when the people of Derry took to the streets in their thousands praying that prayer in a great crusade for peace – calling for an end to the sectarian violence which was bringing so much death and destruction, injury and grief to our city. [...]

Our *Peace Prayer* continues: 'O Lord Jesus, you died to make peace between God and mankind. We long for justice and peace; send us your gift of peace.'

[...] Many families from right across our communities still endure the anguish of not knowing why, or how their loved ones were killed or injured or punished or targeted or disappeared or defamed or locked up, or interned or otherwise banished. Their unanswered questions linger on, as a constant nagging reminder to the next generation of unfinished business, of a grief that is unsatisfied with silence, a pain that does not go away but lies beneath, an unhealed wound that is passed on to the next generation. It is difficult for them to move on. It is hurtful, as some have proposed, to expect them to simply 'draw a line' under the past.

Dealing with the legacy of our past and building meaningful reconciliation is complicated and delicate. As a society we have to find ways to open ourselves to the hidden truths about our past so that proper healing can happen. We have begun to explore and build a shared vision for our future on this island. But if we are to unite hearts and minds and nourish a genuine hope for lasting peace and reconciliation in Ireland, then we have to work together on healing the legacy of our shared past, because peace can only flourish in the light of knowledge, truth and justice.

Our *Peace Prayer* concluded: 'O Holy Spirit, you work always for our peace. Show us the value of peace; take away all sorrow and hatred from our hearts'.

We know that peace is so much more than an end to war and conflict. Peace from poverty; peace from hunger; peace for those living on the streets or in camps for migrants; peace of mind and heart for those denied the truth, closure and justice both here and around the world; this is the kind of deep peace we should all strive for today. It is the peace of Christ".

**PRAYER TO ST BRIGID** *who lived 451 -525 and is one of the patron Saints of Ireland.*

Brigid, you were a woman of peace. You brought harmony where there was conflict.

You brought light to the darkness. You brought hope to the downcast.

May the mantle of your peace cover those who are troubled and anxious and may peace be firmly rooted in our hearts and in our world.

Inspire us to act justly and to reverence all God has made. Brigid you were a voice for the wounded and weary. Strengthen what is weak within us. Calm us into a quietness that heals and listens.

May we grow each day into greater wholeness in mind, body and spirit. Amen

#### **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

"Brothers, we wish you joy; try to grow perfect; encourage one another; have a common mind and live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you". (2 Cor 13:11)

*(Focolare Movement Ireland in collaboration with the Ecumenical Lunchtime Group at St Finian's Lutheran Church, Dublin. On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 13.00 (GMT) there will be an ecumenical prayer service based on this outline which can be followed on youtube: <https://youtu.be/u2zktionQFU> )*