

**Prayer for Peace**  
**Journeying with young people toward May 9**  
**THIRD WEEK – 10.04. – 16.04. 2022 - CZECH REPUBLIC**

**“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid.” (John 14,27)**

“Brotherhood is one of the fundamental and universal values that ought to be the basis of relations between nations, so that those who suffer or are disadvantaged do not feel excluded and forgotten, but welcomed and supported as part of the one human family. We are all brothers and sisters!

In sharing sentiments of brotherhood with one another, all of us ought to become promoters of a culture of peace that encourages sustainable development, tolerance, inclusivity, mutual understanding and solidarity [...].

We live under the same sky, and in the name of God, we, his creatures, ought to recognize one another as brothers and sisters [...]” (*Pope Francis’ speech on the International Day of Human Brotherhood, 2022*).

Reconciliation, forgiveness, forgetting any wrong we suffered, sacrifice, humility, openness to dialogue, fidelity in following our conscience, service and the warmth of love: these values are necessary to bring about peace. Let us pray to God that we, too, may put them into practice in our life, following in the footsteps of these famous persons from the Czech nation.

WENCESLAS I (907 – 935) was a Czech duke from 925 till his death as a martyr. He always humbly put himself at the service of others, defended the high Christian ideals, for which he renounced his wealth, and promoted reconciliation through settlements based on dialogue and wise agreements.

VÁCLAV HAVEL (1936-2011), President of the Republic: like duke Wenceslas, during his mandate he endeavoured to build relationships, to establish dialogue with others who held diverse opinions, while keeping on trusting in truth, in line with his presidential motto “Truth and love must triumph over lies and hate”.

JOSEF LUX (1956-1999), President of the Czech Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL) and, after 1990, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture. In one of his speeches, he said: “It is necessary to know how to suppress the ‘I’ and listen to the others, creating spaces of dialogue; it is necessary that we take the initiative and, if we fail, we must start all over again; it is necessary to help society feel the need to move from the words ‘to have’ and get closer to the words ‘to be’ on the values scale”.

*Heavenly Father, we beseech you: endow Europe with politicians that are able to dialogue, to hold conversations, to respect those who think differently from them; politicians that subscribe to the superior ideals of brotherhood, friendship, reconciliation, joyful cohabitation and feel grateful for the diverse races, cultures and religions.*

ADALBERT OF PRAGUE (956-997), second bishop of Prague; a man with a European mindset: he studied in Magdeburg, the cultural and political centre of Central Europe. He was enthusiastic about being a Christian, and harboured grand visions of a united Europe. He lived out the Christian ideals of the Kingdom of God, which need to influence the political, cultural and social life of all nations, all humanity. He wanted to completely dedicate his life to the spreading of the

Gospel; indeed, he died as a martyr while trying to introduce the Christian values in a violent and aggressive environment.

*Heavenly Father, we beseech you: endow Europe with servants impassioned of the Gospel, who are ready to sacrifice themselves fully and joyfully for the spreading of the culture of love, of the high ideals of the Kingdom of God among all persons; servants of God who dedicate their life for the values of the Gospel of Christ.*

AGNES OF BOHEMIA (1211-1282), was a Czech princess who is remembered in our history books for having reconciled her brother, the King, with his son, thus giving a big contribution to end fratricide conflicts. Although she belonged to the highest social class, enthused by Christian love, she defended the poor and served the sick, sharing with joy and passion their fate in poverty, simplicity and self-denial.

*Heavenly father, we beseech you: endow Europe with great and influential reconcilers of hostile groups, disinterested servants of the marginalized in our society, the sick, the poor, the forgotten... Reawaken in our hearts the desire to be sensitive to the needs of the others and to help them*

ZDISLAVA OF LEMBERK (1220-1252), was a Czech noble woman; she lived her entire life within the family environment and used her creativity to develop relationships in the family. As a daughter, she lived out in a profound way the Christian values of life and spirituality. As a wife, she was nurtured by the love and support of her husband. As a mother, she educated her children in a loving and responsible manner. She was also active beyond the family relationships; however, it was these relationships that always inspired her.

*Heavenly Father, we beseech you: endow Europe with united families in which harmony and love flourish; families that are able to create a safe environment and deep and faithful relationships of disinterested love; families that educate and instruct their children, handing down to them the profound and solid base of trust in the goodness of life, morality and the joyful union with others.*

JOHN AMOS COMENIO (1592-1670), was a Moravian bishop of the Union of Bohemian Brothers: a Czech thinker, writer and pedagogue. He was persecuted for his Protestant faith by the Catholic Church; he loved his motherland, but was forced to leave it. He died in exile in the Netherlands. "Wise persons have always considered forgetting any wrongs suffered as the most secure path toward peace": these words are true even today.

OTO MÁDR (1917-2011) was a Czech priest, made prisoner under the Communist regime. In 1951, during the period of the harshest persecution of the Church in Czechoslovakia, he wrote: "We Christians are able to win without hating. We need to forgive and pray fervently for those who fail, humiliate, imprison, torture and condemn us." He was arrested just a little while after writing this text.

BOHUMIL KOLÁŘ (1924-2015), was a priest of the Focolare Movement; during his life he fulfilled his duties faithfully. During the Communist regime, he was imprisoned for eight years. Sixty years later, when he visited the prison in Valdice, he prayed: "Lord, I entrust to you my fellow prisoners, the magistrates and the guards. I pray: that we all may one day be united next to you in heaven".

*Heavenly Father, we beseech you: give us courage and the audacity to love. We ask you to give strength to those who are being persecuted for their religious beliefs.*

"Peace among nations depends on peace within the persons themselves".

JOSEF ČAPEK (1887-1945), painter and writer

Committee of *Together for Europe* in the Czech Republic