

# Prayer for Peace



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE • SEPTEMBER 21, 2019

## Theme

### Climate Action for Peace

**Setup:** Create a sacred space with a candle and bowl of water.

**Song:** Select music to aid in focusing your group.

**Introduction:** The International Day of Peace, observed around the world on September 21, is a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

In 2015 the United Nations Member States adopted the **2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to build a peaceful world, one in which the economic and social development of all people everywhere is guaranteed and their rights are protected.



The 2019 Theme from SDG 13 draws attention to the importance of addressing climate change as a way to protect and promote peace throughout the world.

**Climate change causes clear threats to international peace and security. Natural disasters displace three times as many people as conflicts, forcing millions to leave their homes and seek safety elsewhere. The salinization of water and crops is endangering food security. The growing tensions over resources and mass movements of people are affecting every country on every continent. Peace can only be achieved if concrete action is taken to address climate change.**

— Introduction adapted from [un.org/en/events/peaceday/](https://un.org/en/events/peaceday/)

## LEADER

Let us pray with Pope Francis:

Creator God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen

## READER 1

Greta Thunberg is a 16-year old climate activist from, Sweden. She started the 'School Strike for Climate' protests, promoting #fridaysforfuture alongside millions of school children around the world, to demand politicians, governments and corporations take action on climate change.

After learning about climate change, she became determined to change the opinion of billions and stand up for climate action. She persuaded her family to all go vegetarian (now vegan), stop flying, buy an electric car and heavily reduce their carbon footprint.

This wasn't enough for Greta. On Friday 20th August 2018, Greta's steely determination led her to sit outside parliament in Stockholm, Sweden, every day during school time for 2 weeks with a sign saying 'Skolstrejk för klimatet' (School Strike for Climate). She demanded the country reduce their carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement.

The latest global strike, Friday May 24, attracted over 1.8million in over 1,400 locations across 110 countries.

— Adapted from [curious.earth/blog/greta-thunberg-quotes-best-21](https://curious.earth/blog/greta-thunberg-quotes-best-21)

Let us be inspired to action by Greta's life and words.



## READER 2

Until you start focusing on what needs to be done rather than what is politically possible, there is no hope. We can't solve a crisis without treating it as a crisis. We need to keep the fossil fuels in the ground, and we need to focus on equity. And if solutions within the system are so impossible to find, maybe we should change the system itself.

—COP24 in Katowice, December 2018

(pause)

## READER 1

Adults keep saying we owe it to the young people, to give them hope, but I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.

—World Economic Forum, Davos, January 2019

(pause)

## READER 2

Sometimes we just simply have to find a way. The moment we decide to fulfill something, we can do anything. And I'm sure the moment we start behaving as if we were in an emergency, we can avoid climate and ecological catastrophe. Humans are very adaptable: we can still fix this. But the opportunity to do so will not last for long. We must start today. We have no more excuses.

—Houses of Parliament, UK, April 2019

(pause)

## READER 1

Let's not wait any longer. Let's do it now!

—After Transatlantic Crossing August 2019

## REFLECT AND SHARE

**Leader:** Let's take a few moments in silence to consider: What are Greta's words calling me to?

(after the quiet)



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**Leader:** Direction for large group: I invite you to turn to your neighbor to share briefly your reflection.

Direction for small group: I invite anyone who would like, to share briefly your reflection.

(sharing)

**Leader:** Let us now offer prayers for all who are being impacted by our climate crisis.

(spontaneous prayers)

## CLOSING PRAYER

Teilhard de Chardin spoke of a moment that would come in which we would have the impetus for a collective vision. "Without any doubt people today suffer and vegetate in isolation; they need a superior impulse to intervene and force them to pass beyond the level at which they are immobilized, leading them to discover their profound affinities. The sense of Earth is the irresistible pressure which will come at the right moment to unite them in a common passion."

As we conclude our celebration of Climate Action for Peace, we will pass around our bowl of water. As you receive it, I invite you to prayerfully hold it, or if you wish, use the water for a blessing of our circle as we share a common passion for our Earth.

(pass around the bowl of water)

**Leader:** Chardin assures us that the sense of Earth will come at the right moment to unite us in a common passion. Let the people say, COME!

## ACTION

Take the Climate Pledge: [climatepledge.global/](https://climatepledge.global/)