

Monday - Country and states, and honoring the military personnel who have died while serving

Introduction

Thank you for choosing to participate in this Prayer Vigil.

Today we are focusing on the many blessings we enjoy while living in the United States of America. We pray for our government, our leaders and their staff. We remember its military personnel who over the years have fought for, and often given their lives for, the many freedoms we enjoy—especially our religious freedom, and that they still defend our country to this day from its enemies.

Your passion for prayer is evident in the sacrifice of time you are making today. As you come to Him, be certain and confident that God will hear and answer these prayers. He will provide you with all you need to put Jesus' words into practice. *You can choose to pray for the specific requests below or you can pray as the Lord guides you to pray.*

If you find your mind wandering or if you have additional time, begin to meditate on one of the suggested scriptures relating to the Vigil's theme. They are listed for you on the last page of this document. May this time of prayer and meditation with our Lord open your heart more fully and prepare you for the many challenges and blessings that lie ahead!

Opening Prayer

For Country and States

***God bless our native land; Firm may she ever stand through storm and night:
When the wild tempests rave, ruler of wind and wave,
O God, our country save, By your great might.***

Heavenly Father, Ruler of all and the one who never changes, be our firm foundation in this storm of the corona virus. Continue to anchor us in the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever!

Bless our land with health, our fields with a bountiful harvest, and our people with safety, security and love for one another.

Bless our leaders of the United States that you have put into place (Romans 13) for your will to be done. Give them wisdom, strength, and discernment in caring for your people and all of creation. May they lead with integrity and unity in this time of trial.

***For her our prayer shall rise to God above the skies; On whom we wait;
Lord, you are ever nigh, guarding with watchful eye.
To you aloud we cry, God save the state!***

Jesus Christ, our Risen and Ascended LORD, give us the strength and faith to trust you with patience and endurance. Help us to run the race of faith in this season and to continue to proclaim your message of hope, forgiveness, and love. We thank you for the promise that you are with us – Immanuel! We also thank you for this promise – “in this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world!” Overcome our anxieties, overcome our worries, overcome our lack of faith, overcome our addictions, overcome our doubts, overcome our judgements, and overcome all things that separate us from trusting you and you ALONE!

Bless our state leaders as they continue to make and administer mandates and safety regulations for the good of one another. Bless their families and the stress they have to endure during these tough times. As we look to reopen our lives, protect us from illness and further outbreak, according to your good and gracious will!

Bless all those in the states of Georgia and Florida that have been affected by this illness, but also for those who are bogged down by other ailments. Heal them and make them healthy to be people proclaiming about their Great Physician.

***Not for this land alone, but be God’s mercies shown from shore to shore;
And may the nations see that all should neighbors be,
And form one family, the wide world o’er.***

Holy Spirit, unite our nation and the world in the great message of Christ being with and for us and not against us. Inspire people to come to the knowledge of the truth that Jesus Christ is LORD. Continue to give your good fruit to your Church so that the nation and world will receive: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We thank you that in the midst of trials, you continue to point us to the great promises of God the Father through Jesus Christ.

May the gifts and talents that you have given to your people be magnified in this time of need. Bless us as we care for our neighbors, share the love of Jesus, and meet the need of the most vulnerable with the blessings that you have bestowed on us.

These prayers are offered in the powerful name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

Prayer offered by Rev. Steve Carretto, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Boca Raton, FL

Additional Specific Prayers

- That God would guide and bless the leaders of our Nation and State; for President Donald Trump, specifically for Georgia Governor Brian Kemp, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and their staffs, that they would make godly decisions for the common good.
- That as a nation, we would humble ourselves before the Lord and seek His forgiveness and mercy for our selfishness, our lack of self-control, for our desire to be our own gods
- Lord, grant us a time of national re-awakening to the Gospel
- Give discernment and judgement to mayors, city councils and other local governing bodies as they seek to make decisions for their municipalities.

- That Jesus Followers would let their lights shine in every dark place, that their faith will be seen in their words and lives – where they live, work and play
- Grant our County leaders wisdom as they govern and make decisions for the people in their county.
- For those who protect and provide for the good of our communities – police, fire, hospital and medical workers, for perseverance in these trying time and for strength to continue as this pandemic continues.
- That all people in our nation, beginning with our leaders, would respect life as a gift from God, seeking to protect all life from the unborn to the elderly and vulnerable
- Wisdom for Governors and state legislators across the country as they make decisions, both large and small, that affect businesses and constituents in their states.
- Pray for our Judges, at the Federal, State, County and local level. We implore God to grant that they work for the causes of truth, justice and humanity.

For the military and remembrance of those who died in service to our country

Opening Prayers

Heavenly Father, we honor all those men and women who have served our country in times of peace and in times of war. On this Memorial Day we especially remember those who gave their lives to fight for and to protect the freedoms that we now enjoy. May we never forget their sacrifice. In a greater sense, we remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ and we are eternally grateful that by His death, He destroyed death and purchased our salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, at our Confirmation we pledged to remain true to our God, “even to death.” May the sacrifices of those who have gone before us encourage us to be faithful witnesses for You as we battle the forces of evil in this world every day. By Your grace protect us and our country, that we may serve You, honor You, and promote the cause of the Gospel in our daily lives, to the glory of Your holy name. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we remember those families in our communities who continue to mourn the death of loved ones who died on battlefields far from home. We honor their grief and their sacrifice, even as we draw strength from them and honor their fallen. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, since there is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for another, we honor those who showed such love for us and this country we call “home.” We pray that we will remember the lessons learned in the hard-fought battles to preserve our homeland and do our best to make this land a place of freedom and peace and understanding – a place where the Gospel message of Your love and salvation may flourish and grow! Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Prayers offered by Rev. David Brighton, Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Warner Robins, GA

Scripture readings to guide this time of prayer:

- John 15:13 – “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”
- Romans 5:1-2 – “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”
- Romans 5:7-8 – “Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- Acts 1:8 – “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (It is informative to remember that the same Greek word is translated into our words “witness” and “martyr.”)

A portion of President Abraham Lincoln’s *Gettysburg Address* given at the site of that battlefield during the Civil War: We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this . . . The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.”

Additional Prayers for our Military

- Heavenly Father, thank you that you defend your people with your mighty hand. Please hear our prayer as we lift up our military and veterans before you now. They work tirelessly to defend our country. Bless and protect them Lord and use their work for the good of our nation and your glory. May they know your presence with them at this time.
- We pray for the protection of our armed forces as they serve our country around the world right now. Give them endurance and remind them that their service is worthwhile. May they know that their service is appreciated by us. We thank you Lord for using the bravery of these men and women as part of your protection for us.
- So many children are missing their parents today. Please bring our troops back home safely to their families. These kids yearn to be with both parents. We pray that You will allow our troops to remain safe and sound until they return to their homes.
- Help the children of parents who’ve been deployed to feel Your strong love, to know Your comfort, to develop endurance and to learn to trust You.
- Lord, we ask you be with military spouses. Give them strength to walk through each day, knowing that You have things under control. May the love that the husbands and wives share be multiplied greatly as they reunite later.
- Some of our troops have experienced injuries from all sides: minor to critical. Lord, you are the Great Physician. Heal the wounds that our brave men and women have encountered while protecting us. Please, Lord, give them peace and healing. We thank

you for these brave men and women!

- We give you thanks for the men and women that protect this nation. Father, as they protect us, protect them as well. Lord, You know where they will be today and we pray that You will be there with them to guide them through whatever challenges and trials they face this day.

Closing Prayer

Glorious God our Father, You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine. According to Your power that is at work within us, to You be glory in the Church throughout all generations, and in Christ Jesus, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen!

Closing prayer offered by Rev. Charles T. Reich, Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Winter Haven, FL

Suggested Scripture Readings

- Matthew 11:28 : Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
- Psalm 46:10 : Be still and know that I am God
- Psalm 145:4 : One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.
- 2 Timothy 3:16 : All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.
- Colossians 4:2 : Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
- Romans 12:1 : Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
- Mark 6:31 : Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.
- Luke 15:23 : Let's have a feast and celebrate.
- Mark 2:27 : The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.
- Ephesians 4:32 : Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- Philippians 2:12 : If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.