



Blessed Are the Peacemakers

Environment Arrange chairs in a circle setting. Place small round table in center with symbols of peace (e.g.: dove, olive branch, peace candle). Have pictures of peacemakers (e.g.: *Laughing Jesus*, *Thomas Merton*, *Dorothy Day* or peacemakers in the Inspirational People section of Hill Connections <hillconnections.org>).

Have a basket with a small symbol of peace (dove, olive branch) for each person who attends. Provide a small piece of paper and pencil for each participant.

Introductory Proclamation

“Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9

Pause, then repeat the proclamation.

Presider Today we gather to hear these words of God, to reflect on those people we know as peacemakers, and to hear our own call to peacemaking in our day. Let us pray for the gifts we need this day.

All O God, Creator and Sustainer of our lives, we hear your call to peace in our world in so many places torn by war and conflict; we experience many acts of violence in our communities, in our relationships, and within our own hearts. We desire your presence of healing and hope in our time together as we listen to stories of those who lived as peacemakers in our world. Send us your Spirit of Wisdom that we may hear our call to be peacemakers in our own time. In openness and trust, we pray. Amen.

Reading I *John 14:25-27*

I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

Pause for reflection.

Reading II *Challenge of Peace* by United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

Jesus Christ...is our peace, and in his death-resurrection he gives God’s peace to our world. In him God has indeed reconciled the world, made it one, and has manifested definitely that his will is this reconciliation, this unity between God and all peoples, and among the peoples themselves. The way to union has been opened, the covenant of peace established. The risen Lord’s gift of peace is inextricably bound to the call to follow Jesus and to continue the proclamation of God’s reign.

.....[T]o have peace in our world, we must first have peace within ourselves.... [W]orld peace will always elude us until peace becomes a reality for each of us personally.

Pause for reflection.

Presider We hear our call to peace. Let us now recall those who have given us an example of living as peacemakers. A peacemaker, the dictionary says, is a person who brings about peace. I ask you now to recall persons from history and your own experience who come to mind when you speak the word “peacemaker”.



Allow time for each person to write a name on a piece of paper and collect the names in a basket.

Ask five people to come forward, draw out a name and proclaim the name to the group (one by one). After the name is announced, ask for qualities of this person that identifies her/him as a peacemaker.

Proclaimer

We remember, you, _____, as a peacemaker.

All We give honor to your name.

When all have been proclaimed.

Presider Let us sing with the psalmist a song of praise:

All *Psalm 85:9-14*

I will hear what God proclaims:
Yahweh, You proclaim peace
to your people, and to your faithful ones,
and to those who put their hope in you.

Near, indeed, is your salvation
to those who fear you,
glory dwelling in our land.
Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.

Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.
You, O Yahweh, shall give your benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.

Justice shall walk before you,
and salvation, along the way of your steps.

Presider We have heard God's call to peace and listened to the ways of peacemakers calling for justice. Let us now pause to experience the call within and determine one step that is needed to respond fully to this call.

Quiet time for reflection.

Presider As we pass this basket of peace symbols, please take one, turn and present it to the person on your right and pray a blessing for that person for strength in living out the personal call to be a peacemaker.

After the above ritual is finished.

Presider Let us present our prayers to our God who calls us, and all people, to be peacemakers. We pray for all those afflicted by the violence of hatred and war. May they listen to the peacemakers within their midst.

All *God of peace, listen to our prayer.*

Presider We remember children who experience abuse and disruption in their homes and communities. May they be touched by people of peace.

All *God of peace, listen to our prayer.*

Presider We give thanks for all those whose lives witness to peace in our day. May they find the strength and courage to continue to live out their call as peacemakers.

All *God of peace, listen to our prayer.*

Presider We pray for all those imprisoned for their actions for justice and peace. May they know the freedom promised by God to all who follow the way of peace.

All *God of peace, listen to our prayer.*

Presider We ask for the gifts of the Spirit that we need to remain firm in our resolve as we go forth to live as peacemakers.

All *God of peace, listen to our prayer.*

Pause for spontaneous prayers.

Presider Let us go forth with the joy of the Spirit who is the source of peace that lives within us.

Closing Song

Let There Be Peace on Earth

(Sy Miller and Jill Jackson; text: 1983 Jan-Lee Music)



Acknowledgments

“Blessed Are the Peacemakers” ritual: [Marguerite Samz, OSM](#);
“Faces of the Children” graphic: [Fran Gregory](#), CSJ Associate. Used with permission.
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