

Catalogue *Lent / Easter* of Ideas

The focus of this Lent/Easter *Catalog of Ideas* is on **Peace**. With that in mind, we are suggesting a multi-part exercise in the development of your prayers for Lent and Easter, having to do with making war and making peace. Our thought is that you work on the "Stations of War" for the season of Lent, and the "Stations of Peace" for the season of Easter.

Let's begin with prayers for Lent.

There are images of war everywhere – magazines, newspapers, books, websites.

PEACE

Find them.

Cut them out.



Seasonal Prayers

Your teenagers and older children might take on this liturgical responsibility, or you might ask for a multi-generational group to do it.

There are many ways you might adapt this prayer exercise to suit your particular needs and resources.

We have made some specific suggestions.

Make a collage or several. Make sure that some of them speak to the specifics of the prayers you develop, such as children, or mothers, or the war-ravaged land.

Develop prayers over the images you choose, and allow your prayers to come from the heart. You might make a "format" decision, and decide to begin each prayer with words of confession,

"We are sorry, O God..."

You might conclude each prayer "section" with a prayer from the compilation we have recommended, *Peace Prayers*.



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For Example ...

PEACE

Leader

We pray
for the children who are
battered by war.

Children Hold up or otherwise display
images of children.

Voice 1 We are sorry, O God, for the
children of Iraq who are...

Voice 2 Hungry

Voice 3 Frightened

Voice 4 Orphaned

(Other)

*(note: the prayers are those concerns
that arise from working with the
images. What we are including here
are possibilities, and not intended to be
exhaustive.)*

Leader

Every gun that is made,
Every warship launched,
Every rocket fired signifies,
In the final sense,
A theft from those who hunger
and are not fed,
Those who are cold
and are not clothed.

The world in arms is not spending
money alone.

It is spending the sweat of its
laborers,

The genius of its scientists,

The hopes of its children.

Dwight Eisenhower

Leader

We pray for all victims of war.

Children Hold up or otherwise display
images of war victims.

Voice 1 We are sorry, O God, for all
victims of war..

Voice 2 Those who have lost brothers
and sisters

Voice 3 Parents

Voice 4 Those who have died ...

(Other)

Leader

The face of war is my face.
The face of war is your face.
What color is the face of war?
Brown, black, white –
Your face and my face.

Death is the broom
I take in my hands
To sweep the world
Clean.

I sweep and I sweep.
Then mop and I mop.
I dip my broom
in Blood –
And blame you
for this,



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Because you are there,
Enemy.

It's hard to blame me,
Because I am here –
So I kill you,
And you kill me.
My name,
Like your name,
Is War.

Langston Hughes (p. 26)

Leader

We pray for the earth, destroyed by war

Children Hold up or otherwise display images of the earth.

Voice 1 We are sorry, O God, for the destruction of the planet and its creatures.

Voice 2 For the burning of the land

Voice 3 For the death of the wildlife

Voice 4 For the destruction of habitat

(Other)

Leader

I, no sense of being alive,
Live next door to death.

My neck was so feeble,
It toppled if anyone touched it.

I felt I had turned to stone.
Every day my anxiety grew deeper,
Until it enveloped me so thickly
That I could see nothing.
Alone in
an illimitable
desert
I wept
hopelessly, as
if in a nightmare in dawn
Where the open mouthed blue sky
wept with me.



The tress wept,
A bird's body,
A horse's bleached bones,
All spell bound.
Immobile, watched with bated
breath
The figure of death.

The world was unbearable still.
I sat side by side with death,
Held immobile in reality,
Only hoping I would not fail.

Nakamura Chio (p. 4)

Other categories of prayer you might consider are these:

For Mothers of Children

(p. 14, Langston Hughes or Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, p. 29))

For the Enemy (p. 15, Jim Wallis)

For Fathers and Sons (p. 19, Francis Bacon)

Confession for the Waging of War
(p. 43, Teresa Bacon)



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The Lent prayers, basically prayers of confession, will yield to the Easter prayers, formatted similarly.

The development of **Easter prayers**, like the Lenten prayers, is grounded in images, but this time, images of peace. A land at peace, a people at peace, a people planting new life.

We suggest you start each prayer block with the words from the Leader, **"Imagine a world ..."**

Leader

Imagine a world in which peace has invaded the land.

Children Hold up or otherwise display images of a land at peace.

Voice 1 The earth is at rest

Voice 2 The skies are quiet

Voice 3 Seeds of peace are planted anew

Leader

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the children of the earth. If people

spit upon the ground, they spit on themselves.

This we know. The earth does not belong to people; people belong to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected.

Chief Seattle (p. 45)

Other prayer blocks might include ...

Children (p. 61, Deng Ming Dao)

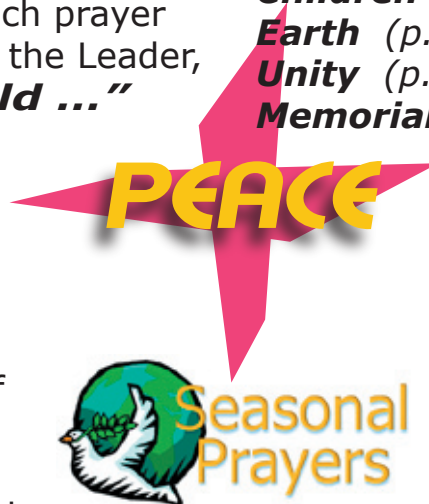
Earth (p. 66, Marcia Falk)

Unity (p. 110, Rig Veda)

Memorials (p. 123, William Stafford)

Creatures (p. 124, Jamie Sams)

Peace (126, 127, Ellen Bass, the Upanishads)



These prayer exercises invite the participation of people of all ages, both in the development and in the offering.

You might choose to devote your weekly Church school time to the design of your Lenten prayers and your Easter Prayers.

You might invite the community to a evening meal and then break into groups.

This exercise, no matter how you accomplish it, has the potential to empower your community in significant ways.

