

Pastoral Prayer

July 4, 2021

Gracious God,

On this day we recognize as the birth of the United States of America, give us peace, give us joy, give us guidance, and give us forgiveness as a nation and as citizens of the nation. Our history is too filled with wars not to pray for peace. Our land is too glorious not to rejoice. Our wisdom is too flawed not to pray for guidance. Our conduct as a nation – its colonialism, its racism, its sexism, its worship of wealth, its hubris – is too transparent not to pray for forgiveness.

In the longhouses of the Algonquin of old, in the maka tipis of the Lakota, in the hogans of the Navajo, the houses of the Chinook, in the hale of the Hawaiians, they wait for American repentance.

We pray for the suffering of the world and for the suffering world. We pray for the grieving in Florida, awaiting the word that the remains of their loved ones have been found. We pray for the ocean which had been on fire from an oil pipeline leak in the Gulf of Mexico. We pray for the warming of the earth that has fed record temperatures in the Pacific Northwest.

We pray for peace, for joy, for guidance, and for forgiveness.

We pray for ourselves, because we face the stresses of the world as well. We are tired, O God, after so long a pandemic. Our neighbors are impoverished and some are homeless. Our health is frail and our stamina low. We are your children and we call out to you.

Be with us in our sorrow, be with us in our stress, be with us in our weakness. Make your power perfect in us to the astonishment of everyone, everyone beginning with us.

We ask these things in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying...

Amen.