

# Prayer Service for Global Solidarity

**Opening Prayer:** God of All, help us to recognize all of our sisters and brothers  
in the global community.  
Open our hearts to them, that we might live in solidarity  
with this extended family.  
God of Justice and Peace, help us to be committed to change unjust structures  
and to be peacemakers in a suffering world  
Empower us to be Christians not only in word  
but also in compassionate action.  
Give us the courage to speak out for truth and justice  
and to prayfully and patiently call for transformation.  
May global solidarity and peace be achieved through  
the power of compassion, understanding and love.  
In the name of Jesus, Prince of Peace, we pray for global justice. Amen.

**Reading:** Genesis 4:9

**Reflection:** “Cain’s question, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ (Gn 4:9), has global implications and is a special challenge for our time, touching not one brother but all our sisters and brothers. Are we responsible for the fate of the world’s poor? Do we have duties to suffering people in far-off places? Must we respond to the needs of suffering refugees in distant nations? Are we keepers of the creation for future generations?

“For the followers of Jesus, the answer is yes. Indeed, we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. As members of God’s one human family, we acknowledge our duties to people in far-off places. We accept God’s charge to care for all human life and for all creation.

“We have heard the Lord’s command, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ In our linked and limited world, loving our neighbor has global implications. In faith, we know our neighbors live in Rwanda and Sudan, in East Timor and China, in Bosnia and Central America. God of Peace, help us be committed to be peacemakers. God of Peace, help us be committed to be peacemakers [in Afghanistan and Iraq], as well as across our country and next door. Baptism, confirmation, and continuing participation in the body of Christ call us to action for ‘the least among us’ without regard for boundaries or borders.”

From *Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*,  
United States Catholic Conference, 1997

## Prayer Service for Global Solidarity (cont.)

### Catholic Social Teaching:

**Reader 1:** Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.

Pope John Paul II, *Solicitudo Rei Socialis*, #38

**Reader 2:** It is not only the poor who need our solidarity and advocacy. Our world is still marked by destruction of human life and denial of human rights and religious liberty in so many places. Genuine solidarity requires active and informed citizenship. It requires common action to address the fundamental causes of injustice and the sources of violence in our world.

*Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*, USCCB, 1997

**Reader 3:** We have inherited from past generations, and we have benefited from the work of our contemporaries: for this reason we have obligations towards all, and we cannot refuse to interest ourselves in those who will come after us to enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty.

Pope Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, #17

**Reader 4:** Our faith challenges us to reach out to those in need, to take on the global status quo, and to resist the immorality of isolationism. Pope John Paul II reminds us that a turn to “selfish isolation” would not only be a “betrayal of humanity’s legitimate expectations . . . but also a real desertion of a moral obligation.”

*Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*, USCCB, 1997

**Reader 5:** All must consider it their sacred duty to count social obligations among their chief duties today and observe them as such. For the more closely the world comes together, the more widely do people’s obligations transcend particular groups and extend to the whole world. This will be realized only if individuals and groups practice moral and social virtues and foster them in social living. Then, under the necessary help of divine grace, there will arise a generation of new women and men, the molders of a new humanity.

Vatican Council II, Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, #30

**Reader 6:** It is obvious that individual countries cannot rightly seek their own interests and develop themselves in isolation from the rest, for the prosperity and development of one country follows partly in the train of the prosperity and progress of all the rest and partly produces that prosperity and progress.

Pope John XXIII, *Pacem Terris*, #131

**Reader 7:** Interdependence must be transformed into solidarity, grounded on the principle that the goods of creation are meant for all. Avoiding every type of imperialism, the stronger nations must feel responsible for the other nations, based on the equality of all peoples and with respect for the differences.

Pope John Paul II, *Solicitudo Rei Socialis*, #39

**Reader 8:** The solidarity which binds all men together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist.

Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, #157

## Prayer Service for Global Solidarity (cont.)

### Reflection Question:

Which of these quotes spoke to your heart? What does it ask of you? How can you respond to this challenge? What could be a first step in responding?

### Symbols of Solidarity:

*Symbols of Solidarity illustrate some of the ways we are connected to people around the world, particularly those people who are often pushed to the margins of our everyday lives. The four elements (earth, water, fire and air) place each one of us on equal ground with everyone else. The fifth symbol – people- is the expression of God fully present in the world. Feel free to add your own symbols and your own ways of presenting them. You might have small groups present each of the symbols using the words suggested below. Unless the group is too large, each symbol can be passed to each member. Members may be invited to touch Earth and Water and wave the streamer or wind chime(Air) and raise the candle (Fire).*

**Earth** – a large bowl of earth

**Water** - a bowl or glass of water

**Fire** – a candle

**Air** – a colorful streamer that can be waved through the air or wind chimes

**People** – represented by the group

With all the people of the world we share **Earth**. This is the common ground from which we were made and the common ground on which we stand. Earth receives our seeds, nourishes them and feeds us through the harvest. Trees shade us and provide us fuel. From Earth we build our homes and make paths to take us from place to place. We are called to care for Earth as stewards of God's creation.

With all the people of the world we share **Water**. Life emerges from water, which sustains it. A symbol of our baptism, our bodies are made largely of water. It quenches our thirst, cools our brow and is home to a multitude of plants and animals. We are called to care for water keeping it clean and pure for all.

With all the people of the world we share **Fire**. We remember the fire of Pentecost when all people understood one another. We use fire for heating, cooking and providing light. Fire is the gathering place for a community and a focal point for prayer and meditation. We are called to be vigilant and keep the fire alive for others and for ourselves.

## Prayer Service for Global Solidarity (cont.)

### Closing Litany:

**Reader 1:** In all holiness we are called to share in creation.

**All:** We are called to solidarity, to build a new creation.

**Reader 2:** In all holiness we are called to create a just society which allows for the human dignity of all; that provides life, food, and freedom for people to walk in their own land.

**All:** We are called to solidarity, to build a new creation.

**Reader 3:** We are called to reject the false gods of economic, political and military systems that are destroying people through starvation, violation of earth's resources, disease and violence.

**All:** We are called to solidarity, to build a new creation.

**Reader 4:** We are called to study and understand global issues.

**All:** We are called to solidarity, to build a new creation.

**Reader 5:** We are called to vulnerability, to strength, to laughter, to tears, and to the depths of love.

**All:** We are called to solidarity, to build a new creation.

**Reader 6:** Jesus, you call us to build a new world. Inspire us to live as you lived, to comfort as you comforted, to challenge as you challenged. Guide us and keep us faithful to the reign of God in our midst.

**All:** AMEN.

*Adapted from the "Development and Peace Solidarity Day Booklet," 1991*