

Reflection on September 11th

Prayer for September 11

Father in Heaven,
We look to you for peace in a world filled with anger.
We look to you for hope in a world filled with despair.
We look to you for love in a world filled with hatred.
May those who lost their lives, find peace in your kingdom.
May families and friends left behind, find solace in your love.
May a world shattered by these tragedies, find healing in your strength.

O Merciful Lord,
Guide our future with your wisdom.
Bestow tranquility on our world.
Bring compassion to our hearts.
Amen.

-Passionist Monastery
5700 N. Harlem Ave., Chicago, IL 60631

Scripture Reflection

“If you remain indifferent in time of adversity, your strength will depart from you. Rescue those who are being dragged to death, and from those tottering to execution withdraw not.”
-Proverbs 24:10-11 NAB

“Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted...
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy...
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
-Matthew 5:4,6,7,9

“I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one to him as well.”
- Matthew 5:39 NAB

1. What could motivate someone to risk his own life in order to rescue a stranger?
2. How does mourning bring comfort following a tragic loss?
3. Why did Jesus turn the other cheek, instead of defending himself?

Social Inquiry

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build.
Unless the LORD guard the city, in vain does the guard keep watch.

-Psalm 127:1-2

"We believe that the one God calls us to be peoples of peace. Nothing in our Holy Scriptures, nothing in our understanding of God's revelation, nothing that is Christian or Islamic justifies terrorist acts and disruption of millions of lives which we have witnessed this week. Together we condemn those actions as evil and diametrically opposed to true religion."

- Joint Statement of Catholic Bishops and Muslim Leaders, September 14, 2001

"After September 11, we are a wounded people. We share loss and pain, anger and fear, shock and determination in the face of these attacks on our nation and all humanity. We also honor the selflessness of firefighters, police, chaplains, and other brave individuals who gave their lives in the service of others. They are true heroes and heroines. "

- A Pastoral Message: Living With Faith and Hope After September 11
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
November 14, 2001

"The strict conditions for legitimate defense by military force require rigorous consideration. At one and the same time:
The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
There must be serious prospects of success;
The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated."

-Catechism of the Catholic Church 2309

"Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for one who is responsible for the lives of others. The defense of the common good requires that an unjust aggressor be rendered unable to cause harm. For this reason, those who legitimately hold authority also have the right to use arms to repel aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their responsibility."

-Catechism of the Catholic Church 2265

"There is steel beneath this velvet. That aspect of our character is seldom understood by those who don't know us well. On this day, the family's bickering is put on hold. As Americans we will weep, as Americans we will mourn, and as Americans we will rise in defense of all that we cherish. Still, I keep wondering what it was you hoped to teach us. It occurs to me that maybe you just wanted us to know the depths of your hatred. If that's the case, consider the message received. And take this message in exchange: You don't know my people. You don't know what we're about. You don't know what you just started. But you're about to learn."

- Leonard Pitts Jr. - Miami Herald

"It's God's responsibility to forgive Bin Laden ... It's our responsibility to arrange the meeting!"

- United States Marines

Observe

1. Where were you when you heard the news that a plane had hit the World Trade Center?
2. What special acts of kindness between strangers did you observe in the days following the attacks? How have things gone back to the way they were before the tragedy?
3. September 11, 2001 is often called the day the world changed. What changes have you observed?

Judge

1. How did the war in Afghanistan satisfy the conditions for a Just War? What would justify a pre-emptive war on Iraq now?
2. How strong is the moral obligation to defend the innocent? How can this be balanced with Jesus saying to turn the other cheek?

Act

1. Be kind to a stranger.
2. Support your local fire fighters, police, and emergency medical teams with letters of thanks, joining in fundraisers, or volunteer service.
3. Give blood now. The lines are short.
4. Rebuild. Volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.
5. Join with others in Prayer, Fasting, and other acts of faith and hope in Walking the Nine Days to 9/11. See www.usccb.org/publishing/9-11/index.htm

Closing Prayer

Oppose, LORD, those who oppose me; war upon those who make war upon me.
Take up the shield and buckler; rise up in my defense.
Brandish lance and battle-ax against my pursuers. Say to my heart, "I am your salvation."
Let those who seek my life be put to shame and disgrace. Let those who plot evil against me be turned back and confounded.

Make them like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them on.
Make their way slippery and dark, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.
Without cause they set their snare for me; without cause they dug a pit for me.
Let ruin overtake them unawares; let the snare they have set catch them; let them fall into the pit they have dug.
Then I will rejoice in the LORD, exult in God's salvation.
My very bones shall say, "O LORD, who is like you, Who rescue the afflicted from the powerful, the afflicted and needy from the despoiler?"

-Psalm 35:1-10