

**IPCA WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PRISON MINISTRY**

August 25, 2022

Theme: ***“Lord, Teach Us To Be Healers In A World Divided By Hate.”***

Respecting Differences

**OPENING HYMN:**

HOW GREAT THOU ART

Oh Lord, my God  
When I, in awesome wonder  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart  
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration  
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Leader: Let us pray.

All : Almighty God, you who made us all and loves us, you delight in the creation of your human rainbow, which spans the earth with colors from blackest ebony to palest white and in between, skins of weathered red and saffron. We are all children of the universe regardless of race, creed or gender. We are meant to share the air of this planet in peace and plenty. But greed and fear have distorted your human

creation. We have made the planet a place of war, hunger, homelessness, crime and pain. And within prison walls in the jails and prisons worldwide, children of your creation are suffering. Many countries have suffered from the corruption of their leaders: economies plunging, governments bankrupt, leaders assassinated, fake news, misinformation and historical distortion prevail, not to mention the countless deaths brought about by this nagging pandemic. All these are caused by our human indecisions. Forgive the foolishness and ingratitude of the human race. Guide us to heal the hardness of our hearts and awaken us all to work for justice and peace. O great God of all the nations hear our prayer today. In Jesus Name. Amen.

#### **VOICE FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE:**

##### **A reading from the Acts of the Apostles: (Acts 16:19-40)**

“When her owners saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the public square before the local authorities. They brought them before the magistrates[a] and said, “These people are Jews and are disturbing our city and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us Romans to adopt or practice.” The crowd joined in the attack on them, and the magistrates had them stripped and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After inflicting many blows on them, they threw them into prison and instructed the jailer to guard them securely. When he received these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and secured their feet to a stake.

About midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God as the prisoners listened, there was suddenly such a severe earthquake that the foundations of the jail shook; all the doors flew open, and the chains of all were pulled loose. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew [his] sword and was about to kill himself, thinking that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted out in a loud voice, “Do no harm to yourself; we are all here.” He asked for a light and rushed in and, trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you and your household will be saved.” So they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to everyone in his house. He took them in at that hour of the night and bathed their wounds; then he and all his family were baptized at once. He brought them up into his house and provided a meal and with his household rejoiced at having come to faith in God.

But when it was day, the magistrates sent the lictors[b] with the order, “Release those men.” The jailer reported the[se] words to Paul, “The magistrates have sent orders that you be released. Now, then, come out and go in peace.” But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, even though we are Roman citizens and have not been tried, and have thrown us into prison. And now, are they going to release us secretly? By no means. Let them come themselves and lead us out.” The lictors reported these words to the magistrates, and they became alarmed when they heard that they were Roman citizens. So they came and placated them, and led them out and asked that they leave the city. When they had come out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house where they saw and encouraged the brothers, and then they left.”

#### **VOICES FROM MODERN TIMES**

- “Nobody escapes being wounded. We are all wounded people, whether physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually. The main question is not, 'How can we hide our wounds?' so we don't have to be embarrassed, but 'How can we put our woundedness in the service of others?' When our wounds cease to be a source of shame, and become a source of healing, we have become wounded healers.” – Henri Nouwen

- “There is a light in this world, a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force when there is suffering, too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who hear a call and answer in extraordinary ways.” – Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta
- “Jesus said, it is not enough to limit your love to your own nation, to your own race, to your own group. You must respond with love even to those outside of it, respond with love to those who hate you. This concept enables men to live together not as a nation, but as the human race. We are now at the stage in history where we will either take this step or perish” - Clarence Jordan.
- “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light and where there is sadness, Joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console not so much to be understood, as to understand; not so much to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we received, It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life” - St. Francis of Assisi

### **COMMUNITY INTERCESSION:**

Leader: As one community of prison chaplains worldwide, let us offer the following petitions to our Lord so we may be able to become healers of those in need. For every petition let us respond:

#### **R: LORD JESUS MAKE US HEALERS LIKE YOU!**

1. For the prisoners around the world: those who are still on remand and awaiting trial for their cases as well as those who are languishing with still no end in sight for their trials; as well as those already convicted and are serving their sentences, may they receive strength and fortitude to withstand the hardships of being in prison, and that those wrongly accused receive the justice they deserve and for those proven guilty to have a sense of accountability to right the wrong they have done, WE PRAY. (R)
2. For the families of prisoners, may they find the strength and solace to be able to accompany their loved ones in prison in their quest for rehabilitation and reintegration to society, we pray. (R)
3. For the victims of crime and violence, may they find for themselves true justice that heals and restores and not yearn for earthly revenge toward those who have hurt them, we pray. (R)
4. For the correctional officials and workers in the jails and prisons worldwide, may they always be reminded of the sublime dignity of their work in helping the prisoner renew their awareness of their inherent dignity as human beings, WE PRAY. (R)
5. For those in public office, especially those involved in policy making for criminal justice, that they will strive to work for a kind of justice that heals and restores while upholding the rights and dignity of those in prison, WE PRAY! (R)
6. For countries who are at war, especially Russia and Ukraine, that there conflicts may soon be resolved and that there will be an end to the violence inflicted among each other due to differences in political views; hatred perpetrated by harsh words, deadly weapons, or cold

indifference. May our homes, our nation, and countries around the world become havens of peace, WE PRAY. (R)

7. For the grace to see every human being, especially the prisoners, their families, and even their victims as children of God like us, regardless of race, language, culture, ideology and political belief, WE PRAY! (R)
8. For healing and justice for all those who have experienced violence and discrimination, especially in the countries where graft and corruption, political and extrajudicial killings are rampant and impunity reigns and for strength to teach others, especially our children how to resolve differences non-violently and respectfully, and the courage to model it in our own behavior, WE PRAY! (R)
9. For the wisdom to know the truth and to distinguish right from wrong, truth among the lies, especially in this age where fake news proliferate especially in social media, which exerts great influence especially among the youth, WE PRAY! (R)
10. For solidarity in our global human family, to enable to receive the stories and experiences of those different from ourselves and to respond with respect, WE PRAY! (R)

Leader: God our Father, hear the prayers of your faithful, be merciful unto us and encourage us to celebrate the diverse faces of Christ in our worship, and that we may respond boldly to the Holy Spirit's call to act together to end violence and injustice, and that we may work together to protect those who are most vulnerable and most in need. We ask this thru Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER:**

Leader: Let us all as one pray the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us in our own languages.

#### **CONCLUDING PRAYER:**

All : Father, you are the master of life and death. Everything we have is yours, and we love you so very deeply. Just one touch from you restores the sick, heals the broken, and transforms the darkness. Only you can do this, only you, so we ask that you would be with those who are sick right now, of COVID 19 or any other serious life threatening illness, as well as those suffering from emotional and psychological illnesses and those who are living a life of crime. And also those who are suffering in detention because of them. May they sense your loving and healing presence. May they feel your power, may they know your love, may their bodies be overwhelmed with Your light and truth, with your healing power. Just as it was in the beginning as you first intended us to be.

All of this, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **BENEDICTION:**

Lord God, whose blessings reach to the ends of the earth, you show us your love in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, whom we call Savior and Lord. Confirm us in our common faith that we may walk together with you and one another. Send your blessing upon your people on Earth that what we have begun in the Spirit may be brought to completion by your power. To you be glory and honor, now and for ever.

R. Amen.

**CONCLUDING HYMN:**

**I AM EVER WITH YOU**

**Arnel Aquino, SJ**

**Do not let your hearts be troubled  
Do not stay afraid  
It is really I whom you see  
I offer you now my peace  
I have waited for this moment  
To be with you again  
In my heart you'll remain  
In your heart I'll stay**

**I am with you, till the end of your days  
I am in you, have faith  
That I hold you  
Even when you let go  
And I love you,  
You must know. I am here. I am ever with you.**

**Do not let your hearts be troubled  
Do not stay afraid  
I'm beyond all anguish all death  
I'm risen to life anew  
When you feel that you've been emptied  
And can give no more  
Know that I am your breath and I fill your soul.**

**I am with you, till the end of your days  
I am in you, have faith  
That I hold you  
Even when you let go  
And I love you,  
You must know I am here. I am ever with you.**