

Prayer for World Peace

Joan Chittister

Great God, who has told us
“Vengeance is mine,”
save us from ourselves,
save us from the vengeance in our hearts
and the acid in our souls.

Save us from our desire to hurt as we have been hurt,
to punish as we have been punished,
to terrorize as we have been terrorized.

Give us the strength it takes
to listen rather than to judge,
to trust rather than to fear,
to try again and again
to make peace even when peace eludes us.

We ask, O God, for the grace
to be our best selves.

We ask for the vision
to be builders of the human community
rather than its destroyers.

We ask for the humility as a people
to understand the fears and hopes of other people.

We ask for the love it takes
to bequeath to the children of the world to come
more than the failures of our own making.

We ask for the heart it takes
to care for all the people
of Afghanistan and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel
as well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God,
to constrain our might,
to resist the temptations of power,
to refuse to attack the attackable,
to understand
that vengeance begets violence,
and to bring peace—not war—wherever we go.
For you, O God, have been merciful to us.
For you, O God, have been patient with us.
For you, O God, have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful
and patient
and gracious
and trusting
with these others whom you also love.

This we ask through Jesus,
the one without vengeance in his heart.
This we ask forever and ever. Amen.