

Prayer of the Church -- September 15/16, 2001

Following the events of September 11

Let us pray for our land, for the Church, and for the world.

Almighty and Merciful Father, we pray for America. We need Your help in this time of testing and uncertainty. Remind us again that You are active on the earth, as well as in heaven. For You are not a spectator God, unmoved and serene, as your children are wounded by evil acts of hatred and cowardly aggression. Remind us again that the Feet once nailed to the Cross are still walking the streets of earth. Remind us again that the Heart that was broken on the Cross still feels every human sorrow. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Father, send Your peace and comfort to Your people in the midst of the tragic, violent and confounding events that have occurred across our land. It was to Your glory that this Republic was established. We pray that all over this land there might be a return to the faith of those men and women who trusted in You as they crossed the seas in tiny ships, as they sacrificed for freedom and independence, as they crossed the frontiers in covered wagons, as they fought and prevailed against the evil of slavery, ... as they built their homes, raised their families -- and raised a standard of faith and trust in You to which we now aspire. As You granted it to them, so now grant to us the wisdom, courage, and faith we need for the facing of **this** hour. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Bless Your Church, dear Lord. Do not let sorrow and rage turn us into the very evil we deplore. Help us to love people, to love principles, to love righteousness and to love You. Strengthen the faith of each of Your pastors and all of Your people. Give to each one of us the words we need to speak the reassuring Word of Truth to those who do not know You as well as we do -- to our families, our friends, and sometimes even our own hearts. Help us to be that City on a Hill shining in the darkness, that You have called Your Church to be. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Father, you have never failed us when sorrow has come. When shadows have been thrown across the thresholds of our lives, You have always comforted us with Your assurances of love even as we weep. We ask Your special mercy to be active in the lives of the families who grieve for loved ones who were in the airplanes, in the World Trade Towers, or in the Pentagon. Sustain them with Your presence. Hold them in the nail-scarred palm of Your hand. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Father, we pray for the fire-fighters, police, rescue workers, medical personnel and the men and women in the military who have so-heroically responded to this disaster. We give You thanks, Father, for the service of these men and women. We ask You to comfort the families of those who died in the line of duty, and we ask your mercy and protection on those who are --even now -- placing themselves in harm's way for the sake of others. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Lord, we pray for our leaders, especially for President George Bush and members of Congress. Give them your own divine wisdom and strength as they face the difficult decisions that lie ahead. Give them the insight and inspiration they need in order to defeat a more complicated evil than America has ever faced before. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Almighty and merciful God, we ask that our nation might be united. Grant to our nation a single will to do what is right and just, to protect and defend the innocent against the devices and desires of the wicked. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

We pray for those who are dear to our hearts and in special need. Especially we pray for ... *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Bless this land that we love so much, dear Father. Help America to trust **not** in the strength of our military, **not** in the craftiness of our intelligence officers, **not** in our wealth, **not** in our own sheer grit and determination -- but in You. To that end, we pray that You would give us a renewal of personal righteousness. Turn us from our sin. And help each of us to remember that we have here no abiding city. Remind us that we are, after all, a pilgrim people who are only passing through this life. Help us to draw strength from Your promise that You have prepared for us an eternal City in Heaven, where with the whole company of Your saints and angels we shall praise You. *Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Into Your hands, almighty Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN