



Current Issues in Prayer

January 2015

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

That those from diverse religious traditions and all people of good will may work together for peace.



Getting started:

I close my eyes and as I calm down I imagine a group made up of persons of different skin colour and religions, I picture them praying. Some are sitting either on chairs or on carpets, some standing or in other positions – all according to their customs. I reflect briefly upon what I am imagining: they are all praying so as to work for peace.



Short story:

The group gathered round in a circle as the leader lit a beautiful candle. A Buddhist monk stood next to a Muslim cleric, an Episcopalian bishop alongside a shaman from East Africa. The rays of the late afternoon sun caught the light of the flickering flame. The blessings being made floated on the breeze. This was the opening of a five day gathering of 220 people from 50 countries, who would listen to stories and music and join in dance.



They also discussed and learned from each other on how best to bring up children to value other ethnic groups and to cherish the environment. All were struck as they discovered what different cultures and traditions could do so as to educate their young: “There is hope for our world! Oh if we really would all educate our young in these many splendid ways!”

By the end of their gathering, the participants had a deep sense that such sharing enhances real peace in this world that we all call ‘home’. They came away hopeful of unity rather than opposition and division. They had all prayed in the diversity of their own language, creed and culture, and yet had grown in a sense of unity.



Time to reflect:

Do I respect religions other than my own? Am I able to show love to those following a different religion? Do I pray for peace among peoples of different faiths?



Let us pray:

Lord, help us to appreciate every human being and to respect diversity. Help us to be willing to learn from each other and truly to listen to each other, so as peace can grow.



Inspiration:

To reach peace, teach peace.

Pope John Paul II



Hands on:

I will research and read about the importance of dialogue between different religions.