

“But any kind of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God’s design.”
— Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 29

Prayer on International Day for Tolerance

In a sermon delivered in 2013, Pope Francis stated, “The Lord created us in His image and likeness, and we are the image of the Lord ... all of us have this commandment at heart: do good and do not do evil. ... The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. ... ‘But I don’t believe, Father, I am an atheist!’ But do good: we will meet one another there.” We are thus challenged by Pope Francis to build a culture of encounter and embrace one another through the universal commandment of doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. The United Nations’ International Day for Tolerance, observed each year on November 16, seeks to strengthen the values of tolerance, respect, dialogue, and cooperation among different cultures and peoples throughout the world.

Dear Lord,

In an era of division and unrest
in countries and communities throughout the world,
help us to come together.
Help us to repair that which has been broken
by violence, discrimination, and hate.
Help us to build trust rather than walls.
Help us to seek solidarity and peace.

We remember that all
are created in Your image and likeness,
that we are all children of God.
But help us also embrace the diversity that enriches us.
May we better see the beauty in our differences,
and in the unique experiences of all we meet.
Make our hearts open to learn.
Help us to listen.

We pray that all people
may experience a culture of encounter.
We pray for the triumph of joy over anger,
of empathy over indifference.
Move our hearts to tolerance and understanding,
So that we may all meet one another doing good. Amen.

- Irene Koo

