

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MISSOURI

LITURGICAL MATERIALS FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMEMORATIONS

COLLECT FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION:

Almighty God, giver of life and love, you created all people in your image and call us to live together in peace: Surround with your compassion all who suffer from gun violence; strengthen those who protect and serve; grant wisdom and courage to those entrusted with authority; comfort the grieving, heal the wounded, and stir your Church to be a voice for justice and peace, that we may become instruments of your reconciling love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Deacon Let us remember before God all those whose lives have been taken by gun violence, those known to us and those known to God alone.

Silence may be kept.

Leader For the peace of the world, for the healing of nations divided by fear and violence, and for the courage to seek the ways of justice and mercy; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For your holy Church, that we may proclaim not only with our lips but with our lives the reconciling love of Christ, and that we may never grow weary in working for peace; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For the leaders of the nations, especially the President of the United States, members of Congress, governors, legislators, judges, and all entrusted with authority, that they may govern with wisdom, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to the dignity and safety of every human life; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For all first responders, police officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency room staff, counselors, and all who daily confront the wounds of violence, that they may be protected, strengthened, and upheld in compassion; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For children and young people growing up in communities marked by fear, instability, and violence; for teachers, mentors, parents, and caregivers; and for safe homes, schools, and neighborhoods where all may flourish; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For all who suffer because of gun violence: those who have been injured in body, mind, or spirit; those who mourn loved ones lost; and those whose lives are forever changed by trauma and grief; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For those consumed by anger, despair, hatred, or loneliness, and for all at risk of harming themselves or others, that they may find help, hope, and companions along the way; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader For all who have died because of gun violence, especially those whose deaths are known to you alone, that they may rest in your eternal peace and rise in glory; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Leader Grant that we, your people, may not surrender to fear or hopelessness, but persevere in the work of reconciliation, advocacy, and love, trusting in your power to make all things new; we pray to you O God,

People **Make us instruments of your peace.**

Additional prayers or thanksgivings may be offered. The Presider adds the following prayer.

Presider O God, you sent your Son to break down the dividing walls of hostility and to reconcile all people in your love: Receive the prayers we offer this day, strengthen us to stand against gun violence in every form, and make us bearers of your peace in a wounded world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

COMMEMORATION OF THOSE TAKEN BY GUN VIOLENCE

May be used following the Prayers of the People or following the Post Communion Prayer prior to the Blessing.

Presider Let us remember before God all those whose lives have been taken by gun violence, those known to us and those known to God alone.

Silence may be kept. Specific names or categories may be spoken aloud.

Presider O God of mercy and compassion, receive into your loving arms all who have died through violence by a gun. Comfort those who mourn, heal communities wounded by fear and grief, and strengthen us to be makers of peace in a world too often marked by death. Give us courage to work for justice, wisdom to seek the common good, and grace never to grow weary in protecting the dignity of every human life; through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

People **May the souls of all who have died through violence by a gun rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.**

CONFESSION

Deacon Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

People **Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved one another as you love us. We have too often surrendered to fear, remained silent in the face of injustice, and accepted gun violence as unavoidable. Forgive us for the ways we have failed to honor the dignity of every human being. Heal our hearts, strengthen our resolve, and make us instruments of your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Presider Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

BLESSING

May the God of peace, who formed us in love and created us for community, strengthen your hearts with courage, steady your hands for the work of justice, and fill your spirits with compassion for all who suffer.

And may Christ, who broke the power of violence through the cross, make you instruments of his reconciling peace in your homes, your communities, and the world. And the blessing of God Almighty...