

#REDWEDNESDAY PRAYER LITURGY

Instructions:

Welcome to the ACN Red Wednesday Prayer Resource! Here you will find a short liturgy to help your young people prayerfully engage with the work of ACN. We recommend printing a few copies of this page and noting which pupil will say each part.

It would be nice to set up a small 'altar' as a focal point for this activity; you could put a red cloth on it as a reminder of Red Wednesday and use a candle and crucifix to remind the young people of God's presence during this time of prayer.

Opening Prayer:

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

God who is all good, be present here with us today.
Give us the grace and understanding to listen and inspire us to bring your love to all who are around us.
Give us courage to protect and pray for all those who are persecuted for their faith.
We now bring our prayers to God, our loving Father.

Bidding Prayers:

On this Red Wednesday, we offer our prayers for the persecuted Church throughout the world. Confident that Jesus will save us, we pray for everyone who is persecuted because they believe in Him.

[Pause] Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for all young Christians throughout the world who suffer for their faith. We pray especially for those who have been displaced from their homes.

[Pause] Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for all who are kidnapped because of their faith, may they be freed from their captivity. [Pause]
Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for all those suffering with mental or physical illnesses, especially those who are facing discrimination and oppression.

[Pause] Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for world leaders, that they may be inspired by the Holy Spirit to work with cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect.

[Pause] Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for those who have died, especially for those who have been martyred for their faith. May they rest in peace.

[Pause] Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We now pray in the words Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in Heaven....



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MAJED'S STORY

"My name is Majed. We live in Lebanon now, but my Dad says we are originally from Syria and our home is also in Syria. Dad says that the bad people chased us away and we had to flee; like more than one million people from my country.

Dad says that as a child I became a refugee, like the baby Jesus, who also had to flee with His mum and dad.

Mum looked after us but she is sick now. When there's nothing to eat, we go to the place where we receive meals from the Church."

There is a video of Majed's story. If you would like a copy of it to share with your class, get in touch! scotland@acnuk.org

Prayer for Persecuted Christians:

Heavenly Father,

So many of my Christian brothers and sisters suffer simply because they believe in Jesus.

Though I live in freedom, it's hard to fully grasp the suffering of those persecuted for their faith. Yet I hold them in my heart.

Jesus, you were nailed to the Cross on Calvary for the sake of all who believe in You.

You hung there, persecuted for the truth You proclaimed.

Be with our brothers and sisters who, even today, suffer for confessing their faith in You.

Give them courage and hope, and help them to unite their wounds with Yours on the Cross.

We pray too for their persecutors that their hearts may be softened and their spirits touched by the incredible faith of those who they attack.

Help me to pray faithfully, to act with compassion and to give what I can to stand alongside them.

Amen



This prayer is also available as a prayer card! Get in touch and we'll send some to your school!

#REDWEDNESDAY PRAYER ACTIVITY

Scripture Reading:

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. Then He began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Mini Lectio Divina:

Encourage the young people to pause for a moment and reflect on what they have just heard. Invite them to reflect on the following questions. Give them at least 3 minutes to reflect on each question. You could play some peaceful music in the background if you want. If you find they are getting distracted, you could get a young person to read the passage again.

- What word or phrase stood out to you?
- What might God be saying to you through this passage?
- How can you live this message out today?

A Prayer for Red Wednesday:

Loving God, we pray for all people around the world who are taking part in Red Wednesday. We pray for all the parishes, schools and individuals who are taking time to pray, learn, and take action for those who are suffering.

May we ask for the strength to build Your Kingdom here on earth. Let us make a place where all are welcome and all are free to practice their faith in peace.

Amen.

Concluding Prayer:

Loving God,

Thank you for this time of prayer and reflection. We remember our brothers and sisters around the world who suffer for believing in you. Give them strength, courage, and peace.

Help us to be a voice for the voiceless and a light in the darkness.

May we never take our freedom for granted, and may our faith always lead us to love and action.

Amen.

BONUS ACTIVITY - PRAYER CHAIN OF HOPE



What You Need:

- Red paper strips, approximately 3 cm wide and as long as the short edge of an A4 sheet of paper.
- Pens
- Stapler

Instructions:

1. Invite each student to write a short prayer or message of solidarity on each strip of paper. Some examples;
 - “We pray for peace”
 - “You are not forgotten”
 - “We stand against persecution”
2. As a class or year group link the strips together into a paper prayer chain and put it on display in your school!
3. Don't forget to send us a picture of your Prayer Chain of Hope on display.



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