

# We Pray for Children

- Leader: We begin our prayer today (*sign of the cross*) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- All: Amen.
- Leader: Let us pray together as the faithful people of God:
- All: Thank you, Lord, for this time together.  
Help us to be a people that does justice, loves kindness,  
and walks humbly with you, O God. Amen.
- Reader 1: We pray for Children - We pray for children who put chocolate fingers everywhere, who like to be tickled, who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants, who sneak popsicles before supper, who erase holes in math workbooks, who can never find their shoes.
- Reader 2: And we pray for children who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers, who never "counted potatoes", who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead in, who never go to the circus, who live in an X-rated world.
- Reader 3: We pray for children who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money, who cover themselves in Band-Aids and sing off key, who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink, who slurp their soup.
- Reader 4: And we pray for children who never get dessert, who have no safety blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser, whose monsters are real.
- Reader 5: We pray for children who spend all their allowances before Tuesday, who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food, who like ghost stories, who shove dirty clothes under the bed and never rinse out the tub, who get visits from the tooth fairy, who don't like to be kissed in front of the car pool, who squirm in church and scream in the phone, whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.
- Reader 6: And we pray for children whose nightmares come in the daytime, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who aren't spoiled by anybody, who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep, who live and move, but have no being.

Reader 7: We pray for those children who want to be carried and for those who must, for those we never give up on and those who don't get a second chance. For those we smother . . . and those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.

*(From Kevin LaNave. Christian Justice: Sharing God's Goodness.)*

*(Pause for a moment of quiet reflection and silence.)*

Leader: Let us pray together for an end to suffering for all children . . .

All: We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war:  
For we know that You have made the world in a way  
That we must find our own path to peace  
Within ourselves and with our neighbour.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end starvation:  
For You have already given us the resources  
With which to feed the entire world  
If we would only use them wisely.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to root out prejudice:  
For You have already given us eyes  
With which to see the good in all people  
If we would only use them rightly.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end despair:  
For You have already given us the power  
To clear away slums and to give hope  
If we would only use our power justly.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end disease:  
For You have already given us great minds  
With which to search out cures and healing  
If we would only use them constructively.

Therefore, we pray to You instead, O God,  
For strength, determination, and will power,  
To DO instead of just pray,  
To BECOME instead of merely to wish.  
Amen.

*(By Rabbi Jack Reimer)*

Leader: Let us go into this day in peace to share the goodness  
that God has given for everyone,  
In the *(make sign of the cross)* name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy  
Spirit.

All: Amen.