



# International Day of Prayer for Peace

**21 September 2007**

**Make me a channel of your peace**

**An Initiative of the World Council of Churches**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen

*St. Francis of Assisi*



In 2007, the World Council of Churches joins the UN International Day of Peace by inviting congregations worldwide to pray for peace in all participating churches on 21 September, the preceding Sunday, or the following Sunday.

Saint Francis of Assisi, has given us an example of peace making and peaceful living. The Prayer of a Peace Maker, attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, is known very widely and we all can join in the supplication with

our heart and mind: Make me an Instrument of Your Peace.

This prayer was chosen as the theme for the Focus on Europe 2007 of the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) by the Steering Group, composed of young adults from all over Europe. The theme invites us to accept the challenge of overcoming violence all around us world while relying on God's promise and power, not ours.

## **An Invitation from the World Council of Churches**

When the world is at war in so many places and the forces of violence, war and oppression seem to be increasing, praying for peace seem to be a futile exercise. But we Christians believe both in the power and in the promise of peace, and we also believe in the power of prayer.

Prayer is part of Christian spirituality, a spirituality which is not a call to turn inward, to retreat from social action and public life but, on the contrary, a call to awaken and to pursue the continuity of things of the spirit with action for justice and peace.

That is why, in the framework of the Decade to Overcome Violence, the World Council of Churches has called on its member churches to observe an International Day of Prayer for Peace on 21 September.

On that day, we want to lift up people in all nations who are working together for a peaceful world. Let us encourage them and walk in solidarity with them. Let us intercede for them and give thanks to God for them.

*Samuel Kobia, General Secretary*

## **The UN International Day of Peace**

In 2001, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (55/282) designating 21 September of each year as a day for the entire world to observe a day of peace and nonviolence. In 2004, UN secretary general Kofi Annan supported the proposal of the WCC to establish an international day of prayer for peace.

God of compassion and mercy,  
We bring to you our divided society and our broken world,  
Seeking your healing and transforming grace;  
It is easy for us to point the finger at others,  
Yet we know that we all need your forgiveness;  
So we lift into your presence today,  
not only the victims of your conflicts,  
But also those we have called enemies.  
Break down the walls of hatred, distrust and bitterness  
And open a way for us to reach one another  
in truth and love.  
Enable us to build a society where all can belong;  
To share our gifts in mutual respect  
And to seek for the new future which you offer us.  
Through Jesus Christ.

*Travelling the Road of Faith:  
Worship resources from  
the Corrymeela Community,  
Belfast, Northern Ireland.*



## Observe and Support the International Day of Prayer for Peace

There are many ways in which church and individuals can support the International Day of Prayer for Peace.

Be creative! Some communities have used the day for public events, art contests, educational and cultural programmes. Church bells have tolled at noon and school children have written stories and letters.

Other ideas for action include:

- Organize a time of prayer and reflection on peace in your community, workplace, school or home
- Share information about the Day of Prayer with others. Distribute copies of this brochure
- Prepare a 24 hour prayer vigil for peace with other faith communities around the world (see: [www.idpvigil.com](http://www.idpvigil.com))
- Arrange a meeting with representatives of other church and religious communities to discuss how faith groups can build a culture of peace.
- Join a growing network of Christians contributing to an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace



Photo: Peter Williams/WCC

- Collect special offerings to support peace initiatives in your community or abroad

Visit the DOV website to find out what others are doing and to share additional resources.  
[www.overcomingviolence.org](http://www.overcomingviolence.org)



Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT

## International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)

4 - 11 May 2011

The World Council of Churches' 9th Assembly (Porto Alegre, Brazil, February 2006) decided that „the conclusion of DOV be marked by an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)“. The Assembly also called for „a process of wide consultation to be undertaken toward developing an ecumenical declaration on just peace“. This consultative process leading up to the IEPC allows for broad participation with many entry points, and covers a wide spectrum of thematic and methodological approaches.

### Mission Statement

The IEPC aims at witnessing to the Peace of God as a gift and responsibility of the oikumene. It seeks to assess and strengthen the church's position on peace, provide opportunities for networking and deepen our common commitment to processes of reconciliation and peace.

For more information on the IEPC, visit our website at [www.overcomingviolence.org/iepc](http://www.overcomingviolence.org/iepc)





Photo: Jonas Ekström/WCC

## The Decade to Overcome Violence

The Decade to Overcome Violence (2001–2010): Churches seeking reconciliation and peace calls churches, ecumenical organizations and all people of goodwill – to work together at all levels (local, regional, global) with communities, secular movements and people of all living faiths for peace, justice and reconciliation.

It calls us to walk with those oppressed by violence, and to act in solidarity with those struggling for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

It calls us to repent for our complicity in violence, and to engage in theological

reflection to overcome the spirit, logic and practice of violence.

As an initiative of the World Council of Churches, the Decade is a global movement. It attempts to strengthen existing peace networks as well as inspire the creation of new ones.

[www.overcomingviolence.org/](http://www.overcomingviolence.org/)

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## The World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches promotes Christian unity in faith, witness and service for a just and peaceful world. An ecumenical fellowship of churches founded in 1948, today the WCC brings together over 340 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican and other churches representing more than 550 million Christians, and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church.

[www.wcc-coe.org](http://www.wcc-coe.org)

*Copies of this brochure, in several languages, may be downloaded from the DOV website. We encourage you to reproduce and distribute this brochure in consultation with your local church or ecumenical network.*

*Additional prayers and resources are available at:*

[www.overcomingviolence.org/](http://www.overcomingviolence.org/)

