

Prayer for the Common Good and the Reign of God

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OPENING PRAYER AND READING

Leader: The City of God, the new Jerusalem, is our heavenly home, but it is foreshadowed in our earthly city through the common good. Since health care is a prominent aspect of the common good, let us reflect on this city, here and in the presence of God.

Reader 1: A reading from the Revelation to John
“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; ... And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.” (Revelation 21:1-3 NRSV)

SILENT REFLECTION

“The only absolute is God with whom human beings enter into full relationship only in the heavenly Jerusalem, the City of God. But the political domain has the potential to become a practical embodiment of this full human Good when it seeks greater human solidarity, not just toleration or the protection of individuals in their solitude. The quality of this republic will be proportional to the quality of the loves found among its citizens” ...¹

Reader 2: Central to the common good is the group’s “social well-being and development...[and] authority’s proper function is to arbitrate between various particular interests in society.” Essential to this is ensuring the accessibility to each person of “what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, health care, the right to establish a family, and so on.” (Catechism #1908)

SILENT REFLECTION

Everyone has responsibility for the common good as an embodiment of charity and justice. “The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real

needs of our neighbors, the more effectively we love them. Every Christian is called to practice this charity, in a manner corresponding to his vocation ...” (Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, #7)

PRAYER

Please respond: *Lord hear us*

Lord, you have shown us the vision of the Holy City Jerusalem, as our home. Help us to imitate that city in the world we inhabit, we pray.

All: Lord, hear us.

Lord, political life helps us create an earthly city that brings justice and equity and an end to suffering. Give our politicians and civil leaders prudence, good judgment, and a firm commitment to just distribution of the goods of the earth, we pray.

All: Lord, hear us.

Help us in our own lives to reject fear and to prefer solidarity with others to the security of individual solitude, we pray.

All: Lord, hear us.

May our health care ministry be a sign to the world of God’s heavenly city, we pray.

All: Lord, hear us.

Leader: Bless us with the gift of solidarity and justice. Help us to be a holy, transforming presence in the world around us, especially as we care for the sick and improve social conditions that lead to illness and hasten death.

We ask this of you who live and reign forever, with your Son and in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

NOTE

1. Portions of this prayer were inspired by David Hollenbach, SJ, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 127-36.