

A Prayer for Nuclear Prayer Day, August 6, 2023

Michael Ramos, Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

“If you hear God’s voice today, harden not your hearts.”

- Psalm 95

O Source of the river of life, we come to you in this moment of grave nuclear weapons danger. As nations, we say, “Peace, peace,” and yet our armaments expand, their lethality is shared, their deployment is extended, their threat reverberates, and their normality is accepted as sacrosanct.

The injustice is tangible in the voices of the Hibakusha, the Marshallese, the Puerto Ricans, the New Mexicans, and all who are too sick to speak as victims of fallout and waste. We hear their stories and lash out in lament to the highest heaven, while remembering all who have died from nuclear testing, use, and storage.

And yet, our offense is still greater, for our corporate devotion to nuclear weapons is a violation of your ways, your call, and your dream for the human species and all living things. You have given to our care the light of this planet and we have abused your creation.

In our divisions, fears, greed, and violence, we have lost our moral compass and hardened our hearts to your still, quiet voice of invitation. “Can this people be saved?” asks the God of Ezekiel. We acknowledge our grief and despair, and yet you speak, you speak!

As we listen closely, a heartbeat remains. We stop, we pivot, we walk: we hold our hearts in our hands and extend them to you.

Our dry bones are not the end of the story. Bone matches up with bone; parts of the body find their complement. Dry bones become a body with one equal heart, a people, a race, that is, the human race, creatures joined to creation and to You.

Restore the tenderness of our hearts. Align the depths of our being with your holy intention. Teach us to be people of global compassion, who see our lives intertwined with one another. Guide us to be dependent on your waterfall of wisdom and insight, flowing through our hearts, our towns, our societies, and our countries.

Beckon us to change: give us the lion’s heart of courage to work collectively toward the elimination of nuclear weapons; give us the love to speak truth in the halls of power and with all our relations across border and barrier; bestow on us the light to engage in humble acts of divine obedience that say “Yes!” to the water of life streaming to the oceans of our inheritance. May the fruits be joyful repair, hopeful companionship, and mindful transformation of systems of nuclear mass destruction.

We celebrate with one another, we thank you for your presence, and we sing of the freedom which you promise and we – with all of our minds, hearts, strength, and soul – pledge to uphold. Amen.

“If today you hear God’s voice, harden not your hearts.”