

Intercessions for Racial Justice Sunday (Alison Cross)

February 13th 2022

We start with a prayer by Mark Sturge from the official Racial Justice Sunday resources.

PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

Mighty, and everlasting God.

As Your people come into your presence,

We are thankful for your graciousness, your mercy, and your love.

We continue to remember all those adversely affected by the COVID pandemic,

We pray that your Holy Spirit will be present with them,

To comfort and to heal; to sustain and be reconciled, one with another.

On this special day, we remember the family of George Floyd,

We remember all those who are hurting, disadvantaged,

and impacted by racial prejudice.

We also remember all those who have suffered at the hands of injustice,

May your Holy Spirit be present with them,

To comfort and to heal; to bring justice and reconciliation,

one with another.

Faithful God, we commit this service into your hands,

We pray for every participant and every listener,

That you will empower them with your strength,

That they might be courageous to say and do what is right and just,

and that your good and glorious, magnificent, and righteous name

might be praised,

We pray in the name of your selfless son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen! Amen! And Amen!

Mark Sturge

And now we bring before God some of the many issues arising from the divide and inequalities between different races and cultures which disfigure our world and hinder the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The responses this time are not something you can memorise but little prayers in themselves, so I'm afraid this will mean keeping your eyes open to read them.

Let us pray first for all those who feel that their race makes them second class citizens in a system that is stacked against them; for those who feel disadvantaged in education and employment; who feel that they attract unnecessarily heavy-handed policing; who feel singled out for abuse in sport; who feel that they do not truly belong in society.

Oh Lord, help us always to be sensitive to those who struggle and to encourage and build up our brothers and sisters with understanding.

We pray for healing of the deep wounds caused by man's inhumanity to man in times past which still fester and are reinforced today, thinking here especially of the slave trade and the Holocaust. We pray for a softening of the anger and bitterness which hardens hearts and holds back the flow of love.

Oh Lord, help us always to seek truth above everything else in our representations of history and to tune in with the pain of those who have suffered.

We thank God for the richness to be found in diversity, confessing our instinctive tendencies to turn our backs on anything that is strange and different. We pray for recognition of the significance of the artistic, literary and musical contributions of those outside white, western culture.

Oh Lord, may we be willing to expand our horizons beyond the known and familiar and open ourselves to a new understanding of the world.

Let us remember here, too, all those persecuted for their faith in you, sometimes by one dominant race against different ethnic and cultural minorities within their own country, other times by members of their own race. We think particularly today of the Kachin Christians in Myanmar.

Oh Lord, help us to commit ourselves to bearing up our persecuted brothers and sisters in prayer, and to thank you for our own freedom of worship.

We end as we began with words from our opening prayer, adapted from the third person to the first:

We pray that you will empower us with your strength, that we might be courageous to say and do what is right and just, and that your good and glorious, magnificent and righteous name might be praised.

We pray these words for all humankind, regardless of race or history, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen