

# Walking the Road to Peace

## Welcoming Reflection

**Leader** Let us take a minute to reflect on the Icon by John August Swanson.

If you were in that Icon where would you want to be? What would that experience be like for you? Please share a sentence or two about your reflection with your neighbor.

## Opening Song

Come and fill our heart  
with your peace.

You alone, O Lord, are holy.  
Come and fill our hearts with peace,  
Al-le-lu-ia.

A Taizé chant

## Readings

### Reader 1

Joan Chittister wrote:

*“I heard two children talking recently and began to understand with painful clarity Swanson’s panel of the peaceable kingdom. I knew meditating on the picture that we could not have peace until we each cultivated within ourselves a child with open arms.*

*We could not have peace until we all sat down at the table of life intent on nourishing one another together. Then peace would come.”*



R. There will be peace in the valley for me, some day.  
There will be peace in the valley for me, oh God I pray.  
There’ll be no sadness, no sorrow,  
No trouble, trouble I see.  
There will be peace in the valley for me.

L. Well the bear will be gentle  
And the wolves will be tame.  
And the lion shall lay down by the lamb, oh yes.  
And the beasts from the wild,  
Shall be lead by a child.  
And I’ll be changed, changed from this creature that I am,  
Oh yes.

Lyrics by Thomas A. Dorsey

All Peace I leave with you, my friends, Shalom my peace, in all you do. Peace I give to you, so you can give to others too.

### Reader 2

Matthew 25:34–40

*“God has blessed you. Come and receive the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world was created. When I was hungry you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you*



© John August Swanson (Used with permission.)

*gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger you welcomed me, and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick you took care of me and when I was in jail you visited me.*

All When did we give you something to eat or drink?

When did we welcome you as a stranger or give you clothes to wear or visit you while you were sick or in Jail?

### Reader 2

*God will answer; ‘When ever you did it for any of my people no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me.’”*

All Peace I leave with you, my friends, Shalom my peace, in all you do. Peace I give to you, so you can give to others too.

### Reader 3

From Clarissa Pinkola Estés:

*Ours is not the tasks of fixing the entire world all at once but of stretching out to mend*

*the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts, or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to adding more... continuing. And we pray....*



## Closing Prayer

- R.* Moses and Miriam, nonviolent liberators, architects and singers of the covenant of justice.
- L.* Isaiah, prophet of peace.
- R.* Amos and Micah and Hosea, voices for the oppressed.

### **All Pray for us.**

- L.* Gandhi, nonviolent warrior.
- R.* Simone Weil patroness of solidarity with the oppressed, fasting unto death with the hungry.
- L.* Martin Luther King, prophet and dreamer of the Beloved Community

### **All Pray for us.**

- R.* Thomas Merton, contemplative critic, mentor of peacemakers
- L.* Dorothy Day, lady poverty, mother courage, witness to the radical gospel of peace.
- R.* Oscar Romero, shepherd of the poor, martyr for justice.

### **All Pray for us.**

- L.* In silence let us remember a peacemaker that influenced our lives.

**Leader** All holy peacemakers, living and more living Jesus, Messiah, Prince of Peace, we pray to you.

### **All Empower us.**

## Acknowledgments

“Walking the Road to Peace” ritual by [Joan Weisenbeck, FSPA](#), of the [Franciscan Spirituality Center](#) (used with permission); © “Peaceable Kingdom” by [John August Swanson](#) (used with permission); clasp hands and earth-holding graphics: source(s) unknown; available on [Hill Connections](#) (<http://hillconnections.org>), a web site linking [Contemplation](#) and [Social Justice](#).