

A LITANY FOR PEACE IN SUDAN

ADVENT 2010

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This litany is designed for congregational, prayer group, or personal use on a daily basis. It need not be used in its entirety; rather it provides numerous options, so that in a public worship setting for example, one or two of the optional scriptural readings might be used, and choices made among the bracketed options as appropriate to the day, and what has been prayed for in days previous. It is entirely appropriate to have the officiant read the opening and closing and then to distribute specific portions of these petitions in advance to various members of the congregation to lead.

Officiant: In the name of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace. We gather to raise our voices in prayer for the people of Sudan as they enter a time of crisis and grave danger of resumed war. Over two million people perished in the civil war between north and south and over 200,000 more perished in the genocide in Darfur.

We pray for the souls of those who have perished in past violence, famine, and disaster, and we pray for the relief and comfort of those maimed or bereaved by that violence, for those made homeless, widows, orphans, beggars in their own land, and exiles outside it.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: A large number of those killed in Sudan, lay people and clergy alike, died rather than renounce their faith in you, Lord Jesus. Help us by their example to be ready to give an account of the faith that is within us and to rejoice if we should suffer dishonor or persecution for faithfulness to your name. [Acts 5:41]

People: Lord, have mercy.

[The congregation may sit. The lesson should be read by a member of the congregatoin]

Scripture: Micah 4:1-4

Officiant: Lord Jesus, through your mercy and the efforts of many faithful people, a comprehensive peace agreement was reached in 2005, bringing the north south civil war to a halt, and offering a peaceful way forward. On January 9, 2011, the people of the south are given the right to vote for their future, either as a separate nation or as part of a united Sudan. Our elected church leaders and our Presiding Bishop have called us to a season of prayer for peace in Sudan as the people of southern Sudan approach the referendum.

We pray that regardless of the outcome of the referendum, the people of Sudan will be spared from the resumption of war, genocide, religious persecution, famine, epidemics and exile.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: You taught us that the peacemakers are blessed.

We pray for all those who are working to keep the peace, the diplomats, aid workers, UN observers, peacekeeping troops, political leaders, tribal leaders, religious leaders and ordinary clergy and lay people anxious to avert bloodshed.

We pray especially for Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, elected leader of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, and our long-time friend. We pray for the Archbishop of Canterbury and our Presiding Bishop for their efforts for peace in Sudan.

We pray for their safety and we pray for their families, many of whom are far away from them.

We pray that you will give them wisdom, grace and courage to persevere through difficulty, discouragement, and setbacks, and to keep their eyes upon the twin goals of peace and justice.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Scripture: "A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who utters lies will not escape." Pr. 19:5.

Officiant: Lord God, by your commandments and prophets you have taught us that you loathe falsehood. We pray that the referendum will be free and fair, and an accurate reflection of the will of the people of southern Sudan.

[We pray for those working to keep this referendum fair, weighing each voter's choice equally and accurately.]

[We pray for election monitors, poll workers, election officials, and those providing security so people may cast their ballots in safety.]

[We pray that you will expose and bring to naught the efforts of those seeking to falsify the results, whether they seek to do so by intimidating of voters, casting fictitious ballots, stealing ballot boxes, or any other perverse scheme which they have been tempted to perpetrate.]

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: Lord Jesus, you have taught us to pray like the widow wearing out the unjust judge, persistently, faithfully, and expectantly. Give us grace to be steadfast and unceasing in prayer for our brothers and sisters in Sudan, for your church, for the needs of the world, our own country and people, and for the needs of our parishes, families, and ourselves.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul taught us that Christian congregations must support each other when they are in need or danger, as he did by gathering relief from the gentiles to relieve Jewish Christians suffering from famine in Jerusalem. Help us, like those in Corinth [1 Cor. 16:2], to put aside something as we may prosper so that we can help our

brothers and sisters in Sudan to minister ably to the needs of their people in Christ's name.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: James [Jas. 3:15-17] taught us that when our Christian brothers and sisters are naked or in want, that we must give them the things needed for their bodies if we are to be truly faithful.

Lord, this church has committed to help meet the Millenium Development Goals, we pray for the work we are doing together with our church partners in Sudan

[To fight malaria, TB and AIDS, and waterborne disease

To reduce child mortality

To improve maternal health

To promote gender equality

To provide universal primary education

To eliminate famine and malnutrition

To promote environmentally sustainable development]

[Use one of these petitions each day, with a specific example of work the church is doing in Sudan]

Lord, the people in Sudan ache for the healing hands of Christ. Make our hands His as we work together with our Sudanese church partners to heal the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, liberate the oppressed, and return the exile, and open all our eyes to your gracious mercy among us.

[The congregation may sit; a lay person should read the lesson.]

Scripture: Ezek. 33:1-6 or Esther 4:13-17.

Officiant: Lord God you have taught by your prophets that we must raise the alarm for our brothers and sisters lest you require their blood at our hands. Give us courage to speak up bravely for those who are oppressed, voiceless and vulnerable, so that when we and our kin face defeat or disaster we will have someone to speak up for us. Help us to be valiant and tireless advocates for peace and for the safety of our brothers and sisters in Sudan.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray for the needs for our church partner in Sudan, the Diocese of [Renk], especially for peace in the time leading up to and immediately after the referendum.

[Because of its geographic location as the northernmost part of southern Sudan, directly south of Khartoum on a good road, Renk is acutely vulnerable if war resumes or if the border is sealed, an economic blockade. Renk gets most of its food, and all of its fuel,

medicine, other goods, and electricity from the north. The north has sealed the border in the recent past.]

We pray that you will keep the scourge of war and bloodshed away from the Diocese of Renk and its people.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray for restraint and control by military commanders of their troops, and for resistance to provocation to violence.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray that outside observers will be posted to help forestall the onset of violence, and we pray for the safety, ability, and integrity of these monitors.

People; Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray that trade is not interrupted nor the border sealed, so that our brothers and sisters will remain able to secure food, medicine, fuel and electricity and a working water system.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray for the safe evacuation of children, old people, and the infirm during this crisis, that they may come safely back when the crisis has passed.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Officiant: We pray for their clergy, especially [*name on rotating basis*]

 Their lay leaders, especially [*name on rotating basis*]

 The Mother's Union, especially [*name on rotating basis*]

 The youth, especially [*name on rotating basis*]

 The children, especially [*name on rotating basis*]

And for their Bishop, Joseph Garang Atem Zorial, his wife Rhoda, and their children Grace and Michelle.

We pray for the prayer group Bishop Joseph has formed in Renk, who are praying for us at Christ Church as well as for peace in Sudan.

We pray for [*name of parish on a rotating basis*] in the Diocese of Renk and we pray for the Renk Cathedral, [where our rector is a canon, installed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and Sudan, and which Christ Church and the Diocese of Virginia helped build. We pray for the dean of the Cathedral, the Rev. Martha Deng Nhial, the only woman cathedral dean in Africa. We pray for the cathedral congregation.]

We pray for the Diocesan Clinic in Renk, which was built by Christ Church. [We pray for Doctor Paul, the midwife, laboratory assistant, and pharmacist. We pray that the clinic has enough medicine and

adequate space to do its healing work for all who come to it, regardless of faith. Help the clinic to combat the scourges of malaria, waterborne disease and tuberculosis, and help them to safeguard the health of the expectant mothers whose babies they deliver and to guard the health of the infants in the area.

We pray for the four diocesan primary schools, in Renk, in Geiger, in Lathbior and in Melut. [We pray for the students, teachers, headmasters and parents. *[insert names of headmasters and teachers on a rotating basis if available.]* We pray that the students receive adequate food, clean water, and good teaching.]

We pray for the senior secondary school in Renk.

We pray for the other U.S. church partners of the Diocese of Renk, our sister parishes in Virginia, for St. Paul's Alexandria, for St. Mary's, Arlington, and for the Diocese of Chicago. We pray for our clergy and lay counterparts at these congregations, for their safety and well being and that their mission work will be blessed. We give thanks for their faithfulness, steadfastness, and wisdom in this work and for their constant encouragement of our efforts with them.

We pray for the ongoing work of the Dinka Cam Old Testament, now half finished, well advanced by donations from Christ Church and others. [We give thanks for the long faithfulness of the translators, who have labored for more than fifteen years. We give thanks for the literacy work they do.] We give thanks that the full word of God will soon be heard in the native language of over two million people in the Dinka tribe in Sudan.

We pray for our own needs, for those of our parish, and for those of our families.

We give thanks for the blessings of this day.

Officiant: And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray:

In Unison: The Lord's Prayer

Officiant: Lord, we give thanks that you have brought us here together to pray. Grant that what we have asked in faith for our brothers and sisters in Sudan, and for ourselves, may be granted in your providence, to the preservation of peace and glory of your name. All this we ask in Jesus' name. AMEN.