

Prayer for Peace, Hope and Justice

So many headlines competed for oxygen this week.

Were the City's actions in terms of the interdict against the homeless more topical than the issue of racism at schools. Or the continued gender-based violence against women highlighted on women's' day. Or the violent racist rioting in the United Kingdom, or the deadly SA police shootouts in Khayelitsha and Durban.

A simple theme in this sample is about the exercise of power. Be it institutional, legal or criminal. It can be emotional, or physical.

But that power could, and so often does, manifest into conflict; violent words, violent actions and violent thoughts, exacerbated by social media

We all have power. As parents, in intimate relationships, at work, in organizations, in sports, in industry, in politics.

We can be disparaging of others, talking behind their backs, because we have friends, relatives and acquaintances who are willing to listen to us. We prefer to be with people who are like us, because in spite of some positives, it easily provides a simple yet effective collective for groupthink, in-jokes, and even for targeted vitriol, hurt, hate, and horridness. And at times violence happens.

Let us pray:

Lord God the violence is all around us, it touches us in homes and on the streets. Help us to be mindful of our personal power and influence.

O Lord, precious savior you experienced humiliation, and death, through the power of little men, the power of mobs, the power of men under military orders, the power of religious men, and the power of the principalities and powers of the day.

Your word, your message was, and is, love, peace, hope and justice.

Lord God, forgive us as we find it so difficult to share this love you have for us. We fear our own power that can so easily be misused and abused.

Help us, Lord. Do we see others who are different, as an image that we have created or do we see an image of God. When someone irritates or provokes us, Jesus, do we rise up, voice up, anger up, or do we open up, seeing so much more, and becoming love in that moment, a God image to a God image.

Help us Lord to unclench our fists, to melt our heart of stone so that we can be full and overflowing.

Help us Lord, to be alive to the power of the spirit, and the creative power of a new us, a new community.

May we love each other as Christ loves us. Amen.