

From Education for Justice

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Litany: Praying with Women in Scripture

We pray in the name of the women in the Old and New Testaments, for women throughout our global community. May the human dignity of all women be respected and may they know justice and peace in their lifetimes.

In the name of Esther, who spoke out to save her people, we pray for all women speaking out in places such as Afghanistan, for justice for women and for all in their community.

In the name of Hagar, who was forced to leave her home and wandered in the desert before God spoke to her, we pray for the women and their families who are forced to migrate in confusion and dread in Darfur and other regions of the world.

In the name of Rachel, who died in childbirth with her son, Benjamin, we pray for all women who face childbirth without adequate medical assistance in countries such as Malawi and Mozambique, which have the highest rate of mortality for women giving birth.

In the name of Ruth, who cared for her mother-in-law Naomi, we pray for all women caregivers who work without respite to care for the sick and the elderly in their families, the U.S. and around the world.

In the name of the Pharaoh's daughter, who rescued Moses from the river, we pray for all women who work to care for the lives and dignity of all children, in poverty areas in the U.S. and in areas such as Africa, where there are over a million AIDS orphans.

In the name of Miriam, the sister of Moses, who celebrated the liberation of her people, we pray for women leaders such as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the president of Liberia, who is helping her country heal after years of civil strife.

In the name of Deborah, one of the Judges of the Old Testament who governed wisely, we pray for all women in leadership positions, in the U.S. and around the world, that they may use their power to promote the common good.

In the name of Martha, who worked without ceasing, we pray for all women who are forced to work long hours in workplaces and sweatshops that violate workers' rights.

In the name of Martha's sister, Mary, who sat at Christ's feet to listen, we pray for all those women who take time to listen and understand the issues of social justice, so their prayers and their actions are informed by compassionate contemplation.

In the name of Mary Magdalene, we pray for all women and girls who are victims of sexual trafficking; may they come to know the love of Christ through our efforts to bring them freedom.

In the name of the Samaritan woman at the well who answered Christ's request, we pray for women who are willing to transcend cultural barriers and to be open to all members of the human community.

In the name of the woman from Cana in Matthew's Gospel who was persistent and challenging in asking Christ for the healing for her daughter, we pray for all women who are persistent in the face of injustice and speak truth to power.

In the name of Mary, Mother of Sorrows, we pray for all women who are grieving because of their children's suffering in body and mind.

In the name of Phoebe, Chloe , Prisca, Euodia, and Syntyche, all women mentioned in Paul's writings who were hailed for being co-workers in spreading the Word, we pray for all women of faith who are co-creating the Kingdom of God through their daily efforts to teach, to preach, and to witness to the Good News of peace and Justice.

We pray that we may draw strength from the examples of such women
and be courageous in speaking out
and be instruments of God's purpose
and be strong in carrying our burdens
and be uncompromising in standing up for our deepest values
and be ready to sacrifice intentionally
and be tender in showing compassion to others
and be fearless in facing injustice
and be witnesses of great faith. Amen.

-by Jane Deren/Sr. Katherine Feely, SND
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