

<p>WEDNESDAY   February 25, 2015</p>	<p>THURSDAY   February 26, 2015</p>	<p>FRIDAY   February 27, 2015</p>
<p><b>I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers and intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)</b></p> <p>In these uncertain times, it is tempting to join various bandwagons of harsh criticism; to only add to the extreme voices and polarization that we see around us. If only that leader were removed and this leader were in charge! However, one thing as follower of Jesus we know we are to do, that pleases God, is to PRAY for our leaders! In these times we know without any doubt that the church is called to pray. So, let's start fervently praying for those who are leading.</p> <p><i>Loving God, we do pray for our leaders today. We know they are facing extreme pressure and are frail human beings. May they be guided by Your wisdom, peace, mercy, compassion and truth. May they rule in a way that allows for peace and the common good. Amen.</i></p>	<p><b>Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)</b></p> <p>Perhaps one of the most important things we have in common with our brothers and sisters around the world is the destination; the goal and prize of our faith. Shoulder to shoulder we press onward, pilgrim eyes fixed on the far horizon towards a day when there will be no more pain. Today there is reason for fear and uncertainty but let's keep walking through the darkness of today into the light of tomorrow where there is abundance and Shalom.</p> <p><i>As we lift our heads towards the far horizon, bring focus to our gaze. Strengthen our steps and make our path straight. Help us to trust You. We praise You, our Guide and Redeemer. Amen.</i></p>	<p><b>Then Jesus said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me. (Mathew 26:38)</b></p> <p>Jesus knew something of uncertain times. He understood vulnerability full well. He carried the vulnerability of fear as he stumbled towards the hill on which he'd hang naked on a cross and die. He felt all the vulnerability of loss as he watched his mother moan in pain for her dying son. Yes, Jesus knew something of vulnerability as he gasped and struggled for his last breath. Ironically, the Kingdom had finally come because Jesus embraced his vulnerabilities and surrendered to God's transformative work. Remember the vulnerability of Jesus and invite God to stay with us and keep watch over us in our own places of vulnerability.</p> <p><i>Our world is weak and fragile and our souls are overwhelmed. Stay with us; keep watch over us all. Because you are faithful, and full of mercy we embrace our vulnerability and place our hope in You. Amen.</i></p>
<p>SATURDAY   February 28, 2015</p>	<p>MONDAY   March 2, 2015</p>	<p>TUESDAY   March 3, 2015</p>
<p><b>The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)</b></p> <p>ISIS, Ukraine crisis, Ebola, measles, racial violence and strife....and the list goes on. We are inundated with news of tragic situations which generate more fear than hope. What if you used these stories to spur you to prayer, rather than fretting or becoming more fearful? Try it for this Lenten season and discover the peace of God growing in you and spreading to others through you.</p> <p><i>Lord, thank you that You are Lord even when the world seems threatening and out of control. Help me to experience Your peace and to help others find Your peace as well.</i></p>	<p><b>Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:23-24)</b></p> <p>Working for peace is hard work. It demands hope in God's ultimate victory, courage to engage broken relationships and violence, and perseverance to stay the course. Without the encouragement of others, working for peace is often impossible. Who can you encourage today in the work of peace? Don't let today end without sending a note, making a phone call, or personally encouraging someone who is working for peace.</p> <p><i>Today we pray for those working hard for peace in conflicted situations, in the midst of broken relationships, and in the face of injustice. Spur them on and strengthen them. Stir in me a holy passion to constantly foster the work of Your peace in our world.</i></p>	<p><b>But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. (Matthew 5:39)</b></p> <p><b>Do not repay anyone evil for evil... Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:17-21)</b></p> <p>When we are faced with evil – really repugnant evil – somehow, some way, love must rule. Love cannot be vengeful, love cannot retaliate – and love cannot be passive. Love must envision good for the evildoer. Love prays good upon the evil-doer. Love boldly weeps for the mind and heart trapped in evil.</p> <p><i>Lord, I don't know what I would do if I came face-to-face with real and, violent evil. But I ask for the grace to have love in the mix – in fact, to have love dominate my heart. May I envision the evil-doer embracing Your love for them..</i></p>