



## Prayer for Our Lady of Sorrows 2010

**We pray for all Mothers whose hearts are pierced by the violent loss of a child especially those associated with the death penalty.**

**Leader:** Let us pray together the words written by Sr. Helen Prejean csj

### ***A Prayer to Abolish the Death Penalty***

God of compassion,  
You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.  
Expand and deepen our hearts  
So that we may love you as You love,  
Even those among us  
Who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.  
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance  
As we fill up death rows and kill the killers  
In the name of justice, in the name of peace  
Jesus, our brother  
you suffered execution at the hands of the state  
But you did not let hatred overcome you.  
Help us reach out to victims of violence  
So that our enduring love may help them heal.  
Holy Spirit of God,  
You strengthen us in the struggle for justice,  
Help us to work tirelessly  
for the abolition of state-sanctioned death  
and to renew our society in its very heart  
So that violence will be no more.  
Amen

**Readings for the Feast of the Dolors:** [1 Cor 12:31-13:13](#)

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 33:2-3, 4-5, 12 and 22

**R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

Give thanks to the LORD on the harp;  
with the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises.

Sing to him a new song;

pluck the strings skillfully, with shouts of gladness.

**R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

For upright is the word of the LORD,

and all his works are trustworthy.

He loves justice and right;

of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full.

**R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD,

the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.

May your kindness, O LORD, be upon us

who have put our hope in you.

**R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

**Gospel:** Lk 2:33-35 *(pause for brief reflection)*

**Leader:** We have heard God's call in the dark of a night filled with hatred, fear and revenge. We have heard the cry of God's people - the plea of those on death row - for mercy. We have heard the cry of the families of victims of senseless crimes for healing, for wholeness, for an end to the bloodshed. Let us now respond to these cries and to God's call to be instruments of healing and love, instruments of true justice. Let us respond in prayer and in deed.

**Prayers of Petition**

Leader: Let us bring before the God of our understanding the needs of our world. Our response to the petitions will be: **Oh God, Hear Our Prayer.**

**Reader 1:** God of Compassion, we pray for the victims of crime and their families. May they know Your healing presence that transforms pain and anger in ways never though possible, we pray . . .

**Oh God, Hear Our Prayer.**

**Reader 2:** God of Compassion, we pray for the victims of capital punishment and their families. May they be comforted in your love, we pray . . . **Oh God, Hear Our Prayer.**

**Reader 3:** God of Life and Compassion, we stand before You, members of a society needing Your healing. We are confident that You will hear the prayers of our hearts. And so we ask that Your compassion be poured out in our world, especially on those scheduled for execution . . . especially for \_\_\_\_\_ **Oh God, Hear Our Prayer.**

**Reader 4:** God of Compassion, we pray for those who participate in executions and in all executions done in our name. May they, and we, be open to the ways You minister Grace and conversion in the least likely places, we pray . . . **Oh God, Hear Our Prayer.**

**Our Father**

**Communion: instrumental music**

**Post Communion Reflection:**

**Reading 1:** *(statement by Marietta Jaeger, murder victim's mother)*

Believe me, there are no amounts of retaliatory acts that will compensate for the loss of my little girl or restore her to my arms. Even to say that the death of one malfunctioning person is going to be retribution is an insult to her immeasurable worth to me.

*(pause for brief reflection)*

**Reading 2:** *(Statement by Coretta Scott King)*

As one whose husband and mother-in-law have both died the victims of murder assassination, I stand firmly and unequivocally opposed to the death penalty for those convicted of capital offenses. An evil deed is not redeemed by an evil deed of retaliation. Justice is never advanced in the taking of a human life. Morality is never upheld by legalized murder.

*(pause for reflection)*



**Closing Prayer**

**Leader:** And so we go forward now, knowing that the violence stops with us. Bless us, O Compassionate One, and give us strength for the journey.

Fill us with that amazing grace which breaks down walls of hatred and fear and allows Your love and mercy to enter in, that the process of healing and reconciliation might begin.

**All:** Amen

**Closing Song:** Amazing Grace TM 445



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