

A Prayer of Responsive Reading (Litany)

In Remembrance of the 3.11 Great Eastern Japan Disasters

A Litany based on the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus Christ, from the 5th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew

- Kyrie, eleison (repeat)

Leader: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Voice 1: O Lord our God, in the Great Disasters one year ago, nearly twenty-thousand people lost their lives, engulfed by the earthquake and the tsunami. Before nature's fury and irrationality, humans are such powerless beings. God, each and every one of us, physically and spiritually impoverished, can only lay down life and its meaning before You, entrusting to You the meaning of senseless death as well. Please speak to us - the words of Christ.

All: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Voice 2: Multitudes lost beloved family, lost friends, lost homes, lost jobs, and were driven from their hometowns. That sadness has not been soothed, those tears have not been dried. O Lord, have mercy on us. Please permit us our continued grief. Please allow us to cry, to mourn. And in the midst of our suffering please speak to us - Your words of compassion and comfort.

All: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Voice 3: Even while encountering such hardship and affliction, there are people who once again are plowing the soil and sowing seeds, or going back out on their boats to fish. There are people who, while living in temporary housing, greet volunteer workers with smiles on their faces. We are being shown the true meekness of those who have known sorrow. O Lord, please reveal to them - Your words of promise.

All: Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Voice 4: O Lord our God, all the people, the victims foremost among them, not only seek comfort but also thirst for righteousness: as quick an end as possible to the nuclear power plant accident, open and reliable information, honest politics, prompt administration, reconstruction measures that place value on human life, and support for the weak and disadvantaged. In reality, we all hunger not for wealth or possessions, but for truth and righteousness. O Lord, please speak to us - Your words of encouragement for those who seek righteousness.

All: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Voice 5: To support the survivors, and to share in their sorrow, offerings, charitable donations, and volunteers came from all over Japan and the world. In churches everywhere, prayer continues. When we connect with, share with, or pray for one another, a certain power is formed, and the strength of both parties is renewed. We are then made aware of the true compassion that is continually being poured out from God. O Lord, from now on as well, please call me into rich communion with others.

All: Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Voice 6: When we survey the after-effects of this unthinkable damage, when we think of the overwhelmingly long path to restoration, both we and the survivors lose heart, and are on the verge of being swallowed up by anger or our tendency to succumb. O Lord, please purge this from our hearts. Please grant us a heart that believes, that maintains hope. Please grant us the kind of love that encompasses healthy self-worth, is grateful for life, and is accepting of others. And God, please help us to be able to see you.

All: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Voice 7: God, in the midst of this tragedy, please bless each and every person who, with everything they have, is fighting for the recovery of lives, recovery of society, and recovery of the environment. May the struggles at the accident site, struggles on the medical front, the restoration of local administration, and relief work initiatives, be shaped by you and given significance as a “path of peacemaking.” May society itself – in its efforts to reconstruct, to be reborn – show God’s peace. O Lord, use us as instruments of Your peace.

All: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison

Leader: Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Voice 8: God, let us part ways with those mistaken things that were made clear to us through our experiences in the Great Disasters - things we should have parted with before. To show God’s will in this world, may we live in such a way as to speak the things that should be spoken, choose the things that should be chosen, and reject the things that should be rejected. God, please protect us and support us as we strive to live according to your will.

All: Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.

- Sing: Kyrie, eleison (repeat)