

Litany on or before September 11

From the National Religious Campaign Against Torture

You are invited to use or adapt these prayers for your congregation, community or interfaith gathering. You can use the litany in its entirety or portions of it. You can use several leaders. You might light candles or use another symbol during each line of the “Remembering our Grief” section.

Remembering our Grief

Leader: At this time of remembering September 11, 2001, let us pray.

Leader: We remember the shock, horror and fear of that day.

All: We turn to you, O God, for security and strength.

Leader: We remember the anxiety over the loss of our sense of safety.

All: We seek your comfort and peace, O God.

Leader: We grieve for the victims of all of the tragedies of that day: those killed, injured, and lost.
(silence)

We entrust them to your presence, O God, for all eternity. We remember all of those whose hearts are heavy with the loss of family, loved ones and friends at this anniversary.

All: We ask you to surround them, comfort and sustain them.

Leader: We remember the spirit of unity, in our own nation, and the outpouring of support and compassion from around the world following the 9-11 attacks.

All: We ask for your guidance in helping us to rekindle that spirit.

Leader: We grieve the violence that followed from that violence of September 11th and pray for the victims:

All of those killed, injured, damaged, and displaced by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
(silence)

All of those who have been tortured in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and secret prisons around the world. (silence)

All of those who have been denied justice. (silence)

All: We turn to you, God of justice and peace, for guidance and strength to choose the path of life that you have set before us and to follow in the ways of compassion and love.

Prayer of Repentance

Leader: God, over and over you call your sons and daughters, and whole nations, to acknowledge wrongs.

For acts of revenge instead of reconciliation. (silence)

For engaging in torture. (silence)

For denying justice to members of the human family. (silence)

We have failed to see the sacred in every human being, those from every country and every religion.

We have failed to seek and pursue peace.

We have lacked courage and failed to speak against the demonizing of people of other religions.

We have not been persistent enough in our efforts to end U.S.-sponsored torture.

All: Trusting in your mercy and compassion, we repent of these wrongs, and pray for your forgiveness.

Vision for the Future

Leader: Lift up before us, O God, your vision of how we can move from this day into lives more consistent with your will.

All: Help us to seek your will.

Leader: Let us see every child, every person everywhere, as equally precious in your sight.

All: Help us to seek your will.

Leader: Let us actively engage in peacemaking.

All: Help us to seek your will.

Leader: Let us see your image in every person, and denounce all forms of torture, cruelty, inhumanity.

All: Help us to seek your will.

Leader: Let us find ways to live together as one human family, caring for one another as you care for each of us.

All: Help us to seek your will.

(Those present can be invited to lift up their own statements of vision for the future.)

God of compassion and hope, guide us as we seek to live in harmony and to provide a peaceful tomorrow for our children and our children's children.

All: Amen.