

Opposition to Torture: Two Prayers of Recommitment

As Disciples of Christ with a conviction that torture is morally wrong, we are deeply saddened by this failure to prohibit the use of waterboarding, mock executions, induced hypothermia and other forms of torture. When we abandon the moral values which we have championed since the founding of our nation, we forfeit our greatest source of strength and global leadership. By vetoing H.R. 2082, the President chose to defy not only the will of both houses of Congress but also the will of the American people to uphold our deepest convictions.

As Christians, we now recommit ourselves to the important work of healing the soul of our nation and healing the wounds inflicted on those who have been tortured. As long as they continue to suffer, we must not forget the "fierce urgency of now." Torture is a moral issue, and by working together to end U.S.-sponsored torture we will try to be faithful to a God who demands that we respect the dignity of all human beings.

Help us in this as in all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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Oh God who hears and knows and redeems all suffering,

At the heart of our longing, there is a cry for compassion. In the midst of war as we work and pray for peace, all the world's people must nourish a kernel of compassion from which a true and lasting peace may grow.

Mighty God, as you have stood with the saints, sages and prophets of the world's great traditions, as you have stood with our ancestors who have cried, "Peace, Peace" when there was no peace, we pray to feel your strength and presence. We honor your name when we courageously speak out against those actions that harm the soul of our nation, none more than the torture of body, mind, and spirit of one human being at the hands of another.

We hold in our hearts those who have been tortured. Their suffering will not be forgotten or silenced so long as we give voice to their plight.

We hold in our hearts those who have engaged in torture and pray they will take up the powerful path of redemption. May they cease and desist and turn away from this path that corrupts their souls.

And for those who would sully our nation's name out of fear, our hopeful prayers envision a new day, when leaders will find strength in the power of compassion and peace.

By our prayers and actions may we attain forgiveness for what we have allowed to occur in our name. May we be worthy to do good deeds in Your eyes.

And let us say, Amen.