

Leader: Hope in the very condition for the possibility of believing and loving.

All: Creator God, increase our hope.

Leader: Hope is the capacity in each of us that is open to God's truth and love.

All: Creator God, increase our hope.

Leader: Hope is the dynamism that carries us from now to then inclining us to look from the present to the future, from what is, to what is still to come, and on to what might be. It looks for the coming of the new, that which has never been seen before.

Closing Prayer

In the power of the creative spirit of God, we've prayed together to light a candle of hope within the hearts of all people who are faced with difficult situations. Just as we find hope in others, we too can be instruments of hope. We trust that our God will not grow tired or weary and that God's understanding is such that no one can fathom. God gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youth grow tired and weary and young people stumble and fall; but those who hope in our God will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not grow faint.

Creator God, help us to understand more deeply this mysterious reality called "hope," which comes only as a gift from you. Continue to stir up hope in our hearts. May it find a home in us and room to grow so that our life may speak of one long season of hope. We pray in confidence. Amen.

Closing Song: *Everything Will Live* David Haas

Resources adapted from:

- *Hope Begins Where Hope Begins*, Michael Downey, Orbis Books, Maryknoll 1998
- 2012 Washington D.C. Declaration *Turning the Tide Together: A Declaration to End the AIDS Epidemic*
- IHM Response to The Washington D.C. Declaration
- A Handbook on HIV/AIDS, WCC, Geneva 2004

Practical suggestions for response/action:

I will pray daily for my sisters and brothers who suffer with AIDS.
I will seek out, pray over and discuss materials on HIV/AIDS and racism with others.
I will notice what or how medical or other care gets provided and to whom.
I will use my influence to educate others on the connections of HIV/AIDS and racism.
I will respond to advocacy opportunities on issues of race and HIV/AIDS.

We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of the members of the IHM Undoing Racism and HIV/AIDS Committees who prepared this prayer service.



Hope to Hold Onto

Hope

It hovers in dark corners
before the lights are turned on,
it shakes sleep from its eyes
and drops from mushroom gills,
it explodes in the starry heads
of dandelions turned sages,
it sticks to the wings of green angels
that sail from the tops of maples.

It sprouts in each occluded eye
of the many-eyed potato,
it lives in each earthworm segment
surviving cruelty,
it is the motion that runs the tail of a dog,
it is the mouth that inflates the lungs
of the child that has just been born.

It is the singular gift
we cannot destroy in ourselves,
the argument that refutes death,
the genius that invents the future,
all we know of God.

It is the serum which makes us swear
not to betray on another;
it is in this poem, trying to speak.

~ Lisel Mueller ~



Dec. 1, 2012

WORLD AIDS DAY – DEC. 1, 2012
IHM PRAYER SERVICE
For and with all who suffer from
HIV/AIDS



Introduction

As people of faith we are called to create an environment of hope, compassion, and care for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. On this global day of prayer and reflection for people with HIV/AIDS, please pray for an end to stigma and discrimination and for the justice to alleviate the conditions of racism, sexism and poverty that promote the transmission of this deadly disease. Racism, sexism and poverty are the bases of some of the most extreme and serious acts of discrimination and violations of human rights globally.

No one imagined 30 years ago that AIDS would become the deadliest epidemic in history. Since 1981, AIDS has killed more than 25 million people, infected 40 million others and left a legacy of unspeakable loss, hardship, fear and despair. According to UN projections, Africa, where the virus has wrought the most devastation, could reach 100 million by 2025.

Let us pray:

Creator God – God of our hoping, God of our dreaming – you are the great dreamer and the source of all our hope. We recognize that all of us are affected by HIV/AIDS. We give thanks for signs of hope, for growing understanding, for medical advances, for changing attitudes and behavior, and for greater awareness and concern in your people.

You fill us with hope; you call us to deeper hope, to dreams still undreamed and to visions still becoming. Awaken us to a deeper way of seeing. Awaken us to a brighter vision that our world may be a place of healing, peace, and hope for all. We ask this in faith. Amen

Opening Song: *Gather Us In*

Reading I: The Washington D.C. Declaration 2012

Turning the Tide Together: A Declaration to End the AIDS Epidemic

Three decades of tenacious community advocacy, research, and service provision have brought the world to the brink of a scenario unthinkable a few short years ago: the possibility of beginning to end the AIDS epidemic in our lifetimes. The losses have been incalculable; the gains extraordinary. But now, through new scientific advances, and societal, political and human rights gains, we have discovered that it is possible to assemble and deliver a package of proven strategies, which, if taken to scale, can turn the tide on AIDS.

We still need a cure and a vaccine. But we must scale up our resources and efforts using the tools we have today to dramatically curb new infections and improve the health of tens of millions of people with HIV/AIDS. Millions of lives will be saved.

Turning the tide against the HIV/AIDS epidemic will take concerted leadership at all levels of government, health systems, academic and non-governmental organizations. We must strive for multi-disciplinary approaches that respect and uphold the human rights and dignity of all people affected by the epidemic. The goal of beginning to end the AIDS epidemic is ambitious, but achievable. It is within our grasp.

Response: *Taste and See*

Readings II and III

“For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself in not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with patient endurance” ~Romans 8: 24-25

“Hope begins where hope begins” ~Jon Sobrino

Sobrino’s words seem to express that great mystery at the core of human freedom and responsibility, that mystery we name hope. Without it we do not live. Indeed, wherever there is life there is hope. Traces of it are found each time we take the next step. Because of its light, we turn the page and we are able to look from one moment to the next. It looks to a future that can come only as a gift. It begins where it begins. And hope, the deep-down kind, has no end. It is like faith. It is no less than love.

Quiet Reflection

- What words of hope does The Washington, D.C. Declaration speak to me? To our world?
- What words of hope does God speak to me? To our world?
- How does our work speak hope to others?
- How does our world speak hope to others?

Let us Pray...

Leader: Hope is the openness to the light of faith and to the action of love. Though hope is a gift, it demands that we recognize it as such, accept, cooperate with it and make it our own. Hope is at once a gift and our activity. We grow in hope by being hopeful, by acting hopefully.

All: Creator God, increase our hope.