

Franciscan Prayer for *International Women's Day*

Lord, make me an instrument of peace:

Bless all women who daily strive to bring peace to their communities, their homes, and their hearts. Give them strength to continue to turn swords into plowshares.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love:

We pray for all women who face prejudice, inequality, and gender disparities. Help us see and to face the discrimination against women in all the many forms it may take.

Where there is injury, pardon:

Comfort all women who suffer from the pain of war, violence, and abuse. Help them to become instruments of their own reconciliation and peace.

Where there is division, unity:

Forgive all women and men who let differences breed hate and discrimination. Let your example of valuing all of creation help us to see that we are equal partners in the stewardship of your world.

Where there is darkness, light; where there is untruth, truth:

Comfort all women who struggle in the darkness of abuse, poverty, and loneliness. May we stand with them in light to acknowledge their suffering and strive to remove the burdens of shame or embarrassment.

Where there is doubt, true faith:

We pray for all women who live in fear of their husbands, fathers, and forces that control their lives. Help them to be empowered to be their true selves through your everlasting love and faith.

Where there is despair, hope:

We pray for all women who live in the despair of poverty, violence, trafficking, slavery, and abuse. May the light of your love bring them hope.

Where there is sadness, new joy:

Help us to see the strength and goodness in all women and men.

Transform our hearts to celebrate the love and grace of all people.

And may we be blessed with the courage of St. Clare of Assisi to follow our own path of love for you and all sisters and brothers.

by Deborah Hirt

