

A Joint Call for Prayer
Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), National Council of Churches of India
(NCCI) and Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI)

Moved by the pain and suffering of the people of Ukraine caused by war, we join world leaders and the leadership of our respective global and regional communions in calling for an unconditional ceasefire.

We uphold the citizens and inhabitants of Ukraine especially elderly, sick, people with disability, women and children who are the most often among the greatest targets of violence and war. We believe that we have a responsibility to pray for the transformation of leaders who take up arms in anger or revenge. May God's protection and providence be upon Ukraine and Russia by which the entire region shall experience peace for ever.

Responding to the present situation in Ukraine, Pope Francis said, "My heart aches greatly at the worsening situation in Ukraine." World Council of Churches appealed to the churches around the world to "...pray for a change of hearts and minds, for de-escalation, and for dialogue instead of threats." The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) called for an immediate end to the attacks on Ukraine and requested the churches to pray for restoration of peace. Harkening to this clarion call we, CBCI, NCCI and EFI, the ecumenical fellowships in India together in solidarity with all people of goodwill are encouraged to observe Wednesday, the 2nd March 2022 as a day of prayer and fasting (in many traditions it is Ash Wednesday). The attached intercessory prayers are recommended to be prayed weekly during the season of Lent on any suitable day.

The God revealed to us in Scripture is a God who has suffered at the hands of an empire, and so let us together pray for the accompaniment and intervention of God within our situations. We make this Lent even more special by keeping this intention in mind for peace and harmony in the world, in Ukraine and in our own nation.

Archbishop Felix Machado
Secretary General, CBCI

Rev Asir Ebenezer
General Secretary, NCCI

Rev Vijayesh Lal
General Secretary, EFI

**Proposed Litany for all Christians who may recite this every week during
Lent on any suitable day.**

Leader: At a time when peace and harmony are the most sought after gifts by the whole humanity, let us, as one community of Christians bring our prayers before the Lord, who is the Prince of Peace.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

1. For our Church leaders, that inspired by the Gospels and the Holy Spirit they may strive to accompany flock in their distress and pain by uniting them centred on the Lord.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love.

2. For solidarity in our global human family, that we may work together to protect those who are most vulnerable and most in need.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

3. For our leaders in public office, that they continue to work for good governance, and keep the needs of the poor and marginalized always before them.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love.

4. For peace and harmony in Ukraine, in Russia and in the entire Baltic region that the Lord may show our world leaders the futility of war which is not the solution, but rather war brings more suffering, poverty and unemployment especially to the most vulnerable.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

5. For a greater openness among world leaders, to see life beyond the boundaries of race, religion, and nation to affirm common humanity that upholds the coexistence of all.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

6. For all people who are working to build peace in their communities: that they may inspire others by their example and be strengthened to carry on, even in the hardest times.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

7. For the strength on our part to teach our children how to resolve differences non-violently and respectfully, and the courage to model it in our own behavior.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

8. For our faith community, that we may celebrate and welcome the diverse faces of Christ in our worship, our ministries, and our leadership.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

9. For all people who have been affected by violence as they rebuild their lives: that they may find peace in their hearts to move forward with hope.

Response: Lord shower us with your peace and love

Concluding prayer:

Good and gracious God,
who loves and delights in all people,
we stand in awe before you,
knowing that the spark of life within each person
is the spark of your divine life.

May our hearts and minds be open to celebrate
similarities and differences among our sisters and brother (people).

Send your healing and reconciling Spirit in order to bind
the wounds created by war, pain, death and suffering,
and to promote understanding, justice, and love.

We place our hopes for peace and harmony in our committed action
and in your living presence in our neighbors.

May all peoples live in peace!
Amen.