

# The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday May 28, 2006

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On this day in AD 57, Paul's brethren praised God for his ministry to the Gentiles. But warning him of rumors that he'd been slighting Jewish customs, they asked that he pay the Temple fees for purification rites for four Jews. When Paul entered the Temple, he was attacked by some Jews, arrested, and imprisoned by Antonius Felix, procurator for Judea, and later sent to Rome where he was finally executed under Nero. Let us pray.

God of our forebears and of children yet to come:

We thank You for the gift of our country and for her ideals of liberty and justice for all.

We realize that before we were born and while we were yet too young to know the dangers we faced, while we were even later too distracted with our own daily lives, others were sent far away to foreign fields – lonely and scared, in harm's way every day, but doing what they had to do to fight to keep us safe and free. On this Memorial Day Sunday, when we can get so preoccupied with the weekend's bargains and the launching of summertime activities, we can easily fail to honor these young men and women who laid down their lives that we might enjoy leisure time and spending sprees in a land of freedom and plenty. Lord, move our minds to gratitude for them. May our lives yet begin to be worthy of the loss of their lives. May we, and our children's children, never forget the high price of freedom and may we never fail to be prepared to pay that price in full.

We pray for those whose memories of war are now nightmares of post-traumatic stress. They did not die but they've lost much of their will and ability to live. Comfort them in their coping with fears and isolation. Give them and their families hope in reintegration. And may we do all we can do to be sensitive to their needs and useful in practical ways.

We pray for all who are still risking life and limb in war zones as we sit here in safety. We pray for wisdom in all the decisions made in the field and here at home. May leaders at every level of responsibility know what to do and how to do it. And while we thank You for the freedom we have to criticize leaders, help us to be even more ready to pray for them, aware that the awful burdens of public office are not our daily experience.

Lord, bring peace with justice and mercy – all across this world and here in our homes.

With gratitude that Your holy will be done, we add the prayer Jesus taught us, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.