

Reflections and Prayers for Peace from the different faith traditions

Westminster Cathedral Hall, Saturday, 17 October 2026

Radhika Kadaba (Hindu)

Chair, Hindu Council of Wales

In the spirit of Assisi, we come together as people of different faiths, united in our hope for peace. Hindu wisdom teaches “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”— “The whole world is one family.” Every person deserves dignity, kindness and care.

A foundational pillar of this gathering is **universal brotherhood**—the belief that we share a common origin and destiny. The *Maha Upanishad* provides the definitive Hindu anchor for this ideology. The *Rig Veda*, one of the oldest scriptures in the world, explicitly commands humanity to align their actions for the collective global good.

That spirit is exemplified by this universal prayer from Hindu tradition.

*Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |
Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu, Maa Kashcid Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet |
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||*

Om Sarveshām Svastir-Bhavatu | Sarveshām Shāntir-Bhavatu |

Sarveshām Pūrnām-Bhavatu | Sarveshām Mangalam-Bhavatu ||

Om Shāntih Shāntih Shāntih ||

Meaning:

May everybody be happy. May everybody be free from illness. May everybody have good luck and may none fall on evil days. May everybody have good fortune. May there be peace in all.

May everybody realise his ambitions. May everybody rejoice everywhere. Om Peace! Peace! Peace

Our scriptures call us to join our hearts in a common purpose. Let us put this into practice: listen with respect, stand beside those who suffer, and build bridges across our differences.

Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra (Muslim)

Muslim Co-Chair, Christian Muslim Forum

One of the many names of God is Al-Salam, which means The Giver of Peace. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and all his brother Prophets) said, "You cannot enter heaven unless you believe, and you cannot believe until you love one another. Shall I not show you something which if you do will cause you to love one another? Spread the greeting of peace amongst you."

When we greet each other with peace, saying peace be upon you, it is a prayer for the other person. They will then respond offering a similar prayer by saying peace be upon you too. This simple action can help spread the spirit of peace and cause us to love one another.

Dr James Roberts (Christian)

Head of St Paul's Cathedral Institute

'Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God'

These words from the Gospel of Matthew shape the way Christians understand peace. Fundamentally, these words remind us that peacemaking is a task. It is *peacemakers* who are blessed; those who are actively sharing God's love in the world, upholding justice, and striving for reconciliation.

Those who make peace are not only blessed but are recognized as God's children. As children resemble their parents, so we reflect something of our Creator when we make peace.

But, like children (who need care and support from others), we can only do this with God's help, through faith and hope.

In the face of so many challenges to peace in our world, this verse reminds Christians to make peace, but also to put our hope in God for a world without conflict where peace shall reign.

Padideh Sabeti (Bahá'í)

Director, UK Bahai office of Public Affairs

The longing for peace is shared by humanity, yet its realisation requires profound transformation within individuals, communities and nations.

Bahá'ís have been assured that *“World peace is not only possible but inevitable.”* Yet the path towards it demands sustained effort and the creation of conditions in which peace can flourish.

Bahá'u'lláh reminds us that *“The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.”*

Central to this transformation is the power of the Word of God to touch and transform the human heart. Bahá'u'lláh calls upon us:

“Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbour, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face.

Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge.

Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men.

Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression.

Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive.

Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.”

In these words, we glimpse the spiritual qualities through which peace can take root in our hearts, shape our communities, and ultimately transform the relationships between nations.

Malcolm Deboo (Zoroastrian)

President, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

O Creator Ahura Mazda and Guardian Spirit of Best Truth and Righteousness!
Grant us authority and power through Truth, so that with the Good Mind we may bring peace and happiness to the world, of which O Creator Ahura Mazda you are indeed the first possessor.

(Ref: Gathas by Prophet Zarathushtra - Yasna 29.10)

May in this world obedience triumph over disobedience!

May peace triumph over discord!

May charity triumph over stinginess!

May devotion triumph over contempt!

May truth triumph over falsehood!

May moral order triumph over chaos!

(Ref: Yazna 60.4)

May these virtues mentioned which are the satisfaction of the righteous people, their blessings, guileless nature and thanksgiving come into this house!

Now for this gathering:

May there arise righteousness, sovereignty, prosperity, glory, and happiness!

May there arise always righteousness, power of holy man / woman and the Law of the Creator Ahura Mazda.

May there be long enduring predominance of this Religion of Ahura Mazda revealed by Zarathushtra!

(Ref: Yasna 60.1&2)

Righteousness is the best good and it is happiness.

Happiness is to him who is righteous for the sake of the best righteousness.

(Ref: Ashem Voho - Yasna 20)

Dr Mehool Sanghrajka MBE (Jain)

Director, Institute of Jainology

Twenty-five years after the historic gathering at Assisi, my father had the privilege of representing the Jain faith there.

Much has changed since then. Our world is scarred by war, threatened by climate change, and now faces the existential risks of artificial intelligence.

A prayer for peace has never been more relevant.

For Jains, the divine resides within every soul — human, animal or plant. Each soul journeys through life, experiencing its karma, and each possesses the potential for liberation.

From the perspective of the soul, **all life is equal.**

Jainism therefore teaches us to respect all life, practising compassion and non-violence in thought, word and deed.

Peace should not be an aspiration. It should be our natural state.

Khamemi savva jīve, savve jīvā khamantu me.

I forgive all living beings. May all living beings forgive me.

Brenda Dinsdale (Jewish)

Hon Life President, Newcastle Reformed Synagogue

Our world

Our world, this world we share, is a place of infinite beauty

Of sunsets and sunrises, of gentle rain, of magical winters of snow and ice.

And yet it is not without problems.

Our world suffers droughts and floods, extremes of temperature, forest fires and arctic weather and famine.

We see the damage caused by wars and anger.

Our world, this world we share, where a child's smile can help heal life's challenges, is precious to us.

Coming together and praying together in a spirit of unity teaches us that we are all one people. Let us see the beauty of our world, and let us help the people of our world come together in understanding.

We pray, each in our own different language, but with a common feeling, for universal peace; for the power of our God to guide us in these turbulent times, and for us to have the wisdom to listen to the words of our God.

God, give strength to your people, and bless your people with peace.

Adonai oz l'ammo yittein, Adonai y'vareich et ammo va shalom

Let us say together

Amen

Dr Desmond Biddulph CBE (Buddhist)

President, The Buddhist Society

The Dhammapada, verse 5

Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased.
This is an eternal law.

This is perhaps the most direct expression of the Buddhist understanding of reconciliation.
Retaliation perpetuates suffering; peace requires breaking the cycle of hostility.

The Dhammapada, verse 183

To avoid all evil, to cultivate good, and to purify the Heart: this is the teaching of all the
Buddhas.

It requires moral conduct and the cultivation of the mind.

The Karaṇiya Mettā Sutta (Sutta Nipāta 1.8)

The Buddha invites us to extend loving-kindness to all living beings, without exception, with
the same protective concern that a mother has for her only child.

A Meditation on Peace

May we recognise that peace begins within the human heart.

May we become aware of anger without being governed by it, of fear without allowing it to
become hatred, and of suffering without turning away.

May wisdom guide our understanding, and compassion guide our actions.

May the peace we cultivate within ourselves shape the way we speak, listen, and respond to
one another.

May our inner calm help us meet conflict with patience, seek understanding before judgment,
and make room for forgiveness.

May peaceful hearts strengthen families, friendships, and communities, creating spaces
where every person is treated with dignity and care.

May those who are divided find reconciliation, those who are afraid find security, and those
who suffer find relief.

May all beings be free from enmity.

May all beings live in peace harmony and good will.

Professor Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia OBE, KSG (Sikh)

Spiritual Leader and Chairman, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ)

Allow me to begin with the Sikh greeting: Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.

Sustained peace is a common aspiration for humanity, a shared value for religions, and a core goal of the United Nations. All religions contain within them a wealth of wisdom and spiritual intelligence on what peace looks and feels like. From a Sikh perspective, peace is reflected beautifully in *Sukhmani Sahib* – often called the “Psalm of Peace” or the “Jewel of Peace” – composed by our fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

It reflects within it the duty of religious practitioners as peace-seekers, peace-keepers, and peace-builders.

While some may describe Sikhi as a religion or faith, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji speaks of *dharam* - a way of life shaped by the Divine order and by the cultivation of sacred qualities within ourselves, in our relationships with one another, and throughout all creation.

Dharam evokes the image of a seed of devotion, piety and faithfulness, nourished by selfless service, remembrance of the Divine and spiritual nurturing. It also conveys an order of Divine accountability and governance under God Almighty, to whom all creation is answerable and from whom all receive love, guidance and protection. Rooted in trust and hope, *dharam* leaves no room for hopelessness. It calls us to recognise that responsibility is a precursor to rights, and that the Divine sovereignty of God is the foundation of *dharam*.

The word *dharam* appears some 285 times in our sacred scripture. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji contains the revealed wisdom of thirty-six spiritually enlightened contributors: six Sikh Gurus and thirty Bhagats from diverse religious and caste traditions of the time. We thus honour Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as a unique interreligious scripture. It is revered by all Sikhs as their eternal Guru since 1708.

As reflected in Sikh scriptural teachings, ‘ghar sukh vasiya, bahar sukh paiya, kaho Nanak gur mantar drirhaiya’. Thus, *dharam* sets a standard and aspiration for how we mobilise this innate spiritual potential, to practice and sustain peace within our inner lives, outer worlds, and universe.

By incessantly remembering God throughout the unpredictable spectrum of life’s experiences, may we be blessed by Him with a sustained sense of peace within ourselves, enabling us to build peace in the world around us. We should adorn ourselves with the treasures of virtues: love, truthfulness, discipline, compassion, contentment and utter humility.

We, people of all faith traditions – Abrahamic, Dharmic, Indigenous – should step forward and cooperate, collaborate, and raise our voices for peace in the spirit Assisi.