



SHOL PAX Christi

A Novena For the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

August 1—9, 2026

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day One—August 1st

In August 2025, Pope Leo XIV sent a message of hope to Bishop Alexis Shirama of Hiroshima that said,

“Nuclear arms offend our shared humanity and betray the dignity of creation, whose harmony we are called to safeguard.”

Quoting Pope Francis, the Pope said that in a time “of mounting global tensions and conflicts”, Hiroshima and Nagasaki stand as symbols of memory that, he said, “urge us to reject the illusion of security founded on mutually, assured destruction.” Instead, he continued, “we must forge a global ethic rooted in justice, fraternity and the common good.”

[Vatican News, Aug 5, 2025]

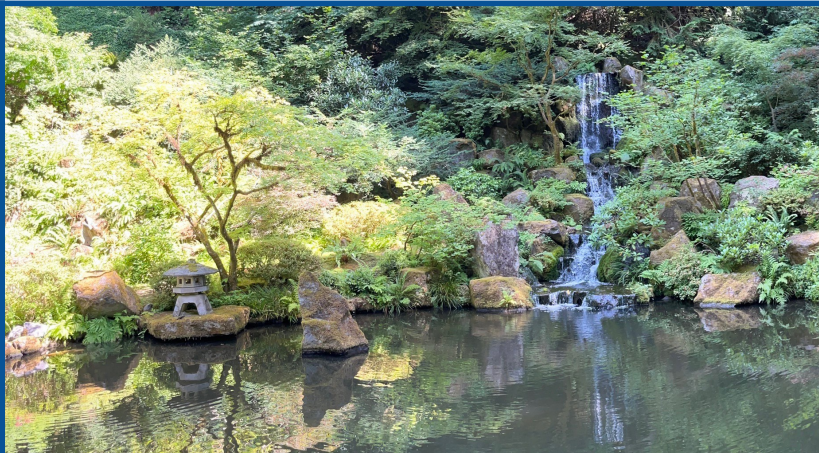
We join together in praying this novena to implore the Blessed Mother’s intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons. Our reflections will be based on the work of:

the [PAX Christi New England Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#) (PCAN)

the [Back from the Brink campaign's Beginner's Guide to Nuclear weapons](#)

the [PAX Christi Novena for Nuclear Disarmament](#)

and [Pope Leo's Magnifica Humanitas](#)



Let us begin...

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Amen.

Our Father

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. **Amen.**

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. **Amen.**

Hail Mary, full of grace, ...

Hail Mary, full of grace, ...

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins.

Save us from the fires of Hell.

Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those
who are in most need of Your Mercy.



Reflection for Decade One

The devastating force and deadly toxicity of nuclear weapons sets them apart from all other weapons. Even a limited nuclear war would kill up to 2 billion people through climatic effects that would cause global famine. A full-scale nuclear war threatens humanity itself. The nuclear weapons of today are far more powerful than those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is time to wrap our minds around the immensity of the problem and as Pope Leo XIV says "the affirmation of the truth must push through: **it is not atomic weapons that generate peace, but disarmament.**" [Vatican News, Aug 5, 2025]

Let us pray for a world free from all nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

To prevent nuclear war, we must challenge the misconception that nuclear weapons make us safe. The doctrine of nuclear deterrence, suggests that adversaries will not risk attacking a nation that may retaliate with its nuclear weapons. Yet the United States, Britain, Israel, Pakistan, Russia, and India have all been attacked despite possessing nuclear weapons. Instead of reducing the amount of war, the world is currently experiencing more active wars than at any point since World War 2, with 103 states currently involved war in some way.

**Let us pray for a world free from all
nuclear weapons and an end to all wars.**

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Oh, My Jesus (Fatima Decade Prayer)

Reflection for Decade Three

Another myth that needs to be confronted is the idea that the threat of nuclear war is a thing of the past. In reality, an estimated 2,100 nuclear weapons around the world are kept ready to launch in an instant. Tensions are rising globally, with provocative rhetoric becoming commonplace. If there's a misunderstanding or false alarm, it would be all too easy for a decision maker to order the launch of nuclear weapons without thinking it through.

In fact, there have already been dozens of incidents—that are publicly known—where the United States has nearly triggered a nuclear disaster by mistake. While we are fortunate that each error was caught in time, the record shows that nuclear weapons systems – and the human beings that control them – can and do fail.

Let us pray for a world free from all nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Four

Another dangerous myth about nuclear weapons is that we could use technology to stop a nuclear attack. Even though the United States has spent \$400 billion in the last 70 years on ballistic missile defense projects, **there is still no effective missile defense against a large scale missile attack.** In 2025, the Trump administration proposed a massive increase in strategic missile defense funding known as the “Golden Dome,” intended to protect the United States by detecting and destroying threats like ballistic and cruise missiles. More effective than any missile defense system would be for countries that possess nuclear weapons to negotiate arsenal reductions and eventual elimination.

In the event of a large-scale missile attack, it is unlikely there could ever be an effective defense system that could stop such a barrage. But by pretending that effective defense systems exist, nuclear conflict might seem more manageable or winnable to decisionmakers and military planners. It also provides cover for world leaders to rattle their sabers in place of diplomacy, putting millions - if not billions - of lives in danger as they test the limits of nuclear deterrence theory.

[Let us pray for a world free from all nuclear weapons.](#)

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



**DISPEL THE MYTHS
ABOUT NUCLEAR
WEAPONS**

Reflection for Decade Five

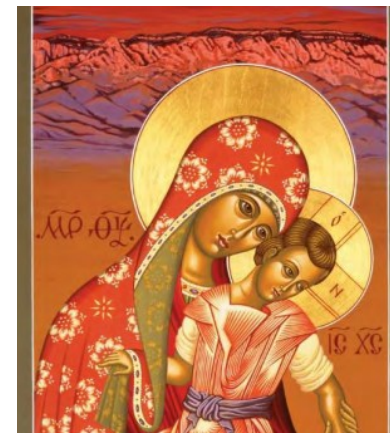
The final myth to dispel is that we don't need to worry about nuclear weapons right now. While funding for programs that provide basic human needs and security keep getting slashed, the United States spent **\$110.344 billion on nuclear weapons in 2024**. Today, a new nuclear arms race is underway. The United States is pursuing plans to replace its entire arsenal of missiles, bombers, and submarines, even though nuclear weapons are ill-equipped for the challenges of the 21st century like climate change, pandemics, and cyber threats.

To quote from Pope Leo XIV's Magnifica Humanitas:

"The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which came into force in 2021 with the support of over seventy countries, is an important step. However, it risks remaining largely symbolic since the major nuclear powers have not agreed to it. This has led to the widespread yet erroneous belief that nuclear deterrence is an indispensable prerequisite for security. This has also contributed to a new arms race, which is hard to control and accompanied by the gradual dismantling of nuclear reduction agreements, as well as the development of "miniaturized" weapons, that make their use seem like a more viable option.

Let us pray for a world free from nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.

Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle to
drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice, proper material
comfort, and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night One

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day Two—August 2nd

Yesterday we reflected on the myths the nuclear weapons make us safe, that their threat is a thing of the past, that technology could stop a nuclear attack, and that we don't need to worry about nuclear weapons right now. And we prayed for a world free from all nuclear weapons.

Today, let us consider nuclear weapons as a humanitarian issue.

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade One

Nuclear weapons are uniquely harmful to human health. In addition to the mass casualties caused directly by their explosions and the subsequent highly lethal fallout, nuclear weapons also release radioactive materials as they're being built or tested. These unstable atoms can linger in the soil and atmosphere for centuries, and even millennia in some cases. No level of exposure is safe.

Let us pray for all people whose lives are impacted by the production, testing, and storage of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

Nuclear weapons are made from uranium or plutonium, which is derived from uranium. Uranium miners and those living near mining sites suffer health impacts such as tuberculosis and lung cancer. In the United States, these people are primarily Native American.

Let us pray for the indigenous people whose health and homes have suffered from nuclear testing and uranium mining on their lands.

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



**Indigenous Rights Are
Non-Negotiable**

Reflection for Decade Three

Underground and above-ground testing of these weapons has created generations of “downwinders” — people who became ill from living downwind of testing sites. Workers in the U.S. nuclear weapons complex also suffer from exposure to radiation and harmful chemicals. Although compensation programs for downwinders and nuclear workers exist, they are often limited and elusive; many who apply for these programs have had their claims denied.

Let us pray for all people whose health and homes are impacted by the production and storage of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Four

One of these programs is the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA), which has provided more than \$2.6 billion to people who have developed specified illnesses like cancer from nuclear weapons testing or production. When RECA was enacted in 1990, it notably did not cover downwinders in Utah, Idaho, Mohave County, Arizona, and New Mexico – including those affected by the Trinity Test. Activists worked for many years to fix these gaps and extended the program as it neared expiration in 2024. RECA lapsed for over a year before it was reinstated and expanded in 2025.

Let us pray for an acknowledgement that the toxic waste in the production and storage of nuclear weapons is a humanitarian issue.

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



A warning sign outside a uranium mine, photographed in 1972.
National Archives photo no. 412-DA-1152.

Reflection for Decade Five

A world free of nuclear weapons is not only safer, but also healthier and more just. Uranium mining on Navajo lands, testing on the Marshall Islands, and radioactive contamination around the Nevada Test Site are just a few examples of how building and testing nuclear weapons has harmed the environment and impacted the health of so many communities. While world leaders gamble millions of lives on the hope that nuclear deterrence will hold, nobody is safe. But we can all play a role in changing things and building the world we deserve—one where we invest in human needs and a healthy planet over weapons of mass destruction.

Let us pray for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ
and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.
Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.
May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Two

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day 3 – August 3

We come together for our third night praying this novena to implore the Blessed Mother's intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Yesterday we reflected on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons. Tonight, let us consider nuclear weapons as a racial justice issue.

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Oh, My Jesus (Fatima Decade Prayer)

Reflection for Decade One

The nuclear era has been inextricably tied to racism from day one. As nuclear weapons have been produced, tested, and used, communities of color have borne the brunt.

In 1945 the Trinity Test, the first ever detonation of a nuclear weapon, occurred in South Central New Mexico, an area populated with Indigenous and Latin American communities. Residents were neither informed nor protected from the effects of this explosion, and fought for nearly 80 years to receive compensation before finally becoming eligible for the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act in 2025.

Let us pray for racial justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father—Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)—Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

While scientists involved in the Trinity Test took precautions against radiation exposure for their own staff, science historian Alex Wellerstein notes there was a lack of comparable concern for the Japanese civilians who would later be exposed. According to the book "African Americans Against the Bomb" by Vincent Intondi, African Americans were among the first to criticize Truman's decision to drop the bomb. Some activists believe that racial bias played a role in the decision to bomb Japan, rather than Germany, and viewed nuclear weapons as a threat to freedom everywhere.

Let us pray for racial justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father—Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)—Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

Nuclear armed-nations like the United States routinely tested nuclear weapons in areas inhabited by ethnic minorities. Over the course of nearly two decades, the U.S. conducted over 100 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands and surrounding areas, known as the Pacific Proving Grounds. Inhabitants of these islands were forcibly removed from their homes, and experienced both acute radiation poisoning and long-term health consequences from this exposure.

All the while, the U.S. government was actively conducting biological and radiation exposure tests on Marshall Islanders. To this day, the U.S. government refuses to provide Medicaid to those affected.

Let us pray for racial justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Four

The uranium used for the bomb dropped by the United States on Nagasaki, was mostly mined from the Congo, a former Belgian colony. The Congolese miners who worked in the mine, where the uranium was extracted, were subjected to forced labor, harsh conditions, and exposure to radiation without proper protection. They were treated as “disposable and expendable”.

Nuclear waste is routinely dumped on Native lands in the United States and Canada, violating the 2008 UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This racial and colonial ecology in the nuclear fuel cycle harms Indigenous people. The largest United States nuclear accident occurred in Church Rock, New Mexico, in 1979, just three months after the more widely remembered Three Mile Island incident, yet it is little discussed today outside of New Mexico, highlighting the colonial politics of erasure in what kinds of nuclear waste disasters are remembered. *The Ultimate Coloniser: Challenging Racism and White Supremacy in Nuclear Weapons Policy Making* (2023) By Haleema Saadia (Co-Chair), Mari Faines (Co-Chair), Ananya Malhotra, Angela Suriyasene, Sara Al-Sayed, Stephanie Verlaan, Daniel Ajudeonu

Colonialist and hegemonic thinking continues to guide nuclear weapons policy today, with the United States and other nuclear armed nations holding the threat of nuclear violence over majority non-white countries, rather than through diplomacy, international cooperation and an understanding of global interdependence.

Let us pray for racial justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Five

In *Living in the Light of Christ's Peace*, Archbishop John Wester wrote:
According to U.S. Census Bureau data, New Mexico is 48% Hispanic and 12% Native American. Los Alamos County is 79% non-Hispanic White and has more millionaires per capita than any other county in the United States. In contrast, New Mexico has the highest percentage of children and seniors living in poverty. Further, the Land of Enchantment was recently ranked as 49th among all states in overall child well-being. All of this is evidence of the economic inequality and institutional racism that is endemic to our country.

Let us pray for racial justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ
and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.
Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.
May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Three

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day 4 – August 4

We come together for our fourth night praying this novena to implore the Blessed Mother's intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons. Yesterday we reflected on nuclear weapons as a racial justice issue and prayed for the *abolition of all nuclear weapons*. Tonight, let us consider nuclear weapons as an environmental issue.

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Oh, My Jesus (Fatima Decade Prayer)

Reflection for Decade One

If even a small fraction of the world's nuclear arsenals were to be used at the same time, the released soot and smoke would block sunlight from reaching the Earth's surface for years, drastically reducing average global temperatures and leading to famine that would likely kill billions of people worldwide. A full scale nuclear war between the U.S. and Russia could put enough soot in the upper atmosphere to chill the ocean, alter sea currents, and cause an ice age lasting at least a decade, killing off most, if not all, of humanity.

Let us pray for the health of our planet and for nuclear abolition.

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



Cloud from a nuclear test July 25, 1946 at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. National Archives photo no. 374-ANT-18-35326

Reflection for Decade Two

Scientists have also found that even a single nuclear explosion could trigger ecological consequences that reach far beyond where the bomb went off. The radiation would spread through the air and water, affecting plants and animals by causing habitat loss, contaminating food resources, and disrupting reproduction. All of this could lead to species extinctions that disrupt the food chain and reverberate through the ecosystem.

Let us pray for the health of our planet and for nuclear abolition.

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



Reflection for Decade Three

Even if a nuclear war doesn't happen, current methods for handling radioactive waste from testing and producing nuclear weapons are incompatible with the realities of climate change. The Runit Dome was constructed in the Marshall Islands to store 31 million cubic feet of nuclear waste collected from America's Cold War-era nuclear weapons tests. That waste will remain hazardous for tens of thousands of years. Sea-level rise induced by climate change threatens the low-elevation islands, causing many to fear that the radioactive waste will begin leaking into the surrounding waters.

A concrete dome on Runit Island, known as the Runit Dome, stores dangerous waste from nuclear weapons tests. Photo by Underway In Ireland, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

Let us pray for the health of our planet and for nuclear abolition.

Our Father — Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Four

No one country can tackle either climate change or the threat of nuclear weapons alone. But both issues are existential threats to humanity, requiring us all to work together to mitigate the damage caused and prevent further harm.

In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis stated, "War always does grave harm to the environment and to the cultural riches of peoples, risks which are magnified when one considers nuclear arms and biological weapons. Politics must pay greater attention to foreseeing new conflicts and addressing the causes which can lead to them."

**Let us pray for the health of our planet
and for nuclear abolition.**

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Oh, My Jesus (Fatima Decade Prayer)



**PROTECT LIFE.
PRESERVE THAT WHICH
SUSTAINS LIFE.
CARE FOR
OUR COMMON HOME.**

POPE FRANCIS, *Laudato Si'*

Reflection for Decade Five

In 2019, Pope Francis gave an address on nuclear weapons in the city of Nagasaki, Japan, saying:

“Here in this city which witnessed the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of a nuclear attack, our attempts to speak out against the arms race will never be enough. The arms race wastes precious resources that could be better used to benefit the integral development of peoples and to protect the natural environment. In a world where millions of children and families live in inhumane conditions, the money that is squandered and the fortunes made through the manufacture, upgrading, maintenance and sale of ever more destructive weapons, and an affront crying out to heaven.”

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ
and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.

Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Four

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day 5 – August 5

We come together for our fourth night praying this novena to implore the Blessed Mother's intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Yesterday we reflected on the environmental impact of nuclear weapons and prayed for the *abolition of all nuclear weapons*. Tonight, let us consider nuclear weapons as an issue of women's rights and children's safety.

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Oh, My Jesus (Fatima Decade Prayer)



Reflection for Decade One

When nuclear weapons are used or tested, women and girls are disproportionately harmed. Research has shown that women exposed to radiation are more likely to experience cancer, heart disease, and stroke, compared to men. Studies on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki suggest women may be up to twice as likely to develop and die from solid cancer due to ionizing radiation exposure.

Despite all this, women are conspicuously under-represented when it comes to making decisions about nuclear weapons. In addition, while there is awareness of this disproportionate harm to women, research on radiation exposure has historically been based on White men.

**Let us pray for the protection
of women and the
abolition of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

Pregnant women exposed to high doses of ionizing radiation have the risk of damage to their children, including malformation, spontaneous abortion and stillbirths.

**Let us pray for the protection
of women and the
abolition of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

Children are also more vulnerable to the impacts of nuclear weapons for many reasons. Their bodies are smaller and frailer, making them more likely to die from the blast itself or to get trapped under collapsing rubble. Because children have thinner skin, they are also more susceptible to deadly burn injuries. In a growing body, cells are also growing and dividing more rapidly, increasing the odds of a child dying from radiation sickness or suffering from cancer and other diseases as a result of radiation exposure.

**Let us pray for the protection of
children and the
abolition of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



*Photo from Japanese Friendship Garden &
Museum niwa.org*

Reflection for Decade Four

In the Marshall Islands, where the United States tested powerful nuclear weapons during the cold war, local children and infants became sick from the ionizing radiation and nuclear ash that rained down across the Islands. The fallout resembled snow and children, unaware of the danger, played in it and developed acute radiation sickness.

**Let us pray for the protection of children
and the abolition of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father — Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Five

In 2019, Pope Francis declared: “The arms race wastes precious resources that could be better used to benefit the integral development of peoples and to protect the natural environment. In a world where millions of children and families live in inhumane conditions, the money that is squandered and the fortunes made through the manufacture, upgrading, maintenance, and sale of ever more destructive weapons are an affront crying out to heaven.”

**Let us pray for the needs of children and families living in
poverty and the abolition of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father — Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ
and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.

Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Five

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day 6 – August 6

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. An estimated 60,000-80,000 were killed instantly while the death toll climbed to 140,000 by the end of 1945 as radiation took its grim toll.

Today, despite this unspeakable horror, the world's nuclear-armed states possess a combined total of about 12,100 nuclear warheads, putting the entire planet at risk of annihilation.

On this is the sixth night of our novena, we again implore the Blessed Mother's intercession, praying to Jesus, the Prince of Peace, to hear our prayers for peace and an end to nuclear weapons once and for all.

Our reflections will be based on Most Reverend John C. Wester's pastoral letter "Living in the Light of Christ's Peace" and the PAX Christi Novena for Nuclear Disarmament.



Photo of the Genbaku Dome from
the Asia-Pacific Journal
apjjf.org/2019/15/kingston

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade One

Today, we pray for the people of Hiroshima on the 81st anniversary of its bombing, especially for the Hibakusha, or witnesses/survivors. As they continue to bear the wounds of nuclear warfare, may they know healing and peace.

Let us pray for healing, peace, and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

For the victims of the Hiroshima bombing, may they rest in eternal peace.

Let us pray that perpetual light shine upon them.

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

In a February 1981 address to scientists of the United Nations University in Hiroshima, Pope Saint John Paul II spoke about how the wounds inflicted at Hiroshima and Nagasaki profoundly influence all of humanity. He observed, “Our future on this planet, exposed as it is to nuclear annihilation, depends upon one single factor: humanity must make a moral about-face.”^{p 11}

Let us pray for the future of our planet, for those who work for nuclear disarmament and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Reflection for Decade Four

Archbishop Wester states: “We are the people who designed and built these weapons of mass destruction. We were the first to use them. We must be the people to dismantle them and make sure they are never used again.”^{p 6}

Let us pray for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Reflection for Decade Five

We remember all those who lost their lives at Hiroshima, and recall the lasting effects of war on God’s holy people. We remember those who gave their lives to help those suffering after the bomb struck and who died of radiation sickness.

Let us pray for hope, for when the darkness covers the land and all seems lost, Christ’s light still shines for us. The light of Christ is still present to us and can show us the way.¹

Our Father — Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

¹ [80 Years Later, New Mexico Faith Leaders Return to Trinity Site to Pray for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament](#)

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



Photo of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial
Japan City Tour (japancitytour.com)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.

Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Six

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day Seven — August 7th

Welcome to the seventh night of our novena. We implore the Blessed Mother's intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Today we pray for all who are involved in conflicts and war around the globe, especially the people of Ukraine and Russia, the United States and the Middle East. May all forms of aggression cease and may every nation renew efforts to reestablish lasting peace.

Sign of the Cross

Apostle's Creed — Our Father

Hail Mary x3 — Glory Be

Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade One

For all migrants and refugees fleeing from violence in war-torn areas, famine, and oppression or persecution of any kind; may we welcome them as Christ and develop real and lasting solutions that protect human life and dignity.

Let us pray for an end to war and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father

Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

In the encyclical Magnifica Humanitas, Pope Leo XIV says: "The digital revolution is changing the nature of conflict... While Artificial Intelligence can enhance the defense and protection of civilians, it can also lower the threshold for the use of force, shield people from responsibility and foster a culture in which the enemy is reduced to a statistic and the victim to 'collateral damage.'" [183]

The Holy See has recently observed that the growing ease with which autonomous weapons systems can be deployed makes war more "feasible" and less subject to human control. This violates the principle that armed force should be used only as a last resort in cases of legitimate self-defense. For this reason, the development and use of AI in warfare must be subject to the most rigorous ethical constraints, to guarantee respect for human dignity and the sanctity of life and to avoid a race to develop such arms. [197]

Let us pray for that AI is never part of nuclear weapons systems and for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father

Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

[190] Today, however, we are witnessing a real paradigm shift in public discourse and in decisions regarding rearmament, with a troubling revival of war as an instrument of international politics, while the very ethical principles that had previously limited its use are being eroded. Regional conflicts that drag on over time, escalating tensions and reciprocal threats are becoming almost commonplace, and forms of conflict driven by the desire for territorial expansion that were thought to be overcome are re-emerging. Public opinion is gradually being shaped and conditioned by polarizing media narratives, which are often amplified by algorithms that prioritize conflict and confrontation.

Let us pray that all forms of aggression between nations cease and for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father — Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Four

[191] We are also witnessing a disconcerting loss of historical memory, as first-hand accounts of the Holocaust and the two World Wars are disappearing. This leads to a selective or distorted rewriting of the past, in a context where fake news and the manipulation of narratives obscure the lessons that have been learned. Without a living memory of the horrors of war, political decisions risk being made on the basis of power alone, without any consideration for the long-term consequences.

Let us pray for the preservation of lessons learned from the past and for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father — Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Five

[192] To all of this, the media and digital dimensions are adding new and decisive elements. Communication networks, fragmented information environments and algorithms that reward conflict can magnify polarization and resentment, increase propaganda and make shared discernment more difficult. Thus, war is not only fought, but also culturally conditioned through simplistic narratives, a friend-or-foe mentality, disinformation and fear. When historical memory fades and the ethical principles that protect civilians and the most vulnerable are weakened, it becomes easier to justify violence as necessary, inevitable or even “sanitized.” It is in this context that humanity is slipping into a violent culture of power, where peace no longer appears as a responsibility to be taken on, but as a fragile interval between conflicts. Today, more than ever,

Reflection for Decade Five, *continued*

it is important to reaffirm that the “just war” theory, which has all too often been used to justify any kind of war, is now **outdated**. The use of force, violence and weapons reflects a relational poverty that always has disastrous consequences for civilian populations.

**Let us pray for a future of peace
and for the abolition
of nuclear weapons.**

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
broken at the state of our world.

Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice,
proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from
nuclear annihilation
for all God’s children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Seven

Novena For The Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

Day Eight—August 8th

Welcome to the eighth night of our novena.

We implore the Blessed Mother's intercession for the safeguarding of humanity by the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Yesterday, we prayed for all who are involved in armed conflicts and war around the globe and reflected on Pope Leo XIV's words on modern technology and warfare, public discourse and the outdated concept of "just war".

Today we pray for forgiveness, especially for those times when we have opted for violence instead of reconciliation. May we follow God's way of encounter and dialogue for the resolution of all conflicts. As stated by Archbishop Wester of Santa Fe, "All our conversations should be respectful, rooted in prayer, based in nonviolence, and centered in the hope and belief that nuclear disarmament is achievable. We can do this, and with the God of peace with us, we can do this soon."



Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade One

Archbishop Wester of Santa Fe wrote: "The time has come to commit ourselves globally to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. We should end all these massive financial investments for building and maintaining these weapons of mass destruction-- investments which make only a few individuals and corporations enormously wealthy-- and instead invest those massive funds in education, healthcare, environmental cleanup, addressing the climate threat, rebuilding our infrastructure, and providing vaccinations for everyone everywhere" (p. 30)

Let us pray for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father — Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

Archbishop Wester also wrote: "We could end poverty and hunger, maybe even the causes of warfare itself, by funding real international conflict resolution programs to prevent future wars. Moreover, the reality of catastrophic climate change means we can no longer waste our resources on preparing for nuclear war when the whole planet is facing global destruction."

Let us pray for the protection of the poor and the future of our planet.

Our Father — Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

“It is time to take up the hard work of nuclear disarmament and move toward the creation and building of a new culture of justice that cares for our planet and offers peace for everyone.”

Archbishop John Wester, Living In the Light of Christ's Peace

Let us pray for a culture of justice and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



Reflection for Decade Four

Archbishop Wester recalls the Gospel story in Luke, where Jesus and his disciples are walking to Jerusalem through Samaria. The Judeans and Samaritans were at war, and had engaged in violent attacks upon each other. When a Samaritan village refused to welcome Jesus, disciples James and John asked Jesus, “Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?” Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village,” (Luke 9:54-55).

Archbishop Wester asks, if Jesus rebuked James and John for wanting to call down fire from heaven, He certainly rebukes us for having done it and preparing to do it again. p. 16

Let us pray for creative nonviolence, in our hearts, and in our relations at home and abroad.

Our Father
Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Five

When Jesus rises from the dead, He greets His friends with words of peace and sends them out again to carry on His mission of peace and nonviolence. We are all invited to be peacemakers. We are challenged to face the violence that is being prepared in our name by the National Nuclear Security Administration, and to start the process of nuclear disarmament so that no one ever again calls down hellfire from the sky. pp 17-18

Let us pray for an end to hellfire called down from the sky.

Our Father — Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

 **ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS NOW.**  **ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS NOW.**



NOVENA PRAYER

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we turn to you once again with hearts
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Please hear our pleas for peace,
and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice, proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

End of Night Eight

NOVENA FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Day 9 – August 9

On August 9th, 1945, three days after the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a second atomic bomb detonated 500 meters above Matsuyama in Nagasaki City at 11:02 am. This bomb killed 70,000 people immediately. The area within a 2.5-kilometer radius of the hypocenter was utterly devastated, and the rest of the city was left in ruins. After the bombing, which destroyed all plant life around the hypocenter, people said that no plants would grow there for the next 75 years. However, one month after the atomic bombing, about 30 kinds of plants started to grow again. Today, 500 cherry blossom trees flourish in the Hypocenter Park, as well as flowers and lush greenery that can be seen throughout the year. It truly captures the power of revival ¹.

On this, the ninth and final night of our novena, we implore the Blessed Mother for her intercession, praying to Jesus, the Prince of Peace, to hear our prayers for peace, revival, and an end to all nuclear weapons.



Photo of the Urakami Catholic Cathedral in Nagasaki, Japan (AP Photo/Stamley Troutman, Pool, File)

Sign of the Cross
Apostle's Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary x3
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade One

Today, we pray for the people of Nagasaki on the anniversary of the bombing in 1945. As they continue to bear the wounds of nuclear warfare, may they know healing and peace. May we say “never again” to the use of nuclear weapons.

Together **let us pray for the people of Nagasaki.**

Our Father
Decade 1 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Two

For the victims of the Nagasaki bombing, may they rest in eternal peace.

Together, **let us pray that perpetual light shine upon them.**

Our Father
Decade 2 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

Reflection for Decade Three

Urakami Cathedral was Japan's largest Catholic church during WWII. It suffered catastrophic damage from the atomic bomb dropped on its city. The bells that had once rung from the left and right tower of the Cathedral were badly damaged and buried in the rubble. After the war, they were dug out from the wreckage, and one was rung for Christmas that year. When it rang, the sound echoed through the streets of Nagasaki as a symbol of hope, of peace, and of overcoming the tragedy of war. That recovered bell still rings in the cathedral 80 years later, and its chime carries in it both mourning for the lives lost in war and also the determination that such faults will not be repeated².

Let us pray for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father — Decade 3 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)

²From www.discover-nagasaki.com/en/featured-topics/peace-special

Reflection for Decade Four

May such powerful weapons and indiscriminate annihilations be forever banned and eliminated from the face of the earth.

Let us pray that the deadly power of nuclear weapons never again be unleashed on God's people nor on God's creation.

Our Father — Decade 4 (Hail Mary x10) — Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



Photo of the burnt Our Lady of Nagasaki found at the destroyed Urakami Catholic Cathedral

Reflection for Decade Five

Let us remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki as beacons, showing us a path to find ways to live together in peace.

Let us pray for the courage and strength to raise our voices to work for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our Father
Decade 5 (Hail Mary x10)
Glory Be
Fatima Decade Prayer (O My Jesus)



NOVENA PRAYER

Adapted from Pacem in Terris, 1963

Blessed Mother of Christ and Queen of Peace,
we turn to you once again with hearts
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and strengthen us in our ongoing struggle
to drive out the violence within our hearts,
so that we may rightly call on our leaders
to implement equal justice, proper material comfort,
and lasting safety from nuclear annihilation
for all God's children.

May we unite in our efforts to
demonstrate your loving kindness for our
Common Home and all its inhabitants.

Amen.

SHOL PAX Christi Newton would like to thank everyone who participated in
and contributed to this Novena for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons,
and for the ongoing support of the Collaborative and the Collaborative Staff.

*End of Night Nine
End of Our Novena for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons*