

Restorative Justice Mass Prayers  
Oakhurst Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia  
October 10, 1999

### **Prayer for Victims of Crime:**

Leader: God of Love and Healing. God of Love and Forgiveness. We pray for those who suffer because of the violence inflicted upon them by our criminal brothers and sisters. We ask that you be active in their grief. Bring to them your healing love. We pray that they be freed from their pain, their anger, and their desire for retribution. We pray that you will lead them to the path of forgiveness.

People: We pray in the name of Jesus whom you sent to be with us as an expression of your forgiveness. Amen.

### **Prayer for Prisoners and Jailers**

Leader: God of Love and Judgment. God of Love and Redemption. We pray for those who live and work behind concrete walls, chain link fences and concertino wire. Keep them in good health and spirit. Help both the prisoner and the jailer to do the tasks before them with grace and compassion. Help both the prisoner and the jailer to see one another as human beings created in your own image. And protect prisoner and the jailer from those who would do them harm.

People: We pray in the name of Jesus who showed us how to love those who have done wrong against us. Amen.

Leader: God of Love and Crucifixion. God of Love and Resurrection. We join with other congregations across the nation today asking for a special blessing for the people who live and work on death row. May they find your grace and your peace. We pray for those who make decisions about the life and death of prisoners. We pray that you help them find ways to choose life and not death.

People: We pray in the name of Jesus who showed us the way to true life. Amen.

### **Prayer for Families**

Leader: God of Love and Faithfulness. God of Love and Friendship. We pray for the other victims of crime – the families and friends of the offender. We can only imagine the grief and pain, the shame and ridicule, the emotional and physical hardships that mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters, extended family and friends of prisoners experience during the incarceration of a loved one. We celebrate and learn from their steadfast faithfulness to their loved one who has done wrong. We ask that you be with them and sustain them through this time of separation and judgment. Give them the strength and the way to keep the family together. Provide for them the strength and the knowledge to help their loved one prepare for homecoming that this ordeal will not be repeated.

People: We pray in the name of Jesus who called us friend and taught us to be faithful. Amen.

### **Prayer for the Church**

Leader:                    God of Love and Discipleship. God of Love and Sacrifice. We pray that you provide within us the determination to follow your son Jesus who ate with sinners and comforted the outcast. Help us to focus our discipleship on those incarcerated in prisons and jails. But do not let us loose our outrage over the terrible acts of the offender. Help us to understand how we as a church might proclaim your redemptive love to a government and community that confuses vengeance with rehabilitation. But keep us from seeking simple solutions to complex issues. Help us to practice and proclaim restorative justice, that the broken offender and the broken victim might be restored to wholeness.

People:                    We pray in the name of Jesus who was able to forgive those who crucified him. Amen.