

HIROSHIMA/NAGASAKI MEMORIAL SERVICE

OPENING SONG: PEACE IS FLOWING LIKE A RIVER

Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out of you and me. Flowing out into the desert, setting all the captives free.

READING: "A Silent Flash of Light" by Setsuko Thurlow from Peace: A Dream Unfolding

I heard no explosion. Miles out of the city, people apparently heard a thunderous roar. But like all survivors close to the hypocenter, I heard nothing. There was just the silent flash. The moment I saw it I tried to duck under a desk. But I had a sensation of floating. Together with the building, my body was falling...Lying in the rubble I couldn't move and I knew I was faced with death. Mysteriously I never had a feeling of panic. I felt calm. After awhile I started to hear my classmates. In weak voices they were asking for God...

My clothes were tattered and covered with blood. I had cuts and scratches all over me, but all my extremities were there. I looked around me, even though it was morning the sky was dark, as dark as twilight. Then I saw streams of human beings shuffling away from the center of the city. Parts of their bodies were missing and strips of flesh hung like ribbons from their bones.

The strangest thing was the silence. It is the most unforgettable impression I have. You'd think people would be panic-stricken running, yelling. They moved in slow motion like figures in a silent movie, shuffling through the dust and smoke. I heard thousands of people breathing the words "water, give me water." Many simply dropped to the ground and died.

(Moment of silence)

READING: FIRE (Exodus 3:1-8 by Peter Ediger)

In the 20th century people were tending to their business as usual. And in the middle of the century a raging fire appeared on earth: first in Hiroshima, then Nagasaki, then the islands of the Pacific and continuing in the desert of Nevada. And some people asked, "Why is this fire raging on the earth. Will it consume us all?"

And the God of Creation appeared saying, "My people! My people!" And the people said, "Here we are!"

The God of Creation said, "Take off your shoes. The earth you are on is a holy place. Now therefore I am sending you to go to your soul and say "Let my Creation live! Let my Creation live."

(Moment of silence)

SONG: Love is flowing like a river, flowing out of you and me. Flowing out into the desert, setting all the captives free.

PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISSI

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

SONG: Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out of you and me. Flowing out into the desert, setting all the captives free. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.....

Readings taken from OUR PRAYERS RISE LIKE INCENSE: LITURGIES FOR PEACE. Cindy Pile, editor
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