

# July 4 Prayer Service

## Freedom, Vision, Justice

### Gathering Song

*Gather the Dreamers* by Kathy Sherman, CSJ  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Qgc4x7Pnt8>)

Gather the dreamers and wake the sleeping, now is the time to give birth to the dream.  
Gather the dreamers, a new day is dawning, the time is now and the earth is calling our name.

Gather the lovers and heal the broken, weave all the earth with heartstrings of love.  
Gather the lovers, a new day is dawning, the time is now and the earth is calling our name.

Carried within us, a dream, dare we grasp now the moment.  
We can make dreams come true if our vision is new. It's a quest that belongs to us all.

Peacemakers gather and teach forgiveness, link hands through all lands in a circle of peace.  
Peacemakers gather, a new day is dawning, the time is now and the earth is calling our name.

### Prayer

*Prayer for Independence Day*

God, source of all freedom, this day is bright with the memory of those who declared that life and liberty are your gift to every human being. Help us to continue a good work begun long ago. Make our vision clear and our will strong: that only in human solidarity will we find liberty, and justice only in the honor that belongs to every life on earth. Turn our hearts toward the family of nations: to understand the ways of others, to offer friendship, and to find safety only in the common good of all. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

*(From Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, Revised Edition)*

### Scripture Reading

Adapted from Habakkuk 2:2-4

Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily.  
For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint;  
if it delays, wait for it. It will surely come, it will not be late.

## Reflection

*Prayer at the Kitchen Table* by Martin Luther King, Jr.

In King's book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, he tells the story:

I was ready to give up. With my cup of coffee sitting untouched before me, I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing a coward. In this state of exhaustion, when my courage had all but gone, I decided to take my problem to God. With my head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory. "I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I've come to the point where I can't face it alone." At that moment, I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced God before. It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice saying: "Stand up for justice, stand up for truth; and God will be at your side forever." Almost at once my fears began to go. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything.

## Quiet Reflection

Take a few minutes to think about the past few months in our world. What is the vision that we wait to be fulfilled? We pray for freedom, justice and understanding for all.

St. Martin de Porres ... pray for us.  
St. Katherine Drexel ... pray for us.  
Martin Luther King, Jr ... pray for us.

St. Josephine Bakhita ... pray for us.  
St. Kateri Tekakwitha ... pray for us.  
Sister Thea Bowman ... pray for us.

## Prayer

Earth mother, star mother, you who are called by a thousand names,  
May all remember we are cells in your body and dance together  
You are the grain and the loaf that sustains each day,  
And as you are patient with our struggles to learn  
So shall we be patient with ourselves and each other.  
We are radiant light and sacred dark – the balance –  
You are the embrace that heartens and the freedom beyond fear.  
Within you we are born we grow, live, and die –  
You bring us around the circle to rebirth, within us you dance forever. (Chief Seattle)