

Universal Prayer

Joseph Wresinski, October 17, 1987, Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris

For these millions of children twisted by the pain of hunger,
no longer able to smile, yet still yearning to love.

For these millions of young people,
who have no reason to believe or even to exist,
and who vainly search for a future in this senseless world.

**Our Father we pray to you,
Send hands to reap your harvest.**

For these millions of men, women and children,
whose hearts are still pounding strong to the beat of struggle,
whose minds rise in revolt against the unjust fate imposed upon them,
whose courage demands the right to priceless dignity.

**Our Father we pray to you,
Send hands to reap your harvest.**

For these millions of children, women and men
who do not want to condemn,
but to love, to pray, to work and to unite,
so that a world of solidarity may be born.
A world, our world,
in which all people would have given the best of themselves before dying.

**Our Father we pray to you,
Send hands to reap your harvest.**

May all those who pray
find a hearing in God's presence
and receive from Him the power to remove misery from humanity,
the humanity created in His image.

**Our Father we pray to you,
Send hands to reap your harvest.**

Pope John Paul II chose this prayer to open the 1997 Paris World Youth Days.