



A beautiful prayer  
to reflect on for  
International  
Women's Day.

# Lord, make me an instrument of peace:

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- Bless all women who daily work to bring peace to their communities, their homes and their hearts. Give them strength to continue to turn swords into ploughshares.
  - Where there is hatred, let me sow love:
  - We pray for all women who face prejudice, inequality and gender disparities. Help us to see and to face the discrimination against women in all the many forms it may take.



# Where there is injury, pardon:

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- Comfort all women who suffer from the pain of war, violence, and abuse. Help them to become instruments of their own reconciliation and peace.



# Where there is division, unity:

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- Forgive all women and men who let differences breed hate and discrimination. Let your example of valuing all of creation help us to see that we are equal partners in the stewardship of your world.



Where there is darkness,  
light; where there is  
untruth, truth:

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- Comfort all women who struggle in the darkness of abuse, poverty, and loneliness. May we stand with them in light to acknowledge their suffering and work to remove their burdens.



# Where there is doubt, true faith:

- We pray for all women who live in fear. Help them to be empowered to be their true selves through your everlasting love and faith.



# Where there is despair, hope:

- We pray for all women who live in the despair of poverty, violence, trafficking, slavery, and abuse. May the light of your love bring them hope.



# Where there is sadness, joy:

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- Help us to see the strength and goodness in all women and men.  
Transform our hearts to celebrate the love and grace of all people.
- Amen



We end with 'Be Yourself' from the cantata *Called to be Happy* inspired by the life of Mary Ward

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- A cantata of hope composed by Peter Rose and Anne Conlon, it reflects how Mary Ward's vision and unshakeable optimism enabled her to overcome the many obstacles she faced as a strong-minded woman in a man's world.



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- Making extensive use of Mary's own words, the cantata presents her amazing example as a woman of courage and steadfast determination, who retained her calm faith despite the dangers and problems she faced. The words she used to encourage her young followers four hundred years ago now offer encouragement to contemporary young women as they start on their life's journey. Her message of unwavering hope in the face of adversity has a timeless relevance.



# ‘Be Yourself’ from *Called to be Happy*

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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6t0hJC1-hGw>

