

SOCIAL JUSTICE PRAYER  
For period beginning March 1, 2012

*O sacred Head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,  
now scornfully surrounded with thorns thine only crown...<sup>1</sup>*

As we journey through this season of Lent, Gracious God, we confess that we, too, are like thorns that crushed the brow of our Savior.

We, a world of people, cause bleeding among the least of our brothers and sisters. We lament our sin and bow our heads in shame.

We, as an international community, confess that we are a part of the thorns that cause suffering for the poor in Iran, Syria and the entire Middle East who already suffer under government oppression and international sanctions. They live in fear that, like the daughters of ancient Jerusalem, they will be vulnerable in times of possible violence. Gracious God, forgive us and by your Holy Spirit guide us all into repentance, a turning around into your vision of peace.

We confess that we are a part of the thorns that cause suffering among the vulnerable when fuel prices skyrocket and many people need to choose between food or fuel to heat their homes, between medicine or gas to travel to and from work, if they have a job at all.

We pray for all those who have suffered the loss of life and their homes due to the recent tornadoes that rip through our land. We give you thanks for all those, including UMCOR and local agencies, that help all of us to reach out with compassion and care. May we, your faithful followers of Jesus Christ, be generous in our response to those in critical need. May we assist in relieving the suffering caused by such catastrophic storms.

*What language shall we borrow to thank thee, dearest friend,  
for this thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end?  
O make us thine forever; and should our fainting be,  
Lord, let us never; never out live our love to thee.<sup>1</sup>*

During this season of Lent, this time of repentance, may we never cease in bearing witness to your grace in times of great pain, anxiety and grief. May we never out live our love for You as we seek to find peace in our lives and in our world. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>*O Sacred Head Now Wounded, adapted, The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, Tenn. 1989.*