

**Day 4 - Praying for the Victims of Violent Crimes
by Bernadette Love**

Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise. Isaiah 60:18

How do we pay tribute to the ever increasing number of victims of violent crimes in America? By praying for the loved ones left behind. You see, long after the tragedies leave the front pages of the newspaper and they are no longer the hot topic on the nightly news, the families and friends are left to cope with the void that is left by the absence of their loved ones.

And lets not forget the victims who have not suffered the loss of life but who will forever carry the scars of violence, whether emotionally or physically. Trust me, the next rape victim will never be the same. They need our prayers!

I've had the occasion lately to ask myself one too many times, what would cause someone to take another persons life? How can you fix your mind to go on a killing spree, with no regard to life. How can you torture an innocent child to death. How can a grown man fix himself to rape a child, an infant or anyone for that matter. What would cause two brothers to set bombs off at the Boston Marathon...or shoot into a school of innocent babies. What have we come to?

Our nation will never be the same. The victims cry out from the graves...the loved ones left behind are torn apart with grief. We've got to pray, America. We cannot forget those who are left behind to suffer. We must even pray for the perpetrators, as hard as that may be. Evil is among us and it is not going away simply because we choose not to deal with it.

Victims will feel the effects of pain and suffering long after they cease to be the headline and we can ill afford to forget them simply because another victim has taken their place in the spotlight. They need our prayers and our support...remember, it could have been us or someone that we love. Though we are not to live in fear, we have to be ever mindful of the fact that only the grace of God has kept us safe so far.

Let us pray...

Father, in the name of Jesus, we ask that you forgive us for our sins. Cleanse us from all unrighteousness as we bow before your throne. We praise you, oh God, for who you are. We magnify your name and give you all honor and glory.

Father, we lift up those who have been the victims of senseless violence and crime. Lord, only you can know the true depth of their suffering and the pain and heartache of those left behind to mourn them. None of us is immune and we realize that it could

have been us.

Lord, please give comfort to the families who have been affected by violence and crime. Lord strengthen them as they try to piece their lives back together, filling the void, as they also try and make sense of the loss. Only you can heal the hurt and fill the voids.

Father, we thank you for being their comfort in the time of tremendous pain and suffering. We pray that you use those of us who are able, to reach out and be your hands and heart.

These things we ask in the name of Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ...Amen.