

**Prayer Petitions: 24 September 2016**  
**ACT PALESTINE FORUM**  
**PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**  
**24<sup>TH</sup> of every month**

*Every day in the month ahead, we continue to pray with and for our sisters and brothers in Palestine and Israel who have called for an ecumenical prayer vigil across the globe on the 24<sup>th</sup> of every month.*

We are called to pray for an end to hostilities and bloodshed, for healing and reconciliation, for the cessation of house demolitions, for an end to the siege on Gaza, and a just and lasting peace that brings safety and development to all Palestinians and Israelis.

APF encourages its friends and partners to visit the [APF website](#) and [APF Facebook](#) page often to find, and also contribute, updates, photos, stories, advocacy ideas, and special prayers.

A special thanks to the ELCJHL for authoring this month's prayers.

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ACT Palestine Forum Prayers

24 September 2016

**Prayer Focus: Family Unification**

Everybody has the right to a family and families are entitled to protection by society and State. But because Palestinians who hold Jerusalem ID cards are permanent residents of Israel and not full citizens of the State of Israel, these rights and protections are not afforded equally.

If a Palestinian from Jerusalem and a Palestinian from the West Bank decide to get married, the couple has to apply for family unification at the Ministry of Interior in order to live together in Jerusalem. Until 2002, in most cases - following a long examination and period of waiting, often several years - the Ministry granted the status, enabling the couple to live together in Israel. But in 2002 the Israeli Government stopped processing all family unification applications, seriously impacting families across the occupied Palestinian territories.

**Scripture: Matthew 13:4-6**

Jesus answered, 'Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning "made them male and female", and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

This Scripture passage is from Jesus' teaching on divorce. However, we also may look to this passage this month, as we are praying specifically for Palestinian families divided as a result of the Separation Wall and the tactics of the Occupation. We remember how Jesus said "they are no longer two, but one flesh," and "Therefore what God has joined together, let no on separate."

When walls, checkpoints, identity cards, and policies separate husbands and wives, children and grandchildren, it hurts not only one family, but an entire society.

Please join us in prayer for the reunification of the many Palestinian families separated as a result of the Occupation.

### PRAYER FOR THE UNIFICATION OF FAMILIES

Holy God,  
as you are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
Eternally in relationship within your Divine Self as one-in-three and three-in-one,  
so you have created us, in your image, to be in relationship with one another.  
You have given us the gifts of marriage and family, of love and friendship.  
When families are divided, we know that it grieves your heart as it does ours.

We pray today for Palestinian families divided by geography, by walls, by checkpoints, by identification cards, by occupation. Deepen their love for one another. Encourage them when the wait for unification is long. Strengthen relationships between fathers, mothers, children, and grandparents, in spite of all that threatens to tear them apart.

We pray for a change in the policies which keep West Bank, Jerusalem, and Israeli Palestinian residents from living full and dignified lives. We pray for those in power to see the suffering these policies place on children and families. We pray for expedited applications. Above all, we pray for equal rights for all Arab and Israeli residents of Palestine and Israel, and an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine.

We pray this in the confidence that our Lord Jesus Christ has already broken down the dividing wall, that is the hostility between us. He is our peace. He is our hope.

To you, O Lord, we offer these prayers, and at the same time we offer our hands and our lives, that we may become answers to our own prayers.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

For more information on the challenges facing Palestinian families regarding unification, please visit the following pages:

[Society of Saint Yves](#)

[B'Tselem](#)