

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The text for this year's world day of prayer was written by women from Cuba. This seems most appropriate after recent efforts from Church and Political leaders to reach out to help heal years of separation and hardship.

I had an opportunity to celebrate the World Day of Prayer which was hosted this year by the First Baptist Church. Women and men gathered to share our common faith in Jesus Christ and to learn more about Cuba, its diverse peoples and their deep faith.

Some background information about Cuba was shared both in writing and on a DVD. Everyone present at the Woodstock gathering received a handmade white butterfly jasmine flower. The women have used their national flower for adorning their hair, for conveying messages during the liberation wars and for acknowledging their Cuban heritage.

The DVD presentation showed Pope Francis who recently visited Cuba. He was credited with working and praying to bring about more openness as well as awareness of the needs of the Cuban people.

Despite the beauty of the island and its resilient population, shortages have led to discontent and violence. "Wages are not in keeping with needs of the people, and on repeated occasions there is a lack of products such as medicines, food, personal hygiene items, transportation, and others, that the family cannot afford." (World Day of Prayer Text)



It seems quite appropriate that this year's theme for the International Women's Day is ***Pledge for Parity***. Celebrations are being held around the world and are focused on the social, economic, cultural and political contributions of women. Even within so called developed nations, there is a distinct disparity between what women and men earn for the same work.

One possible cause of this disparity is that women are still not regarded as equal with men. We need only look at how women in many nations are treated. Have we forgotten that males and females are created in God's own image and that we are all equal?

- **Were you aware of these special days dedicated to women in your local area?**
- **Have you prayed with and/or participated in any events?**
- **In our own lives, how are we promoting women and women's concerns?**

We are interested in **your** insights and experiences. God bless you!

Sr. Teresa Morrison CPS