

## Imagine...

*This was a rather immediate reaction to all the media scaremongering after the July bombings in London when the whole idea of multiculturalism was under the spotlight. It is very tempting, like John Lennon in his song Imagine to dream of a world where there are no religions and no countries but that would make for a very boring heaven. I like to think that God's Shalom is rather different and a celebration of diversity and colour and life in all its fullness and expressions. This prayer ends by looking forward to a time of peace expressed in a diversity of languages representing just some of the world's faiths, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian. Imagine...*

Imagine,  
imagine there are no countries  
imagine there are no races  
imagine there are no cultures  
imagine there are no religions  
nothing to kill for  
nothing to die for  
no World War II  
no London bombs.

imagine everyone in identical dress  
imagine everyone eating from one menu  
imagine everyone living in monochrome cities  
imagine everyone believing one creed.  
nothing to celebrate  
nothing to mourn  
nothing to spark debate  
nothing to dream.

for there is no heaven while wars rage  
there is no heaven while bombs shatter lives  
there is no heaven while global warming goes unchecked  
there is no heaven while some hoard and others go hungry  
but there is also no heaven when everything is uniform  
there is no heaven when life all tastes the same  
there is no heaven when there is only one human habitat  
there is no heaven when we are not free to hold our own beliefs.

Imagine,  
imagine there are catwalks full of exotic clothes  
imagine there are menus of gastronomic delight  
imagine there are landscapes diverse as fantasy worlds  
imagine there are religions to make everyday a festival celebration  
everything to preserve life for  
everything to live for  
where we become friends with those who are different  
where we enrich life by sharing food and customs across the divides.

For this is the taste of God's world we want to celebrate this  
this is the canvas painted by God that is bursting with colour  
this is the love of knowledge of God who cannot be confined to one scripture  
this is the wisdom of God who invites us to share in Shanti

Salaam  
Shalom

Pacem  
Peace.

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