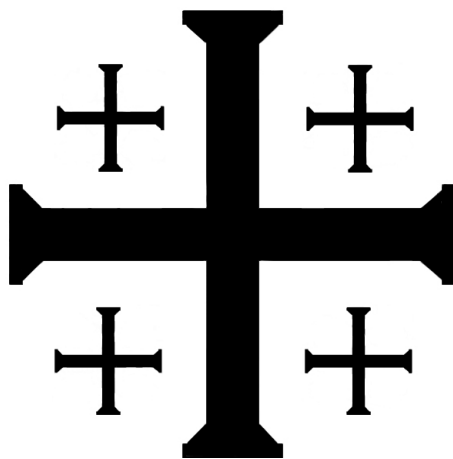


PRAYERS
for
TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY



WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

—Matthew 11:28-30

Scripture makes clear that the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being of humans are closely interconnected. As such, the Church acts in the grace of God for the health and wholeness of all. This ministry is based on Jesus' constant witness of concern and care for the sick, the unloved, the broken, and the lost.

As we find ourselves experiencing difficult times, we receive God's grace, expressed sometimes in an experience of healing and sometimes through the strength that comes in the bearing of trials. God's gracious activity of healing is to be seen both as part of the proclaiming of the good news and as an outworking of the presence of the Spirit in the life of the Church.

This booklet provides a sampling prayers for those difficult situations or distress. Brought together from a number of resources, these prayers may be adapted as needed and desired.



1. At various times of day

IN THE MORNING

This is another day, O Lord. I know not what it will bring forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be. If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently. And if am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly. Make these words more than words, and give me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen. ❖

IN THE EVENING

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen. ✚



2. For the sick

FOR A SICK PERSON

Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your sick servants, and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that those (or *insert names*) for whom our prayers are offered may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. ✚

FOR RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS

Spirit of all healing, visit me, your child; in your power, renew health within me and raise me up in joy, according to your loving-kindness, for which I give thanks and praise; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. ❖

SANCTIFICATION OF ILLNESS

Sanctify, O Lord, the sickness of your servant [*insert name*], that the sense of *her/his* weakness may add strength to *her/his* faith and seriousness to *her/his* repentance; and grant that *she/he* may live with you in everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. ❖

BEFORE AN OPERATION

Loving God, we pray that you will comfort [*insert name*] in *her/his* suffering, lend skill to the hands of *her/his* healers, and bless the means used for *her/his* cure. Give her/him such confidence in the power of your grace, that even when *she/he* is afraid, *she/he* may put *her/his* whole trust in you; through our Savior Jesus Christ. ❖

FOR AN EXTENDED COURSE OF TREATMENT

Strengthen me, O God, to go where I have to go and bear what I have to bear; that, accepting your healing gifts at the hands of surgeons, nurses, and technicians, I may be restored to wholeness with a thankful heart; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. ❖

FOR THOSE IN SEVERE PAIN

Jesus, you knew pain, you knew the loneliness, the weakness and the degradation it brings; you knew the agony. Jesus, your suffering is the only hope, the only reconciliation for those who suffer. Be with [*insert name*] as *she/he* grapples with the pain *she/he* suffers now. Be a promise to *her/him* that this present suffering will cease; be the hand that *she/he* can hold; be present, Savior, for we need you now. Amen. □

FOR RELIEF FROM PAIN

Lord Jesus Christ, by your patience in suffering you hallowed earthly pain and gave us the example of obedience to your Father's will: Be near me in my time of weakness and pain; sustain me by your grace, that my strength and courage may not fail; heal me according to your will; and help me always to believe that what happens to me here is of little account if you hold me in eternal life, my Lord and my God. Amen. ❖



3. For the dying

FOR THOSE NEAR DEATH

Lord, in weakness or in strength we bear your image. We pray for those we love who now live in a land of shadows, where the light of memory is dimmed, where the familiar lies unknown, where the beloved become as strangers. Hold them in your everlasting arms, and grant to those who care a strength to serve, a patience to persevere, a love to last, and a peace that passes human understanding. Hold us in your everlasting arms, today and for all eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. ◆

FOR THOSE WATCHING FOR A DEATH

God of the dark night, you were with Jesus praying in the garden, you were with Jesus all the way to the cross and through to the resurrection. Help us to recognize you now, as we watch with [*insert name*], and wait for what must happen; help us through any bitterness and despair, help us accept our distress, help us to remember that you care for us and that in your will is our peace. Amen. □

FOR THOSE PREPARING FOR DEATH

Lord now you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation: which you have prepared in the sight of every people, a light to reveal you to the nations: and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen. (*Song of Simeon*)



4. For the departed and those who mourn

THE DEATH OF AN INFANT

God our Creator, you called into being this fragile life, which had seemed to us so full of promise: give to [*insert name*], whom we commit to your care, abundant life in your presence, and to us, who grieve for hopes destroyed, courage to bear our loss; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. ●

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Lord God, creator of all, you have made us creatures of this earth but have also promised us a share in life eternal: receive our thanks and praise that, through the passion and death of Christ, your child [*insert name*], our brother/sister, whom we commend into your hands today, shares with your saints in the joy of heaven, where there is neither sorrow nor pain but life everlasting. Alleluia. ◆

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

Lord, we pray for those who mourn, for parents and children, friends and neighbors. Be gentle with them in their grief. Show them the depths of your love, a glimpse of the kingdom of heaven. Spare them the torment of guilt and despair. Be with them as they weep beside the empty tomb of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. ◆

God our strength and our redeemer: you do not leave us in this life nor abandon us in death. Hear our prayer for those in despair, when days are full of darkness and the future empty of hope. Renew in them your sustaining strength for we believe that there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen. ◆

God our creator and redeemer, by your power Christ conquered death and returned to you in glory, bearing in his body the marks of his passion. Confident of your victory and claiming his promises, we entrust N into your keeping in the name of Jesus our Lord, who, though he died, is now alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. ◆



5. For the distressed

FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

Heavenly Father, we remember before you those who suffer want and anxiety from lack of work. Guide the people of this land so to use our public and private wealth that all may find suitable and fulfilling employment, and receive just payment for their labor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. †

FOR THE POOR AND THE NEGLECTED

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. †

FOR PROTECTION

Christ, light of light, brightness indescribable, the Wisdom, power and glory of God, the Word made flesh: you overcame the forces of Satan, redeemed the world, then ascended again to the Father. Grant me, I pray, in this tarnished world, the shining of your splendor. Send your Archangel Michael to defend me, to guard my going out and coming in, and to bring me safely to your presence, where you reign in the one holy and undivided Trinity, to ages of ages. Amen. ❖

AFTER THE DIAGNOSIS OF TERMINAL ILLNESS

O God, only you number my days. Help me to look bravely at the end of my life in this world, while trusting in my life in the next. Journey with me toward my unexplored horizon where Jesus my Savior has gone before. Amen. ❖

ENDING LIFE SUPPORT

Lord of all wisdom and source of all life, we come before you as we struggle with decisions about life and death that rightly belong to you alone. We confess that we act with uncertainty now. Give us your help, and guide us, merciful God, in your loving concern for [*insert name*], who lies in grave illness; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen. ❖

FOR REST

O God my refuge and strength: in this place of unrelenting light and noise, enfold me in your holy darkness and silence, that I may rest secure under the shadow of your wings. Amen. ❖

FOR SLEEP

Holy and Blessed One, shine on [*insert name*], who lies sleepless. Illumine *her/his* spirit and give *her/him* rest in you, so that *she/he* may recognize you as the true God who brings us out of darkness into our eternal light. Amen. ❖



6. For hope

FOR STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE

Gracious God, only source of life and health: Help, comfort, and relieve me, and give your power of healing to those who minister to my needs; that my weakness may be turned to strength and confidence in your loving care; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen. ❖

FOR TIMES OF PERSONAL DISTRESS

O merciful Father, who hast taught us in thy holy Word that thou dost not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men: Look with pity upon the sorrows of thy servant for whom our prayers are offered. Remember him, O Lord, in mercy, nourish his soul with patience, comfort him with a sense of thy goodness, lift up thy countenance upon him, and give him peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. †

FOR THOSE WHO ARE ABSENT

O God, whose fatherly care reaches to the uttermost parts of the earth: We humbly beseech you graciously to behold and bless those whom we love, now absent from us. Defend them from all dangers of soul and body; and grant that both they and we, drawing nearer to you, may be bound together by your love in the communion of your Holy Spirit, and in the fellowship of your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. ✦

FOR HOPE

Loving God, by your Holy Spirit inspire me, as I fear losing hope. Give me a fresh vision of your love, that I may find again what I fear I have lost. Grant me your powerful deliverance; through the One who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen. ❖

FOR TRUST IN GOD

God, you are my help and comfort; you shelter and surround me in love so tender that I may know your presence with me, now and always. Amen. ❖

FOR FACING GREAT UNCERTAINTY

God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; bring hope and courage to all who wait or work in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make them the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided, for your will is health and wholeness; you are God, and we need you. Amen. □



7. Thanksgivings

FOR A RECOVERY

God, your loving-kindness never fails and your mercies are new every morning. I thank you for giving me relief from pain and hope of health renewed. Continue the good work begun in me; that increasing daily in wholeness and strength, I may rejoice in your goodness and so order my life always to think and do that which pleases you; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen. ❖

FOR SERENITY

Merciful Jesus, you are my guide, the joy of my heart, the author of my hope, and the object of my love. I come seeking refreshment and peace. Show me your mercy, relieve my fears and anxieties, and grant me a quiet mind and an expectant heart, that by the assurance of your presence I may learn to abide in you, who is my Lord and my God. Amen. ❖

FOR CAREGIVERS

God, our Healer and Redeemer, we give thanks for the compassionate care N. has received. Bless these and all health care providers. Give them knowledge, virtue, and patience; and strengthen them in their ministry of healing and comforting; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. ❖

FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS/EMERGENCY WORKERS

Merciful God, I thank you that since I have no strength to care for myself, you serve me through the hands and hearts of others. Bless these people that they may continue to serve you and please you all their days. Amen. ❖

Divine Physician, hear our prayers for those in emergency medicine. By your healing power, grant them quick minds and skillful hands. Strengthen them in times of trauma. In quiet times, give them rest and assurance of the value of their work. Keep them ever prepared for the work you have called them to do, for your mercy's sake. Amen. ❖

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