



**Day of Prayer**  
**Diocese of Grafton**  
**Good Friday 3pm until Sunset on Easter Eve**  
**Prayer Resources**

Jesus may all that is you flow into me  
May your body and blood be my food and drink  
May your passion and death be my strength and life,  
Jesus, with you by my side enough has been given,  
May the shelter I seek be the shadow of your cross  
Let me not run from the love that you offer  
But hold me safe from the forces of evil.  
On each of my dyings shed your light and your love.  
Keep calling to me until that day comes  
When, with your saints, I may praise you for ever.  
Amen

Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness,  
be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
we may with the zeal of Pentecost  
inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world, for Jesus' sake. Amen

Father, I know you love me and have plans for me.  
But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future.  
Show me how to walk forward one day at a time.  
May I take heart while I search openly, learn all about the choices,  
listen to others for advice, and pay attention to my own feelings.  
By doing these things, may I hear your call  
to live a life that will let me love as only I can,  
and allow me to serve others with the special gifts you have given me.  
I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

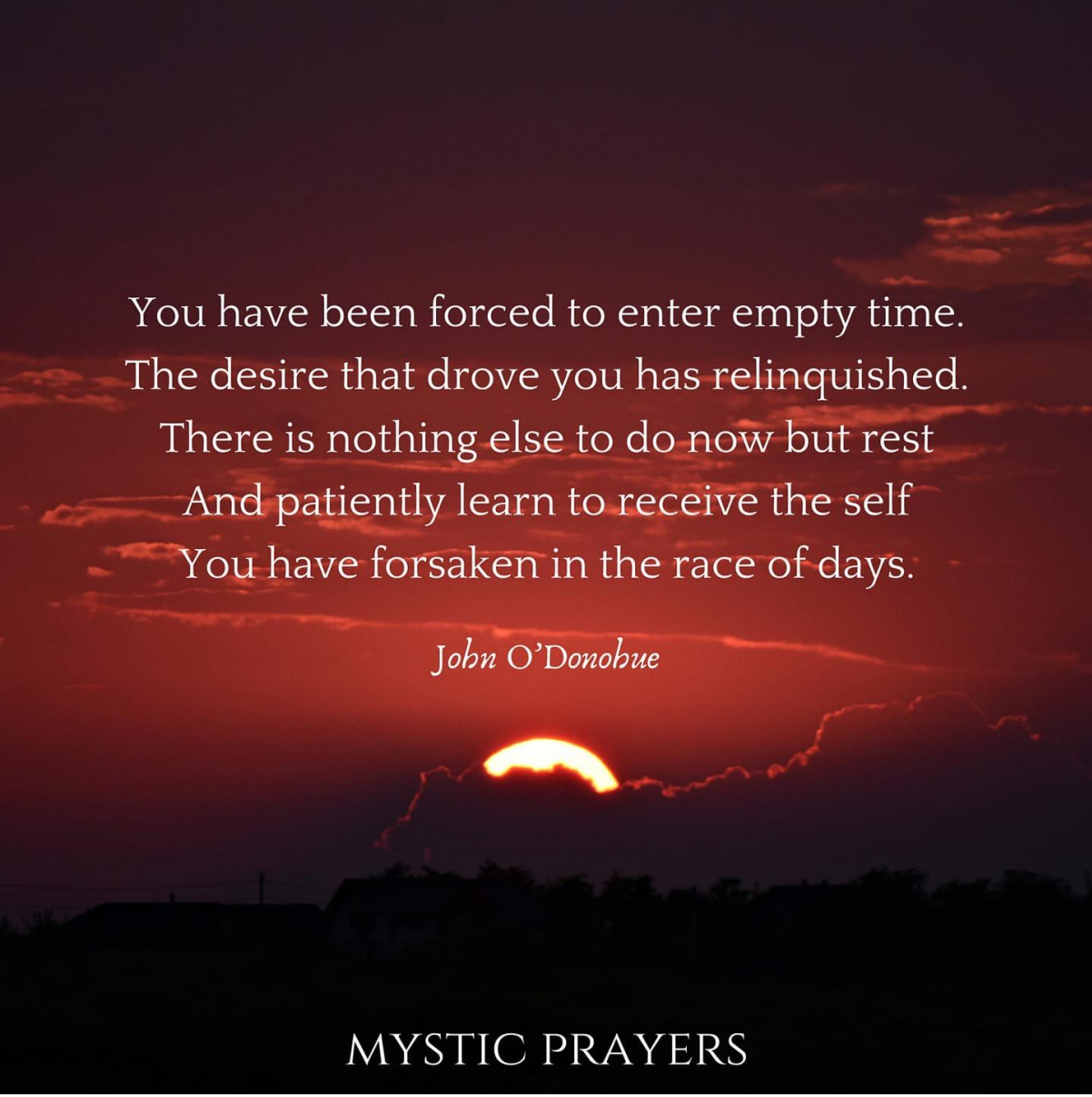
Lord God who calls,  
give your people grace to hear your voice:  
help us to trust you in the known and unknown,  
so we may journey towards your vision  
in the power of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
Wakefield Diocese, The Church of England

Christ, whose insistent call disturbs our settled lives: give us discernment to hear your word,  
grace to relinquish our tasks, and courage to follow empty-handed wherever you may lead,  
so that the voice of your gospel may reach to the ends of the earth. Amen.

Saviour Christ,  
In whose way of love lies the secret of all life and the hope of all people,  
We pray for quiet courage to match this hour.  
We did not choose to be born or to live in such an age;  
But let its problems challenge us,  
Its discoveries exhilarate us,  
Its injustices anger us,  
Its possibilities inspire us,  
And its vigour renew us,  
For your kingdom's sake. Amen

The words of Graham Kendrick's song "Love in a Time of Cholera" can be helpfully used as  
a prayer today -

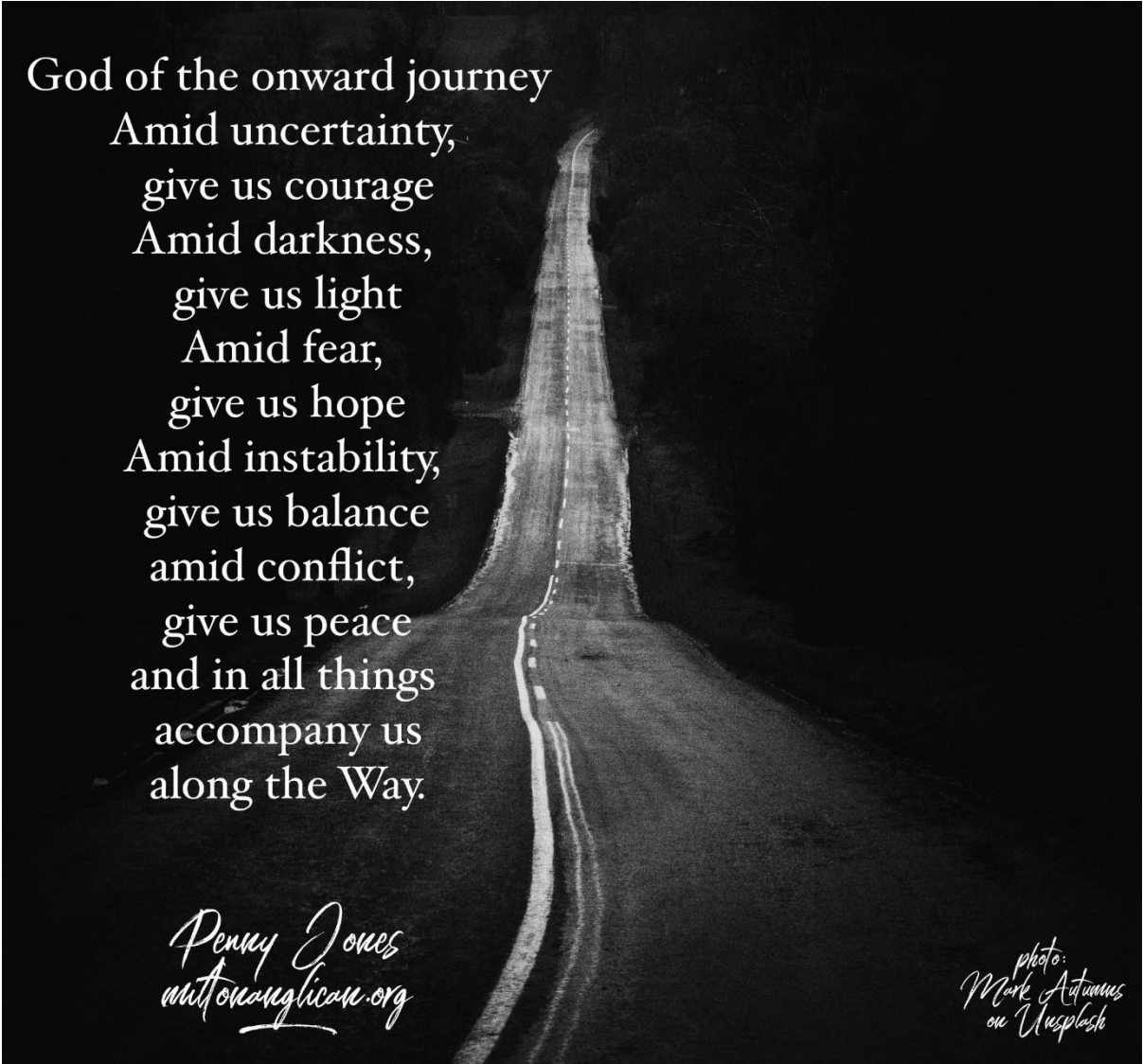
Beauty for brokenness  
Beauty for brokenness  
Hope for despair  
Lord, in your suffering world  
This is our prayer  
Bread for the children  
Justice, joy, peace  
Sunrise to sunset  
Your kingdom increase!  
God of the poor  
Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts  
Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame  
Lighten our darkness  
Breathe on this flame  
Until your justice burns  
Brightly again  
Until the nations  
Learn of your ways  
Seek your salvation  
And bring you their praise  
God of the poor  
Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts  
Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame



You have been forced to enter empty time.  
The desire that drove you has relinquished.  
There is nothing else to do now but rest  
And patiently learn to receive the self  
You have forsaken in the race of days.

*John O'Donohue*

MYSTIC PRAYERS



God of the onward journey  
Amid uncertainty,  
give us courage  
Amid darkness,  
give us light  
Amid fear,  
give us hope  
Amid instability,  
give us balance  
amid conflict,  
give us peace  
and in all things  
accompany us  
along the Way.

*Penny Jones*  
*anticon Anglican.org*

*photo:*  
*Mark Antonius*  
*on Unsplash*

## A Prayer in Lockdown

*The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked. (John 20.19)*

Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
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be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
we may with the zeal of Pentecost  
inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world.  
For Jesus' sake.  
**Amen.**



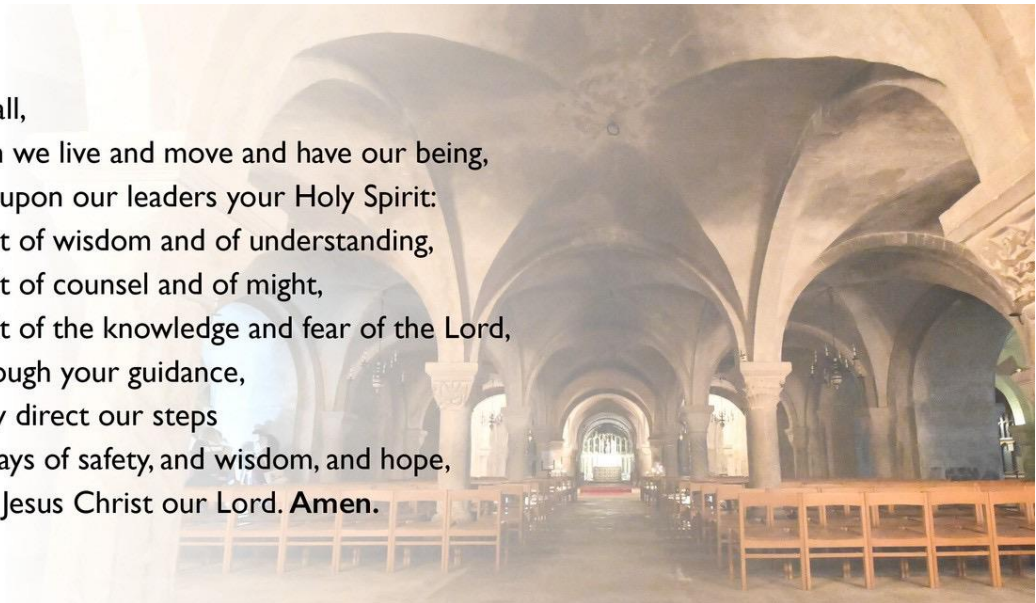


Loving God  
we struggle to hold on  
amid fear and suffering.  
Hold on to us  
and help us  
hold on to the cross.  
Lingering God  
we struggle to wait  
amid stress and insecurity.  
Wait on us  
and help us  
wait with lingering faith.  
Living God  
we struggle to live  
amid death and despair.  
Live in us  
and help us live,  
even in the vale of destruction,  
in your eternal life.

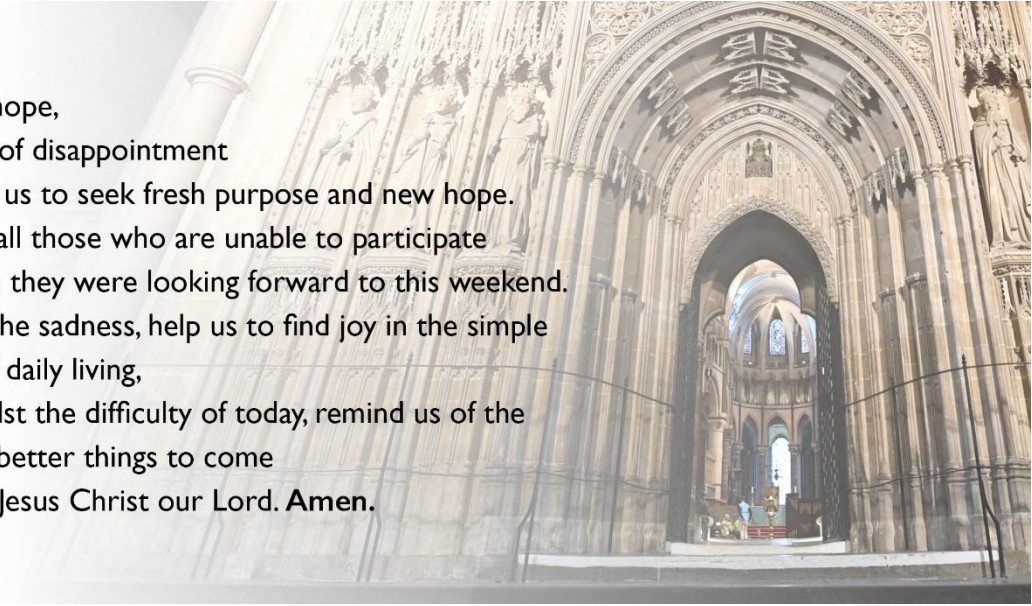


*Joe L. Lippin*

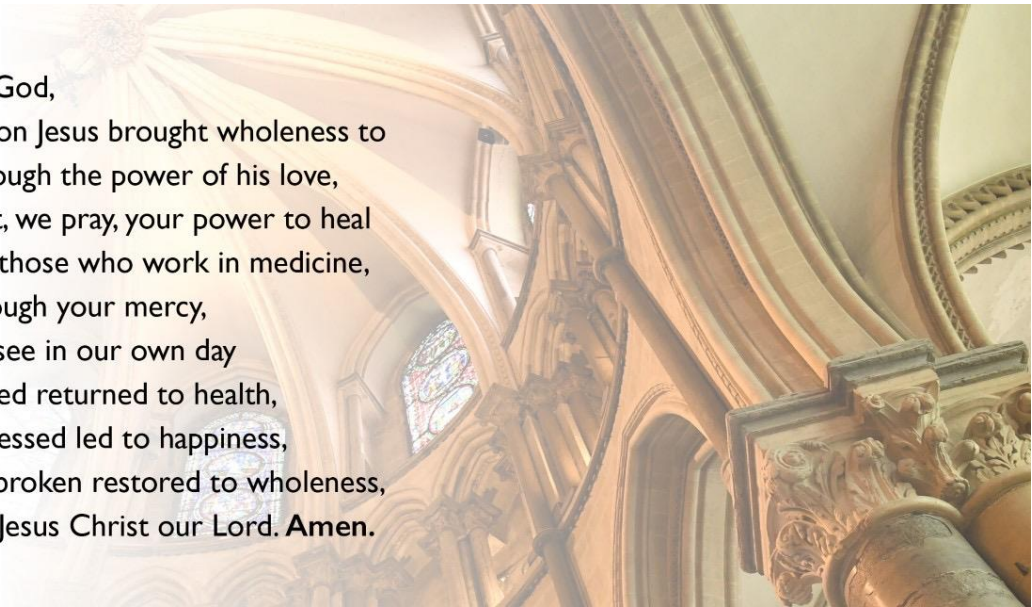
God of all,  
in whom we live and move and have our being,  
breathe upon our leaders your Holy Spirit:  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of might,  
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord,  
that through your guidance,  
they may direct our steps  
in the ways of safety, and wisdom, and hope,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



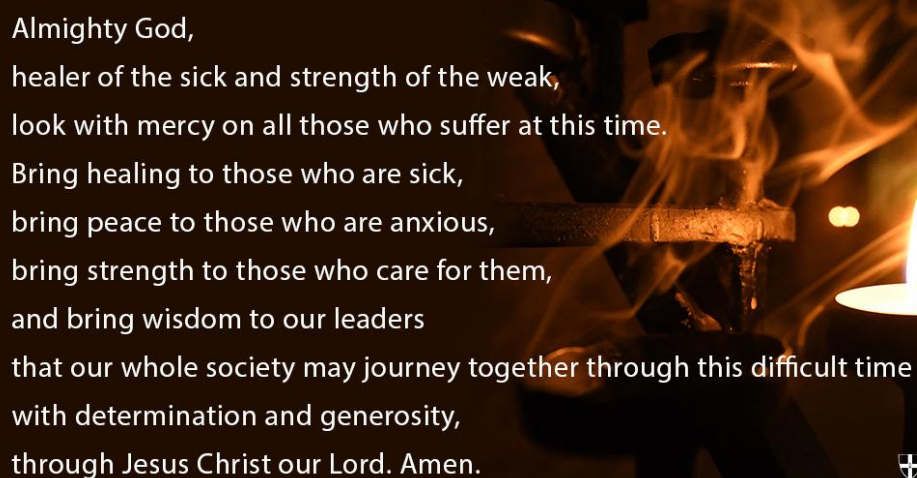




God of hope,  
in times of disappointment  
you lead us to seek fresh purpose and new hope.  
Be with all those who are unable to participate  
in events they were looking forward to this weekend.  
Amidst the sadness, help us to find joy in the simple  
things of daily living,  
and amidst the difficulty of today, remind us of the  
hope of better things to come  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

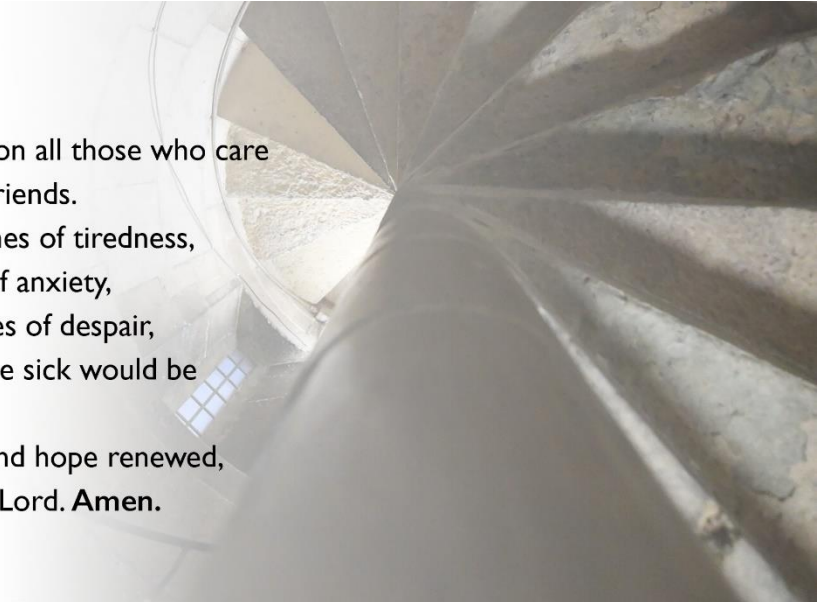


Healing God,  
whose Son Jesus brought wholeness to  
lives through the power of his love,  
pour out, we pray, your power to heal  
upon all those who work in medicine,  
that through your mercy,  
we may see in our own day  
the injured returned to health,  
the distressed led to happiness,  
and the broken restored to wholeness,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**




Almighty God,  
healer of the sick and strength of the weak,  
look with mercy on all those who suffer at this time.  
Bring healing to those who are sick,  
bring peace to those who are anxious,  
bring strength to those who care for them,  
and bring wisdom to our leaders  
that our whole society may journey together through this difficult time  
with determination and generosity,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

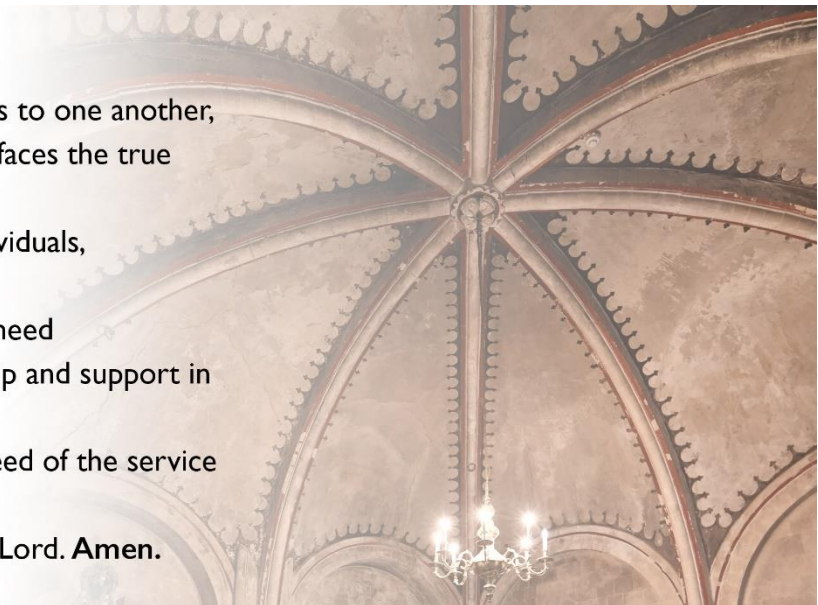




Loving God,  
bless with your compassion all those who care  
for family members and friends.  
Give them strength in times of tiredness,  
give them calm in times of anxiety,  
give them courage in times of despair,  
that through their love the sick would be  
comforted,  
relationships deepened, and hope renewed,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Merciful God,  
we entrust to your tender care  
those who are ill or in pain,  
knowing that whenever danger threatens  
your everlasting arms are there  
to hold them safe.  
Comfort and heal them,  
and restore them to health and strength,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Father of all,  
you call us to be generous to one another,  
and to recognise in their faces the true  
image of your Son.  
Give us grace that as individuals,  
and as a whole society,  
that in this time of great need  
we may minister friendship and support in  
ways that are safe  
to all those who are in need of the service  
of others this day,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



O Lord, our refuge,  
our hope, and our peace,  
be with us this night  
as our protector and our salvation.  
Calm our anxieties,  
ease our fears,  
and soften our sadness,  
that we may find in you  
our true rest, and our perfect restoration,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees and a green, mossy ground. The text is overlaid on the image.

Loving Lord,

We pray for your love and compassion to abound as we walk through this challenging season.

We ask for wisdom for those who bear the load of making decisions with widespread consequences.

We pray for those who are suffering with sickness and for all who are caring for them.

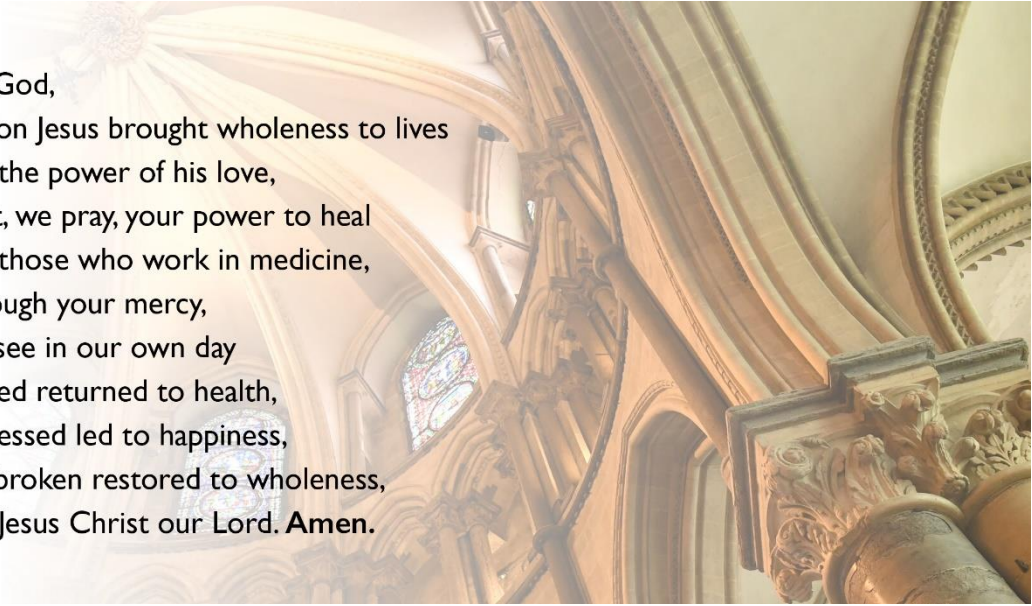
We ask for protection for the elderly and vulnerable to not succumb to the risks of virus.

We pray for misinformation to be curbed that fear may take no hold in hearts and minds.

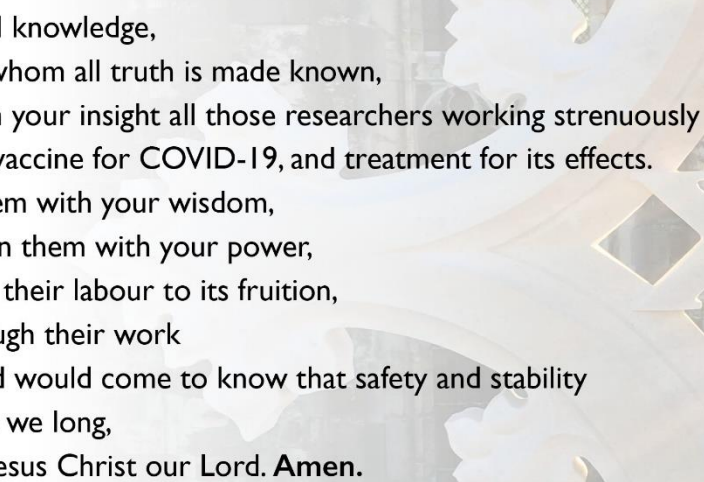
As we exercise the good sense that you in your mercy provide may we also approach each day in faith and peace, trusting in the truth of your goodness towards us.

Amen

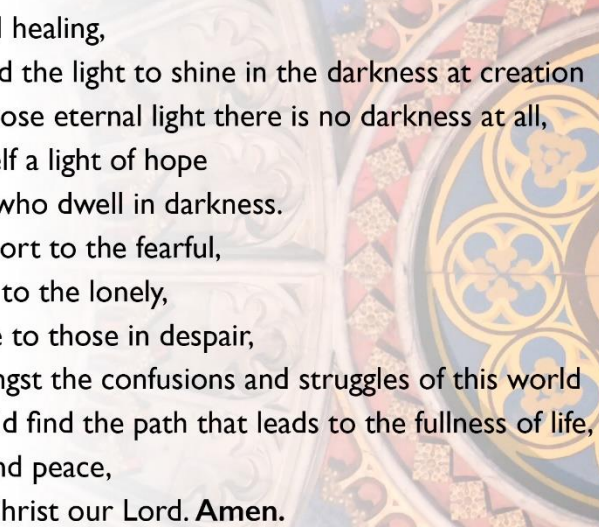




Healing God,  
whose Son Jesus brought wholeness to lives  
through the power of his love,  
pour out, we pray, your power to heal  
upon all those who work in medicine,  
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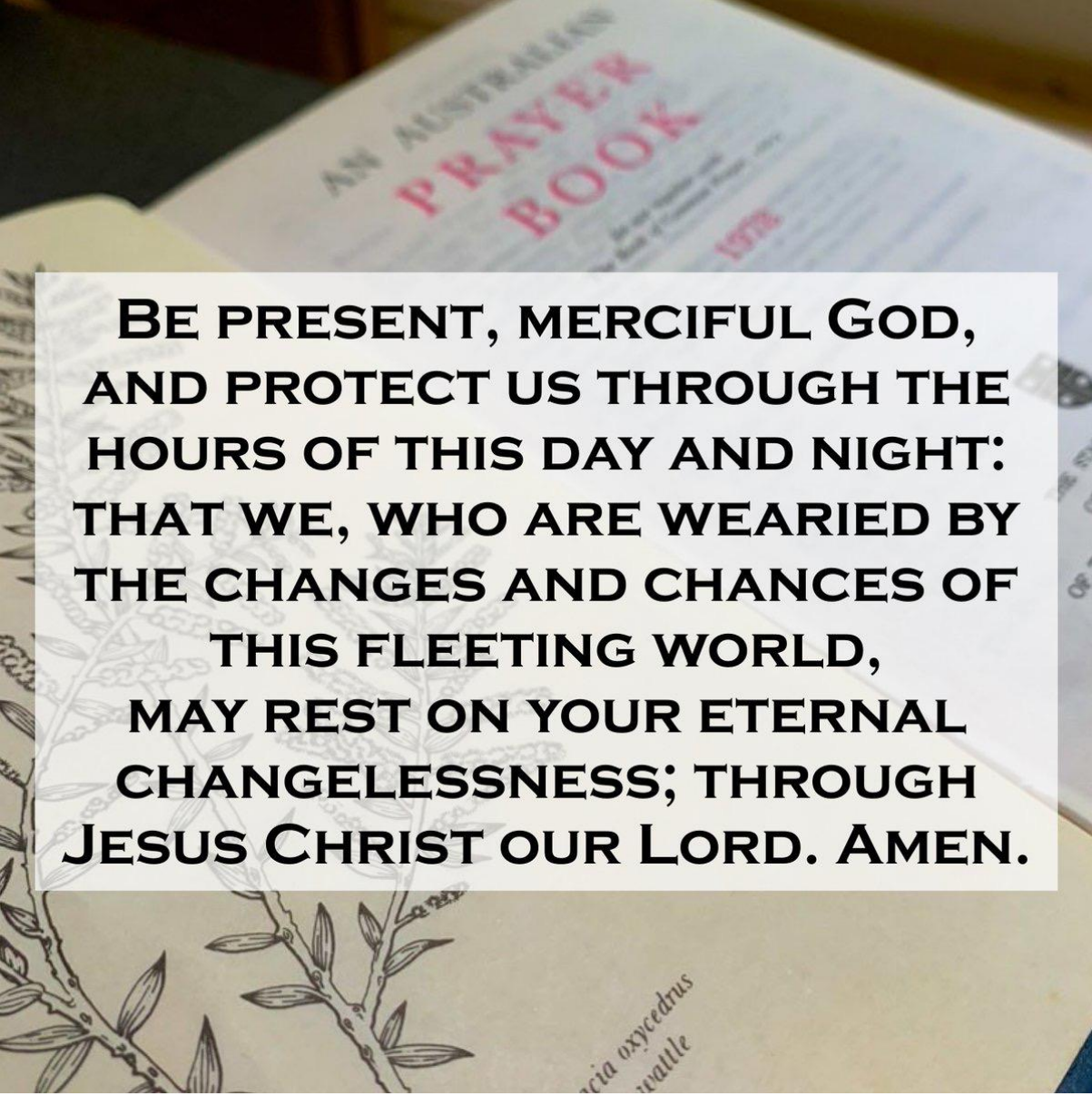


God of all knowledge,  
through whom all truth is made known,  
bless with your insight all those researchers working strenuously  
to find a vaccine for COVID-19, and treatment for its effects.  
Guide them with your wisdom,  
strengthen them with your power,  
and bring their labour to its fruition,  
that through their work  
our world would come to know that safety and stability  
for which we long,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



God of all healing,  
who called the light to shine in the darkness at creation  
and in whose eternal light there is no darkness at all,  
be yourself a light of hope  
to those who dwell in darkness.  
Be a support to the fearful,  
a listener to the lonely,  
a purpose to those in despair,  
that amongst the confusions and struggles of this world  
they would find the path that leads to the fullness of life,  
and joy, and peace,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**





**BE PRESENT, MERCIFUL GOD,  
AND PROTECT US THROUGH THE  
HOURS OF THIS DAY AND NIGHT:  
THAT WE, WHO ARE WEARIED BY  
THE CHANGES AND CHANCES OF  
THIS FLEETING WORLD,  
MAY REST ON YOUR ETERNAL  
CHANGELESSNESS; THROUGH  
JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.**



## A PRAYER IN LOCKDOWN

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For Jesus' sake.

**Amen**

# *Lockdown and Freedom*



This hen is not very happy. She is sick, so she has been isolated behind wire-netting and is prevented from being out and about with other hens. No longer is she able to forage for insects, dig holes and flick soil through her feathers in a patch of soft dirt. Can she find freedom where she is?

At present many of us are also isolated. We are in lockdown in an effort to slow down and restrict the spreading of coronavirus in our world. Vulnerable elderly people, particularly, are instructed to stay at home and only venture forth for essential purchases, medical reasons or exercise.

As Christians, we can no longer attend church services in person. Many cathedrals and churches are responding to this restriction by livestreaming their services on the internet. It is good to worship with others, although via the internet is not the same as being part of a physical congregation.

We are in a strange time, yet we are still members of the body of Christ, called to embody Christ in a world which is today being changed and is changing us. When we embody Christ this Lent we are reminded of the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert before he began his ministry. In the wilderness Jesus was alone, but not quite. We are told in Mark 1:13 that he was tempted by Satan, and “was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.”

We know about being tempted to stress out, and be anxious and afraid because of thoughts that arise in our minds, especially when we are alone and feeling depressed, but what about the wild animals and angels? We share God’s world with all creation. Have we now time to pause, look at a bird flying or listen to its call? We can choose to stop and play with chickens or other pets if we have them, watch insects busy in the garden or notice roses gradually unfolding. By being less bound by time we are free to enjoy God’s living creation, perhaps with angels caring for us.

As we enter Holy Week and Easter, we are confronted by the fear and distress of



Jesus as he approached betrayal and desertion by his friends, his coming capture, crucifixion and finally, death. Was his belief in revealing God's mission of love in the world a horrible mistake?

As we continue living in the current environment we do not know whether we, or people we live among, will catch the coronavirus, how people out of work will manage, or for how long all this will continue. As we listen to the daily reports of more and more people being infected and dying from the coronavirus, it is easy to become depressed and look for someone or something to give us comfort.

When crucified, Jesus was nailed to a stationary cross, unable to move. He was alone, but again, not quite. Passers-by taunted him, but a few women friends and his mother were, "looking on from a distance" (Mark 15:40). They had not deserted him. There was also a close neighbour, nailed to a cross, who in Luke 23:43 unexpectedly offered Jesus an affirmation of his identity and asked for help. Jesus responded with what must have sounded ridiculous in the situation, the assurance of his caring love and presence for ever.

Experiencing interaction with other people "from a distance" by telephone or on-line is becoming common for us. It may be consulting our doctor, participating in meetings, chatting with family members and friends, or contacting neighbours living alone. In lockdown we become neighbours of strangers sharing the same restrictions as we are. They may be the unlikely ones who offer us unexpected help which we can gratefully receive. By serving and being served, we share God's love and healing.

Just before his death Jesus cried out to God, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" (Mark 15:34). It was a cry rising from a feeling of utter desolation. We are told that at that time the curtain in the temple separating God from the people was torn apart. This act symbolised God present with Jesus and us, grieving and sharing the pain.

After Jesus' death, his body was given to Joseph of Arimathea who wrapped it in a linen cloth and placed it in a sealed rock tomb (Mark 15:46).

On Easter Day, Jesus' body was seen alive in many places, freed from death and the tomb. The risen Jesus met his grieving friends, showed them his wounds and forgave their desertion and denial. The disciples' experiences of pain, joy and forgiveness set them free to receive the Holy Spirit to guide and empower them in their future life.

Although we do not know when our lockdown will end, we *shall* emerge from this period, and we *will* be changed. We have been wounded, but we have had the freedom to grow in love and thankfulness for God and others—human and non-human. This is a time that is making us more aware of God's life present in all creation. Can we now move forward in our lives, embodying the risen wounded Christ who showed God's love and forgiveness to all?



The day *will* come when we can again, like these hens, enjoy the close company of our friends.

*Sister Helen CSC*  
*April 2020*