

Prayers for personal use and during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples, 'I am with you always'. Be with me today, as I offer myself to you. Hear my prayers for others and for myself, and keep me in your care.

Gracious God, thank you that you are over all, in all and through all. We lift our world before you as we journey through the COVID-19 pandemic. I pray for those who are suffering its effects, the medical personnel who are caring for them and those seeking a vaccine or cure, and all essential workers. I am grateful for the lives of people who have died and pray for their families and friends in their bereavement. I ask that you enable this diocese to know your love for all and give us your peace which passes all understanding. In the name of Christ. Amen.

- *Diocese of Fredericton*

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. Amen.

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For those who are ill

Merciful God, I 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.

For hospital staff and medical researchers

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- *From the Church of England*

Intercessions from the Church of England

SET A

O God, who alone makes us dwell in safety, I pray:

For all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or isolation or anxiety, that they may find relief and recovery: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who are guiding our nation at this time, and shaping national policies, that they may make wise decisions: **Lord, have mercy.**

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers, that through their skill and insights many will be restored to health: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying, that they may know your comfort and peace: **Lord, have mercy.**

I commend myself and all for whom I pray, to the mercy and protection of God.
Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

SET B

To the Lord, who is our refuge and stronghold, I pray:

For the health and well-being of our nation, that all who are fearful and anxious may be at peace and free from worry: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the isolated and housebound, that we may be alert to their needs, and care for them in their vulnerability: **Lord, have mercy.**

For our homes and families, our schools and young people, and all in any kind of need or distress: **Lord, have mercy.**

For a blessing on our local community, that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship, where all are known and cared for: **Lord, have mercy.**

I commend myself and all for whom I pray, to the mercy and protection of God.
Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Personal prayers

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

- from St Patrick's Breastplate

I am giving you worship with all my life,
I am giving you obedience with all my power,
I am giving you praise with all my strength,
I am giving you honour with all my speech.
I am giving you love with all my heart,
I am giving you affection with all my sense,
I am giving you my being with all my mind,
I am giving you my soul, O most high and holy God.
Praise to the Father,
Praise to the Son,
Praise to the Spirit,
The Three in One.

- adapted from Alexander Carmichael, Carmina Gadelica (1900)

O gracious and holy Father, give me wisdom to perceive you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.

- St Benedict

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Christian community

We are not people of fear: we are people of courage.
We are not people who protect our own safety:
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.
We are not people of greed: we are people of generosity.
We are your people God, giving and loving, wherever we are, whatever it costs
For as long as it takes wherever you call us.

- Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

Prayers from The Corrymeela Community, Northern Ireland, © 2020

God of the spoken and unspoken, may this separation cause us to crave the joy of human closeness. May our face-to-face on-screen meetings remind us that no-one is fully realised in two dimensions. May our careful, scheduled encounters that relay only the necessary materials lead us to appreciate the power of unplanned togetherness, those conversations that drifted, the pauses that linger for another round. Amen.

God of this latest moment, God of this lifelong path: we are meandering through unbounded time without clarity of an endpoint. Like Samuel in the night, or Mary in the garden, we remain lost until we know the voice of the one calling our name, telling us life has won. Take our fear and confusion. Give us purpose and peace. Replace this anxiety with joy. Place us again in this world that you love so this moment reopens our eyes. Amen.

God of our greatest generation, God of our rising generation: may this moment, this hinge in history this date to give thanks and take courage see an heroic spirit of sacrifice and can-do confidence join a growing passion for justice. Strengthen our determination to meet again some sunny day with a fuller of sense of 'we' so that our reunions will not be simply the end of separation, but the start of reconciliation with those who have not gained from our victories. Amen.

God who speaks from out of the whirlwind, and hears sighs too deep for words: as we come to terms with what we do not know – a timeline for return, a safe social distance –as we struggle to make sense of the world around us and imagine what life will be like, ground us in our kindness. May a gracious word begin our next encounter, a patient thought accompany our coming breath, so that with little left in our control, we may control ourselves with grace and faith and compassion. Amen.

God of those on the frontline, God of the ones they must leave behind: this separation is hard enough as we're kept from normal routines, and interactions with friends, the freedom to do as we please. Especially for those who go to work to be at risk, and stay away, may your spirit provide what phones cannot, what screens only attempt to project and what pixels fail to capture. May your spirit be known in our flesh today, so that an earthly father might be present with his son, and the mother on the ward can hold tight to her child. Amen.

God of the world we create, God of the world you reveal: may our way be not of escape, but of further connection. May our life be not for ourselves but for you and others still. May our truth be not what we shape it to be. Instead may we accept the stranger and more glorious truth of what already is: a greater world available through your divine and selfless love. Amen.