***Prayers, reflections and poems during this time of pandemic***

Lord Jesus,

I can think of your people down the ages

who have travelled over life’s stormy sea

and, in dying, have reached the harbour of peace, light and happiness.

As you calmed the sea,

I ask you to be with me and bring peace in my life each day,

because the boat of my own life is small

and the ocean is very large.

As you have set my course,

I ask you to steer my life towards the shore of everlasting life.

Bring me, at last,

along with all who are dear to me,

to the quiet rest that I seek,

where you live and reign

with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever. Amen. ***Br Nicholas Hutchinson fsc***

***Prayer for those who are sick***

Lord, our God,  
who watch over your creatures with unfailing care,  
keep us in the safe embrace of your love.  
With your strong right hand raise up your servant(s) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
and give them the strength of your own power.  
Minister to them and heal their illnesses,  
so that they may have from you the help they long for.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. ***Order of the Blessing of the Sick***

***Prayer for someone who is sick***

Lord and Father, almighty and eternal God,  
by your blessing you give us strength and support in our frailty:  
turn with kindness toward this your servant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Free him/her from all illness and restore him/her to health,  
so that in the sure knowledge of your goodness  
he/she will gratefully bless your holy name.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. ***Order of the Blessing of the Sick***

God loved us before he made us; and his love has never diminished and never shall.  
 ***Julian of Norwich***

My Lord God,  
I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end.  
nor do I really know myself,  
and the fact that I think I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.  
But I believe that the desire to please you  
does in fact please you.  
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.  
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,

though I may know nothing about it.  
Therefore will I trust you always though  
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.  
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,  
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.  ***Thomas Merton***

Calmer of hearts,

You steady my spirit

when the storms of life disturb and threaten to drown my peace.

When I am with others who are distraught,

may I bring the same unwavering presence

to calm the harsh tempests that menace them.  ***Joyce Rupp***

**Be at Peace**

Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life;

rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise,

God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things;

and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in His arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same understanding Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day.

He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

***Saint Francis de Sales***

**Lead, Kindly Light,** amidst th’encircling gloom, Lead Thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home, Lead Thou me on!  
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on;  
I loved to choose and see my path; but now Lead Thou me on!  
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears, Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still Will lead me on.  
O’er moor and fen, o’er crag and torrent, till The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile,   
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!

Meantime, along the narrow rugged path, Thyself hast trod,  
Lead, Saviour, lead me home in childlike faith, Home to my God.  
To rest forever after earthly strife  
In the calm light of everlasting life. ***St Cardinal John Henry Newman***

O Mary, You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus’ suffering,  
and persevered in your faith.

“Protectress of the Roman people”,you know our needs,  
and we know that you will provide,  
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,  
joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,  
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father  
and to do what Jesus tells us.  
For he took upon himself our suffering,  
and burdened himself with our sorrows  
to bring us, through the cross,  
to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

*We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God;  
Do not despise our petitions in our necessities,  
but deliver us always from every danger,  
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.* ***Pope Francis***

Restorer of broken hearts,

when sorrow empties joy from my life

and situations bring unforeseen bleakness,

wrap your arms of tender hope around the wounded edges of my hurt.

Urge my grief to move toward healing.

Today, I entrust my wounded heart to the divine Healer.  ***Joyce Rupp***

And all shall be well. And all shall be well. And all manner of things shall be exceedingly well. ***Julian of Norwich***

Nothing

Can make up for the absence

of someone we love.

And it would be wrong

to try to find a substitute.

We must simply hold out

and see it through.

That sounds very hard at first,

but, at the same time,

it is a great consolation.

For the gap, as long as it remains unfilled,

preserves the bond between us.

It is nonsense to say that

God fills the gap.

God does not fill it,

but, on the contrary,

keeps it empty,

and so helps us to keep alive

our former communion

with each other

even at the cost of pain. ***Dietrich Bonhoeffer***