

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST



Help for the Dying



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Help for the Dying

Death. The very word can strike terror in a person's soul. Scripture tells us that the inevitable consequence of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

For the unbeliever, death is an enemy to be avoided. For the believer, death is the defeated enemy by Jesus' death and resurrection and is the doorway to eternal life in the presence of God.

But, the process of dying can be a frightening one. How does one approach dying and all that comes with it? Certainly, Christians will call their pastor so that he may make visits, bringing the consolation of Confession and Absolution, the Gospel, and the Blessed Sacrament of Jesus' body and blood.

However, what about those in-between times when there is no pastor present? What kind of conversation should occur and what can be done? Very often, we don't know what to say or what to do when confronted by dying and death.

Certainly, the gift of music in the form of recorded liturgy and hymns will be helpful. Music that proclaims the Gospel will bring great comfort and joy in the midst of dying, both for the dying soul and those who attend him. It is suggested that recordings of solid Christian music be played for the strengthening of faith and consolation in the gospel. Your pastor will be glad to make recommendations and will even provide you with hymns of comfort and strength from Lutheran Service Book. Use the hymnal and read or sing hymns and liturgy as a resource in your time of need.

And, you may use this little booklet as a resource to help the dying and those in attendance. This guide will help you, so you may know what to say and how to say it according to scripture, so that Jesus is made known as He comes into our death-filled world with life eternal and joy in the gospel of salvation.

May this rite, prayers, scripture, and hymns be of help to you when you are dying and may it be a help to you if your loved one or friend is dying.

I Corinthians 15:13-20

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Soli Deo Gloria

Pastor Donald Jordan

February 8, 2010

The 5th Week After Epiphany

That these mine eyes with joy may see,
O Son of God, Thy glorious face,
My Savior and my fount of grace.
Lord Jesus Christ,
My prayer attend,
My prayer attend,
And I will praise Thee without end.

Hymn 708:3

Should death occur, the following prayer is said.

☞ O God the Father, fountain and source of all blessings, we give thanks that You have kept our brother/sister name in the faith and have now taken him/her to Yourself. Comfort us with Your holy Word, and give us strength that when our last hour comes we may peacefully fall asleep in You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. (537)

☞ *Amen.*

The rite concludes with the blessing.

☞ The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.

☞ *Amen.*

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM



THE DYING PERSON FORGIVES AND ASKS TO BE FORGIVEN

EXHORTATION

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
Matthew 6:14–15

It is a part of true preparation for dying in peace that we are to be reconciled with our fellow human beings. The dying should not delay this reconciliation but attend to it at once.

However, the dying should bear in mind that if others have done many things to spite them, they must not take any grudge against their enemies and offenders with them to the grave, but must heartily forgive them and, if possible, show them by kindness or through good friends that they have been forgiven. However, if the dying have caused others grief and offended them, they should not rest until they have been reconciled. Yes, they should not be ashamed to ask those they have offended to come to their dying bed so that they can ask forgiveness of them with heart, lips, and hands. Or, if they live far away, they must contact them and ask forgiveness. Or, if they are dead, they must implore forgiveness from God for the wrong done to them.

At the same time, the dying should also restore to their fellow neighbors or their heirs anything they have stolen, filched, or wrongfully taken, because sin cannot be forgiven if a person is unwilling to restore what can be restored or its equivalent. The dying should feel impelled to seek such reconciliation, not only by their duty as Christians but also by the divine command and threat in Matthew 6:15, and they should remember that if they are unwilling to forgive, neither will they ever obtain mercy from God. As we deal with our enemies, that is how God deals with us.

PRAYER

My God, I live, yet I do not know for how long. I must die, and I know not when. So I will seek reconciliation with my fellow human beings, that I may depart from this world with peace in my heart. Heaven is called the home of peace—no souls that are irreconcilable, revengeful, and filled with wrath and hatred will be admitted into it, but driven back. Therefore, I will purge my heart from all anger and animosity. I will gladly forgive and ask to be forgiven, so that God for Jesus' sake may graciously receive me as a person who wishes to be reconciled. I am still on the way to eternity, and so I will lay aside all enmity in the certain confidence that as I forgive from the heart, I will also be forgiven.

Therefore, I forgive right now from my inmost heart all my enemies, all who have opposed me, and all who have hurt me by words, deeds, or gestures. I pardon and forgive them not only with my lips but also in my heart in the presence of God. I will never again remember what they have done to me; I will forget it. To assure them that I am reconciled with them, I wish them everything good and will seek to do them good wherever and whenever I am able. Yes, I ask God to bless them and let it be well with them and their children now and in eternity.

And as I now from my heart pardon and have forgiven all who have ever angered me, or ever hurt or grieved me, so I also ask forgiveness now of all those whom I have ever offended, or in any way injured or grieved. O my dear friends, forgive me all for the love of Jesus; do not bear a grudge. I admit that I have wronged you; I ask your forgiveness with my heart, mouth, and hand. Would to God I could see you all here at my deathbed, I would ask you each personally to forgive me.

Yes, graciously forgive me, O merciful God, all the grief I have caused my fellow human beings while I lived, no matter who they may be, no matter whether I did it maliciously or in weakness, intentionally or not. Oh, forgive me for Your mercy's sake. From now on I cast out of my heart all enmity. I will not avenge myself or think of any wrong that I have suffered. Oh, remember not my sins and iniquities. O my heavenly Father, have mercy on me. O my Jesus, wash me clean from sins and intercede for me. O Holy Spirit, sanctify my heart and cleanse it from all unrighteousness. Thus I die cheerfully and at peace.

The leader then prays:

- ☐ Almighty God, You breathed life into Adam and have given earthly life also to name, Your dear child and servant. With faith in Your power to heal and save, we commend him/her to You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (536)
- ☑ *Amen.*

The LORD'S PRAYER is then prayed.

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Matthew 6:9–13

- ☐ Name, go in peace. May God the Father, who created you, may God the ☩ Son, who redeemed and saved you with His blood, may God the Holy Spirit, who sanctified you in the water of Holy Baptism, receive you into the company of saints and angels to await the resurrection and live in the light of His glory forevermore.
- ☑ *Amen.*

The NUNC DIMITTIS is spoken or sung (LSB page 169, 208).

**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 be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Luke 2:29–32

The following hymn stanza may be sung or spoken:

**Lord, let at last Thine angels come,
To Abr'ham's bosom bear me home,
That I may die unfearing;
And in its narrow chamber keep
My body safe in peaceful sleep
Until Thy reappearing.
And then from death awaken me,**

**the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

Christian: the ancient text reads "catholic," meaning the whole Church as it confesses the wholeness of Christian doctrine.

The Litany for the Dying may be prayed, either responsively or alone by the leader.

O Lord, **have mercy.**
O Christ, **have mercy.**
O Lord, **have mercy.**
God the Father in heaven, **have mercy on us.**
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, **have mercy on us.**
God the Holy Spirit, **have mercy on us.**
Be gracious to us. **Spare us, good Lord.**
Be gracious to us. **Help us, good Lord.**
From all sin, from all evil,
from all suffering, **good Lord, deliver us.**
By Your incarnation, by Your cross
and suffering, by Your death and burial, **help us, good Lord.**
By Your resurrection and ascension,
by the coming of Your Holy Spirit, **help us, good Lord.**
We poor sinners implore You **to hear us, good Lord.**
That You deliver Your servant name
from all evil and from eternal death,
we implore You to hear us,
good Lord.
That You forgive all his/her sins,
we implore You to hear us,
good Lord.
That You give him/her refreshment
and everlasting blessing,
we implore You to hear us,
good Lord.
That You give him/her joy and gladness
in heaven with Your saints,
we implore You to hear us,
good Lord.
Christ, the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world, **have mercy on us.**
Christ, the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world, **have mercy on us.**
Christ, the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world, **grant us Your peace.**
O Lord, **have mercy.**
O Christ, **have mercy.**
O Lord, **have mercy.**

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM

And thus I live in God contented And die without a thought of fear;
My soul has to God's plans consented, For through His Son my faith is
clear. O God, for Jesus' sake I pray Your peace may bless my dying day.

LSB 598:3

HYMN

*I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.*

*I am trusting Thee for pardon;
At Thy feet I bow,
For Thy grace and tender mercy
Trusting now.*

*I am trusting Thee for cleansing
In the crimson flood;
Trusting Thee to make me holy
By Thy blood.*

*I am trusting Thee to guide me;
Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev'ry day and hour supplying
All my need.*

*I am trusting Thee for power;
Thine can never fail.
Words which Thou Thyself shalt
give me
Must prevail.*

*I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all. LSB 729:1-6*



STARCK'S PRAYER BOOK

*The golden evening brightens in the west;
Soon, soon to faithful warriors cometh rest;
Sweet is the calm of paradise the blest.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*But, lo, there breaks a yet more glorious day:
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;
The King of Glory passes on His way.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:
Alleluia! Alleluia! LSB 677:1-8*



THE DYING PERSON COMMENDS THE SOUL TO GOD

EXHORTATION

*Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O
LORD, faithful God. Psalm 31:5*

Often dying persons have many things to set in order and arrange before their death. They want to set their houses in order, and, while doing so, may be tempted to forget what is most valuable: their souls! But to act thus is very unwise and just plain wrong. Sincere Christians should rather commend their souls as well as their bodies each night when they go to bed and each morning when they rise to the protection of God because they do not know what God will decree concerning them during that day or night.

But if godly Christians are doing this every day, dying persons should do this even more so. They have before them the example of their Savior. When He was about to die, He said "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). Stephen did the same. While being stoned, he cried: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Such care for the soul

Standing before the throne and the Lamb

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.
They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 7:9-17

The CREED is confessed.

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,**

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Matthew 27:27-54

The resurrection of our Lord

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

John 20:1-18

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM

is pleasing to God; and by it a person manifests faith and trust in God. However, this is also highly necessary. We witness many changes and accidents in dying persons. How wise it is then to commend the soul to God while the person is still of sound mind, and thus to put the best treasure of all (the soul) into safekeeping, while, as regards all other things, the dying simply resign themselves to God's will for life or death. When all things have been thus put in order, a person dies in peace.

PRAYER

Merciful and loving God, You turn men to destruction and say, Return, you children of men. You take Your beloved ones to Yourself through death and make them partakers of the glory that our Lord Jesus purchased for us by His bitter suffering and death. I see that my weakness is a voice calling to me: "Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him" (Matthew 25:6). "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning" (Luke 12:35). "Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes" (Luke 12:37). "Set your house in order, for you shall die" (2 Kings 20:1).

Now, as I do not know when my hour will be at hand, I will yield myself to You in time and commit my soul with all its powers into Your keeping. Let my heart be emptied of all worldly, sinful, and wicked thoughts, that I may speak of You, picture to myself Your glory, and unceasingly contemplate the joy of the elect, which also awaits me. Fill my heart with Your Holy Spirit, that He may create good impulses in me. Help me to remember Jesus Christ, and always to keep before my eyes the blood that He shed and His death.

When my last hour is at hand, preserve me, according to Your holy will, from temptations, from thoughts that weigh heavy on the soul, from great pains and unbecoming behavior. Let me keep my sound mind till the end, until I expire, so that my heart, lips, and spirit may sing, speak, and pray to You. And if I should lose my speech, make me enjoy Your sweetness in my heart and feel Your most holy presence.

Give me by Your grace cheerfulness to die. Let me in my dying moment glimpse the pleasures of the blessed, and then let me taste a few drops of heaven's sweetness, that I may go from here in full joy and con-

STARCK'S PRAYER BOOK

solation. When my soul quits my body, I commend it to You; receive it into Your hands, O Father. Into your hands I commend my soul. Yes, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Cover it with Your perfect righteousness and conduct it to the marriage feast, like a child to its inheritance, until it shall be reunited with my body on the Last Day. Yes, I also commit to You my body in the cool earth. Grant it undisturbed rest until the last trumpet sounds and you call: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you" (Ephesians 5:14). And then let me gladly and happily arise to the life that never ends, for Jesus' sake.

Lord, let at last Thine angels come, To Abr'ham's bosom bear me home, That I may die unfeared; And in its narrow chamber keep My body safe in peaceful sleep Until Thy reappearing. And then from death awaken me, That these mine eyes with joy may see, O Son of God, Thy glorious face, My Savior and my fount of grace. Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer attend, my prayer attend, And I will praise Thee without end. Amen.

LSB 708:3

HYMN

*Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.*

*Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

*I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me!*

I will give you rest

[Jesus said:] "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."
Matthew 11:28-30

God so loved the world

[Jesus said:] "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God."
John 3:16-21

The crucifixion of our Lord

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

- L** O Lord, our shepherd, lead Your sheep in goodness and mercy as we pass with You through the valley of the shadow of death to Your eternal home, where You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (534)
- R** *Amen.*

Psalm 130

Out | of the depths*

I cry to you, | O LORD!

O LORD, | hear my voice!*

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for | mercy!

If you, O LORD, should mark in- | iquities,*

O LORD, | who could stand?

But with you there is for- | givenness,*

that you | may be feared.

I wait for the LORD, my | soul waits,*

and in his | word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the | morning,*

more than watchmen for the | morning.

O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is | steadfast love,*

and with him is plentiful re- | demption.

And he will redeem | Israel*

from all his in- | iquities.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

- L** O Lord, let Your ears be attentive to the voice of our cry, for there is forgiveness with You that You may be feared. By Your un failing love deliver us from all our sin that our hope may be in You and in Your full redemption; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (535)

R *Amen.*

One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture may be read.

My sheep hear My voice

[Jesus said:] “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”

John 10:27–29

Into Your hand I commit my spirit

Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

Psalm 31:5

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM

*Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav’n’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me. LSB 878:1–6*



FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM



**THE DYING TAKE COMFORT
IN THE PROMISED
ASSISTANCE OF THE
BLESSED TRINITY**

EXHORTATION

His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me! Song of Solomon 2:6

The presence of God in our suffering cannot but be sweet and comforting to the soul. God, however, is not only present with all His creatures; to the believers He is near also with His special presence in life as in death, as He has promised: “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Oh, if God were to open the eyes of the godly—as He did to Elisha’s servant—they would see gathered around their bed so many angels rejoicing that they may conduct another soul to glory! For frequently godly persons at the moment of their death have joyfully exclaimed and said, “How light it is around my bed! Do you not see that bright light there?” Surely that must have been a vision of God’s holy angels.

However, believers should be assured especially of the assistance of the Blessed Trinity. The Father in heaven will remember His fatherly faithfulness and come to the aid of His child. Jesus will not forsake in their last agony the souls He has purchased at the price of His own blood. The Holy Spirit also will refresh them in that hour with His strong consolations. Let hearing and sight fail; let all the senses fail; still the dying know that God will be faithful to His promises even in their dying hour: “I will be with him in trouble.” Blessed is the person whom God permits to experience all this at death!

PRAYER

Come, Lord Jesus! Thus I say now with the whole Church on earth; Yes, come and take my soul to Yourself. I have even now tasted Your sweetness, and I am longing and thirsting for the full stream. I do not regard dying as something terrible, for I die in the love of my heavenly Father. The Father has provided for me, nourished me, led me, and guided me all my life. Will He now leave me because the end of my life is at hand? Never. He loves me too dearly for that. If a father stays with his sick child and helps him as much as he can, how much more can I comfort myself with the almighty and powerful aid of my Father in heaven! My heavenly Father will not deny me the heritage that Jesus has acquired for me by His death. He will bid me enter the Kingdom He has prepared for me from the foundation of the world.

Dying does not seem terrible to me. I die united with Jesus Christ. This union has begun here by faith and will never be abolished. In this union I am a living member in the Body of which Christ is the Head. If the head knows well the condition of the members, my Jesus, too, knows my condition now. I am in Him, and He is in me, and in holy union with Him I am now ready to die. He has said: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). And so He will be with me also in my dying hour. As He loved His own until the end, when He gave Himself into death for them, He loves them also when they are about to die. If, then, I am in the arms of Jesus, death is not terrible to me because I have Him who by His death has taken away the bitterness of dying. Jesus has even here put on me the garments of salvation and clothed me with the robe of His righteousness. Yonder He will robe me in the white garment of honor and glory. The Bridegroom of my soul leads me to the marriage feast. The Lover of my soul makes me share His glory. My Lord fulfills for me now what He has said: "Where I am, there will My servant be also" (John 12:26).

Death is not terrible to me. I die in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. During my present life, He has consecrated my heart to be a temple. He will remain united with me even in death. He who has so often comforted me in my affliction, gladdened me in my suffering, refreshed me in my misery, sustained me under my cross, He will not forsake me in the

L Do you pray God, for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of His beloved Son, to be gracious and merciful to you?

R Yes.

L In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

R Amen.

One of the following psalms is prayed. When copies of the rite are provided to those present, all may join in as the psalm is sung by whole verse or spoken by half verse. After the psalm and a time of silence, the psalm collect may be spoken. The use of one or more penitential psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143) is customary and appropriate when death is near.

Psalm 23

King James Version

The LORD is my | shepherd;*
I | shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down
in green | pastures:*
He leadeth me beside the still | waters.
He restoreth | my soul:*

He leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his | name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death, I will
fear no evil: for thou art | with me;*

thy rod and thy staff,
they | comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the
presence of mine | enemies:*

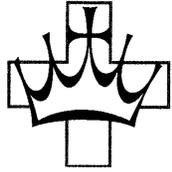
Thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth | over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days | of my life:*

and I will dwell in the house of the
LORD for- | ever.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.



COMMENDATION OF THE DYING

When a Pastor Is Not Present

1. When a member of the Church is near death, the pastor should be called as soon as possible.
2. When death appears imminent and the pastor is not available, this rite may be used.
3. The pastor may wish to provide a copy of this rite to the elders and instruct them in its use.
4. The rite may be abbreviated, using especially the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and commendation.

L In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

R *Amen.*

Matthew 28:19b

L Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, look with favor upon Your child, name, forgive him/her all his/her sins, and comfort him/her with the promise of resurrection to life everlasting; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (533)

R *Amen.*

L Let us confess our sins.

L O almighty God, merciful Father,
R *I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.*

L Do you confess to almighty God that you are a poor, miserable sinner?

R *Yes.*

L Do you confess to our merciful Father that you have sinned against Him in thought, word, and deed?

R *Yes.*

L Do you confess that you justly deserve His temporal and eternal punishment?

R *Yes.*

L Do you believe that our Lord Jesus Christ died for you and shed His blood for you on the cross for the forgiveness of all your sins?

R *Yes.*

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM

last hour, but will bear witness with my spirit that I am certainly God's child. If I should even lose my speech and no longer be able to pray aloud, He will make intercession for me with groans too deep for words. Yes, since He is the down payment of our inheritance, He assures me even now that I am an heir of heaven and shall enter into complete possession of it. The Father holds out to me the crown. Jesus leads me by the right hand into joy. The Holy Spirit adorns me with light and bliss. The holy angels rejoice over my entrance into the heavenly life of joy. All the elect and godly receive me with rejoicing.

All honor, praise, and majesty To Father, Son, and Spirit be, Our God forever glorious, In whose rich grace We run our race Till we depart victorious.

LSB 734:5

HYMN

*Father most holy, merciful, and tender;
Jesus, our Savior, with the Father reigning;
Spirit of comfort, advocate, defender,
Light never waning;*

*Trinity blessed, unity unshaken,
Goodness unbounded, very God of heaven,
Light of the angels, joy of those forsaken,
Hope of all living,*

*Maker of all things, all Thy creatures praise Thee;
All for Thy worship were and are created;
Now, as we also worship Thee devoutly,
Hear Thou our voices.*

*Lord God Almighty, unto Thee be glory,
One in three persons, over all exalted!
Glory we offer, praise Thee and adore Thee,
Now and forever. LSB 504:1-4*

FOR THE USE OF THE DYING AND THOSE ATTENDING THEM



PRAYER OF THOSE PRESENT FOR THE DYING

O holy triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, You hear prayer, and so all flesh comes to You. Behold, we are coming now before You and offer up our prayer on behalf of this dying Christian.

Lord God, Father in heaven, have mercy on him/her. You have created him/her in Your image; He/she is Your creature and Your child whom You received by Holy Baptism into Your grace. Have mercy, O Lord! Your child is about to die. Let him/her now obtain a child's portion, the heritage in heaven, the salvation of his/her soul. Forgive him/her all sins that during his/her entire earthly life he/she has committed, and look upon him/her with favor.

O Son of God, the Savior of the world, have mercy on this dying Christian. You have redeemed him/her with Your holy blood. You died for him/her. Do not charge his/her sins against him/her, but impute to him/her Your righteousness and Your merit. Wash him/her with Your holy blood. Cover him/her with Your righteousness, and let him/her now appear before the throne of God, cleansed with Your blood.

Lord God, Holy Spirit, have mercy upon this dying Christian. Preserve him/her in faith; witness to his/her spirit that he/she truly is a child of God, and make intercession for him/her before God with groans that cannot be uttered. Sanctify, strengthen, and lead him/her into everlasting life.

O Holy Trinity, receive this dying Christian with favor. Remember not the sins of his/her youth, nor his/her transgressions. According to Your mercy, remember him/her for Your goodness' sake, O Lord. Receive his/her spirit into Your hands, and let it share eternal joy. On the last day grant to the body that is now dying a glad and glorious resurrection. Meanwhile, let it rest gently in the cool earth, until at the general resurrection body and soul will be reunited and enter into the bliss of heaven.

But, Lord, since his/her agony and anguish are increasing, let not the remembrance of Jesus and Him crucified slip from his/her mind.

When his/her eyes grow dim, let a bright light shine in his/her soul. Yes, O Jesus, O bright and morning star, enlighten him/her unto everlasting life. When he/she can no longer see us, grant him/her, O triune God, constantly to behold You by faith, until he/she will see You face-to-face. When his/her lips close and he/she can pray no longer, Lord Jesus, intercede for him/her and be his/her advocate with the Father in heaven. Help him/her to battle and to overcome, and let even the sighing of his/her heart be acceptable to You. When the death-sweat breaks out on him/her, strengthen him/her and be his/her support.

O triune God, abide with him/her, and keep him/her in faith until he/she has finished his/her course happily and joyfully. Lord God Father, what You have created; Lord God Son, what You have redeemed; Lord God Holy Spirit, what You have sanctified, we commend into Your hands. To Your name be praise, honor, and glory now and forevermore!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies. Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me. Amen.

LSB 878:6



PRAYER OF THOSE PRESENT AFTER THE DYING PERSON HAS BREATHED THE LAST

O holy and righteous God, it has pleased You to call from this life the departed lying here before us by temporal death. Let us learn from this death that we, too, must die and leave this world, in order that we may prepare for it in time by repentance, a living faith, and avoiding the sins and vanities of the world. Refresh the soul that has now departed with heavenly consolation and joy, and fulfill for it all the gracious promises that in Your Holy Word You have made to those who believe in You. Grant to the body a soft and quiet rest in the earth until the Last Day, when You will reunite body and soul and lead them into glory, so that the entire person who served You here may be filled with heavenly joy there. Comfort all who are in grief over this death, and be and remain to the bereaved their father, provider, guardian, helper, and support. Do not forsake them, and do not withdraw Your hand from them, but let them abundantly experience Your goodness, grace, love, and help, until You will grant them also a happy and blessed end. Hear us for Your mercy's sake. Amen.