

Prayer for April 12, 2020: Easter Sunday

Risen Christ,

In the mysterious time before the dawn, you took on life once more. You strode into the darkness before the day. What did you see? What did you hear? What did you feel as you breathed the fragrance of the olive trees again? What joy animated your once more beating heart?

We will never know exactly how that felt. We will come closest when you summon the living and the dead to be once more with you.

On this Easter morning, the sun has long since begun its journey through the skies. We worship in the light of a resurrection day long advanced; indeed, we live 730,000 days or more since your resurrection day. You'd think that would be time enough for us to greet this morning unencumbered by doubts and fears. It is not. We remain very human, Jesus. The pains and stresses of today weigh more on our hearts than your abundant life lifts us up. So we pray from our griefs and our sorrows.

Holy One, comfort and strengthen the many who are sick today, whatever their ailment or injury. Bless the people who labor to help them heal, from the family members sick with worry and unable to visit, to the ward clerks, to the nurses, to the CNAs, to the cleaners, to the administrators, to the physicians. May all of them do their work with the protection of your hand.

Holy One, comfort and embrace the dying and the grieving. We are all Mary Magdalene on the way to the tomb at some point in our lives, O God. Even with deep faith in resurrection, we mourn our losses, for though it is only for a time, it is for a time and that makes it a hard time. Hold us. Embrace us, and do not let us go.

Holy One, help us sustain our neighbors in this disruption of work and education and family life and community. Encourage us to reach out with note and wave and telephone call. Let us ask, "How are you?" and listen to the answer. May we and the leaders in our society wisely gather and distribute the necessities of life so that illness is not aggravated by hunger and homelessness. May we be as generous of ourselves as you are of yourself.

On this Easter morning, Holy One, we dare to ask you once again for your most gracious gift. As we look about our world in our distraction or in our serenity, come up to us. Look upon us with our aching hearts or our comforted hearts. Then, softly and gently, speak our names to us. Open our perception to see, and hear, and feel, and know that you live, and that in your life we live, and that in your life the world lives.

Call our names, Jesus, and do not ever let us go.

Amen.