

Prayer for May 3, 2020

Good Shepherd,

Guide us, please, to the places of safety and refreshment we crave. We are not sheep, but like sheep we crave one another's presence and company. We do not like this separated living. This is a dark valley for us, and the dangers pressing us to stay apart are real and threatening. So are the dangers of staying apart, the costs to our livelihoods, our emotions, and to our most vulnerable neighbors.

Guide us, please, to the places of safety and refreshment we crave.

We pray for a miracle without, we must admit, quite expecting one. Right now, simple survival looks pretty good. Survival with strong spirits sounds even better. Survival with a society oriented toward the care of all its members looks better yet. Though these will not be miracle enough, O God, because we pray for the good health of the many stricken with this disease, they will be miracles of human effort and of divine grace. We pray for your miracles.

We pray for those who must find your help as they grieve a loved one, whether taken by COVID-19 or some other cause. In days that embraces are few, hold them firmly and tenderly. Join their tears. Comfort their sorrow. Receive their loved ones into light and life.

Strengthen those who risk their health each day to do their work: store clerks, postal and delivery workers, farmers, people who prepare and ship food. Strengthen government officials, police officers and firefighters, the people who keep the water flowing and the surfaces clean. Strengthen the people in medicine, the doctors, nurses, technicians, mental health specialists, and chaplains who treat the sick, the administrators and support personnel who keep things clean and in order, and the researchers laboring to prevent the next wave of illness. May sleep refresh them. May your Spirit renew them.

Come, Good Shepherd, to the tables we have set. Come, Good Shepherd, to become the host. Come, Good Shepherd, pour the cup: we would see and taste it as it overflows with your love.

Amen.