

Pastoral Prayer  
December 20, 2020

May we have the courage of Mary, O God, to take your Spirit within us, and to make for you a home.

May we have the trust of Joseph, O God, who walked with Mary in the promise of hope despite, we are sure, not really understanding much at all.

May we have the assurance of Gabriel who brought a message of hope that did not match expectations but which opened the world to your love in a startling way.

May we have the presence of Christ, a Savior to treasure, a Savior to hold us fast.

We pray for a hurting world, O God, with more people sick in this nation and elsewhere each day, with death tolls near 3,000 each day in the United States and almost 1.7 million families grieving around the globe. May we greet the arrival of vaccines not just with relief but also with wisdom and with compassion, protecting those who need it most as quickly as possible and taking our turn when it comes. May those waiting have your protection and the endurance to live cautiously and carefully, so as not to endanger themselves or others even as relief from this pandemic is in sight. Bless those who work in health care, from physicians and nurses to ward secretaries and cleaning crew, to keep them safe and well.

We pray for the retail workers of the nation who have continued to labor, often at low wages, to supply the rice and vegetables for our tables and the festive gifts that adorn our season. May they have your protection and ours; may we consider their health as we reach for our daily masks.

We pray for those who need medical care for other reasons, O God: the cancers, heart diseases, infections, and injuries that do not pause because an infection has spread. Add your healing power to the efforts of physicians, medical staff, caretakers, and families.

We pause for a moment as the celebration day of Jesus' birth approaches. Holy One, God of all, sneak into our lives with an infant's sleepy breaths. Fill our hearts with your spirit. Make in us your home.

In Jesus' name, who taught us to pray, saying...

Amen.