

Pastoral Prayer
March 10, 2024

O God who is as near to us as breathing and as distant as the farthest star,

Bless us as we pray.

Bless us with the strength we need to endure our struggles, our disappointments, our uncertainties, our illnesses, and our cares. The strength we have and the human supports we have mostly carry us through the day, but not always. We reach out to you for the aid we will find nowhere else and in no one else. You alone can support us when we face the worst of the world. You alone can forgive us when we grieve you with our misdeeds. You alone can carry us from this life to the next.

Bless those we love who suffer from medical distress, grief, and loss. We ache for their pains, O God, and we believe that you weep for them, too. Bring healing, comfort, restoration. Bring purpose, guidance, and confidence. Bring a love so great that they rejoice in your warmth. Bring a promise of salvation that sustains them each day.

Bless those we do not know who live beneath the alarms of war, the harsh brutality of abuse, or the threats of oppression. Bless the people of the world, O God, whose suffering we can imagine but cannot comprehend. Bless the creatures, the growing things, the flowing waters, the heaving oceans, and the towering peaks of the world, O God, that you have created good and that bear the scars of human misuse. Bless the endless stretches of the universe that you made, O God, and into which we gaze in wonder.

Bless us as we pray, in Jesus' name.

Amen.