

Pastoral Prayer

April 21, 2024

O Holy God,

The world can be a harsh place. Wildfires and earthquakes, storms and tsunamis can and do sweep across a community. They take lives, homes, plans, and dreams. To the harshness of the world we add the harshness of humanity. Our wars, jealousies, hatreds, and greed likewise sweep across our communities taking lives, homes, plans, and dreams. We pray for those who suffer from the tyrannies of nature and the cruelties of human beings. We pray that we may be part of their effective aid. We pray that you would do what we cannot.

God, the world can be an indifferent place, a lonely place. At any stage, at any age, we find ourselves wondering if we are loved and cared for. We find ourselves at odds with friends and family, or out of sync with those around us. We wonder if something is wrong with us, and sometimes we do, indeed, need help because of our heart's distress. At other times, we may be doing just what you would ask, but God: it's lonely. Be with us and embrace us in our sorrows, our separation, our solitude. Be with us in our integrity.

God, you have made this world a blessed place, full of beauty to delight the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the tips of our fingers. You have surrounded us with people who, if they are not always good at it, love us day in and day out. You have given us the warmth of the sun and the cooling showers of the rain. Be with us, God, to help us appreciate your abundant grace in Creation, and to recognize in it and in the Scriptures the greater grace you have yet in store for us.

In harshness, indifference, and blessing, be with us, O God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.