

Pastoral Prayer
August 18, 2024

O God of Grace,

We cannot ignore the needs of our neighbors, O God, neither the needs of those close by nor the needs of those far away. As we seek to aid them in the ways in which we can, we pray that you will bring your loving power to their relief.

We pray for those struggling to survive in the midst of wars. We pray for the ceasefire talks in Gaza, and for the people of Ukraine, Russia, Myanmar, Maghreb, Sudan, and too many other places in the world. We pray for those who lack shelter in the night and breakfast in the morning. We pray for those who believe lies, and for those whose truths go unheard. We pray for those who care for the sick and the injured – medical professionals, family members, and friends – and for those who await your healing touch. We pray for those who grieve, for those who are lost, for those who struggle to greet the morning.

And we cannot ignore the richness of your grace, O God. The sights and sounds, the smells and tastes, the very textures of this world delight us when we let them. Your gifts cascade like water over a fall and rush toward us like a wave up a beach. How can our prayers capture the magnitude of our thanks? They cannot, however hard we try, so we beg you to search our hearts and find there our grateful love.

Help us through these days, through the pains and the disappointments, through the losses and the sorrows. These things are as real as the glory of the sunshine and the blessing of the rain. We live with confidence of your constant presence, O God. Guide us to acts of love and kindness, to deeds which change things for the better, and to the joys of faithful living.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.