

# Prayers for these Challenging Times

## **A prayer for each day at 7pm and Sunday 29 March as we offer prayers for our nation, amidst Covid-19.**

Gracious God,  
We give thanks anew for your providence and presence.  
We prayerfully seek your grace, amidst COVID-19 here and overseas.  
We pray for those in need of healing.  
We pray for your peace with those who are anxious or grieving.  
We pray you will continue to strengthen and sustain all those who are serving in response.  
We pray for your Holy Spirit's discernment amidst the many choices and decisions facing our national, community and medical leaders.  
We pray we each might see quickly what more we can do to help those who are vulnerable.  
This prayer for our nation in the family of nations, with all that is on our hearts, we gather now and pray through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
AMEN.

[National Council of Churches](#)

## **A Selection of Prayers to help you through our Current Challenging Times.**

God of expansive and faithful love, giver and sustainer of life,  
You know the depths of our pain as we journey through  
this time of unknowing.  
Hear our voices and the cry of our hearts.  
Guide us to see the most life-giving ways open to us.

St Joseph,  
Man of courage, you protected Mary and Jesus when they were in  
danger.

Cradle us now safely in this same protecting embrace.  
May we, like you, extend this care to our world that is in need.

St Mary of the Cross,  
you faced difficult times with a heart filled with trust,  
always believing in the watchful presence of God.  
Walk with us now in this difficult time,  
and may we be for others, examples of hope and trust.  
St Joseph, and St Mary of the Cross pray with us in this time of  
need. Amen.

God has said: "I will never leave you or forsake you."  
So we may say with confidence,  
"God is my Helper, and I will not be afraid." *Hebrew 13:5-6*



*Figure 1 Mary Mackillop, with permission from the artist - Steven Todd*

### Coronavirus: A Prayer

Almighty and all-merciful God,  
lover of the human race, healer of all our wounds,  
in whom there is no shadow of death,  
save us in this time of crisis;  
grant wisdom and courage to our leaders;  
watch over all medical people  
as they tend the sick and work for a cure;  
stir in us a sense of solidarity beyond all isolation;  
if our doors are closed, let our hearts be open.  
By the power of your love destroy the virus of fear,  
that hope may never die

and the light of Easter, the triumph of life,  
may shine upon us and the whole world.  
Through Jesus Christ, the Lord risen from the dead,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

Holy Mary, health of the sick, pray for us.

St Joseph, guardian of us all, pray for us.

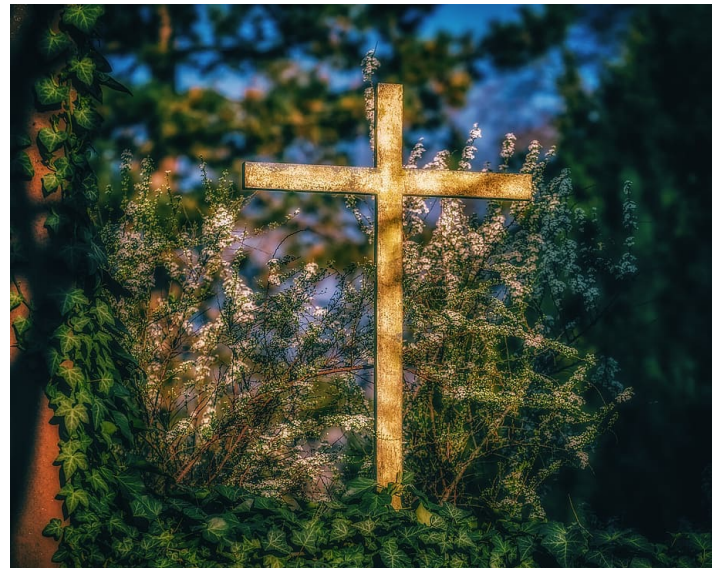


Figure 2 Easter light accessed [here](#)

[The Most Reverend Mark Coleridge, Archbishop of Brisbane](#)

### A prayer to our Mother Mary

O Mary,  
you always shine on our path  
as a sign of salvation and of hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain,  
keeping your faith firm.  
You, Salvation of the Roman People,  
know what we need,

and we are sure you will provide  
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,  
we may return to joy and to feasting  
after this time of trial.  
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,  
to conform to the will of the Father  
and to do as we are told by Jesus,  
who has taken upon himself our sufferings  
and carried our sorrows  
to lead us, through the cross,  
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we  
who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. [Pope Francis](#)



Figure 3 [Kuzma Petrov-Bodkin - The Mother of Good Tenderness](#)

## "Pandemic" a poem

What if you thought of it  
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—  
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,  
on trying to make the world  
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those  
to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still,  
reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected

in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives  
are in one another's hands.

(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils  
of compassion that move, invisibly,  
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love--

for better or for worse,

in sickness and in health,

so long as we all shall live.



Figure 4 Ciel Bergman, *Her compassion*. [Accessed here.](#)

## Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home

remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close

remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market

remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home

remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,

let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbours.

**Amen.**

[Lynn Ungar](#)

[Fr Larry Tensi](#)



And the people stayed home.  
And read books, and listened, and rested, and  
exercised, and made art, and played games, and  
learned new ways of being, and were still.  
And listened more deeply.  
Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.  
Some met their shadows.  
And the people began to think  
differently.

And the people healed.  
And, in the absence of people living in ignorant,  
dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways,  
the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed,  
and the people joined together again,  
they grieved their losses,  
and made new choices,  
and dreamed new images,  
and created new ways to live  
and heal the earth fully,  
as they had been healed.

Kitty O'Meara,  
Madison, Wisconsin



**Catholic  
Education**  
Diocese of Cairns  
*Learning with Faith and Vision*