

# A Vigil for the Sick

## FIRST HOUR: Waiting in Faithfulness and Trust

### Prayer

In you alone, O God, we live and move and have our being;  
your Holy Spirit breathes life into us moment by moment and day by day;  
therefore, we wait for your loving-kindness, O God,  
and open our hearts to your presence,  
asking that you be with us now  
and hold us in your strengthening care;  
help us to put away all the distractions of our daily lives,  
to quiet our hearts and our minds,  
to seek and to know your presence with us now;  
and then teach us to wait peacefully in your presence  
and to cast all our cares on you because you care for us.  
Give us, Almighty Creator, the gift of life renewed;  
grant us, Healing Savior, the gift of life renewed;  
fill us, Indwelling Spirit, with the gift of life renewed. Amen.

### I. The Mystery of Suffering

**Job 23: 1-13**

**Psalm 41: 1-11, 14-15**

### Prayer

O most loving Father,  
you will us to give thanks for all things,  
to dread nothing but the loss of your presence,  
and to cast all our care on you, because you care for us;  
preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties,  
and grant that no clouds of this mortal life  
may hide from us the light of that immortal love  
which you have shown us in the face of Jesus Christ,  
who is your Son and our Savior,  
and in whose Name we pray. Amen.

### II. Faithful Waiting

**Habakkuk 2: 1-3; 3: 17-18**

**Psalm 25**

### Prayer

You have taught us, Lord God,  
that we will be saved by returning and rest,  
that our strength will be found in quietness and confidence;  
lift us, then, by the might of your Spirit to your presence  
where we may be still and know that you are God. Amen. [BCP 595]

### **III. Waiting for the Lord**

**James 5: 7-11**

**Psalm 13**

#### **Prayer**

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom,  
you know our needs before we ask,  
and you know our ignorance, sometimes, in asking:  
have compassion on our weaknesses,  
and grant us those good things that,  
    in our lack of faith, we dare not ask of you and,  
    in our blindness, cannot ask of you. Amen. [adapted, BCP 49]

### **IV. The Power of Prayer**

**Romans 12: 1-13**

**Psalm 14: 1-2, 4-11**

#### **Prayer**

Your love surrounds us, good and gracious God;  
    the sun warms the air,  
    the stars sparkle in the evening sky,  
    the sown seed ripens  
        into the crops that nourish your people;  
help us, Lord God, to know your presence in our lives  
    and your constant care for us,  
that we may praise you in our lives  
    and make known your praise to others. Amen.

## **SECOND HOUR: God's Use of Suffering**

### **Prayer**

All things work together for good, Lord God,  
For those who love you;  
you are able to work your will and accomplish our good  
not only through our success and happiness  
but also, when necessary, through suffering and pain;  
you have taught your people  
through slavery and exile,  
and the blood of the martyrs,  
and you have opened the way of life to all the world  
through the suffering of Jesus  
and his death on Calvary's cross;  
you have revealed your power  
in the endurance of the church in persecution,  
in the witness of the saints,  
in the faithfulness of those who are lonely, handicapped, and frail,  
who are yet sustained and upheld by the knowledge that your strength is sufficient for us  
and made perfect in our weaknesses.  
Grant us, almighty and ever-loving God,  
Sufficient strength in our weaknesses  
to hold to you alone  
at all times  
and at this time. Amen.

### **I. Christ Takes Our Weaknesses upon Himself**

**Isaiah 53: 3-6**

**Psalm 27**

### **Prayer**

Almighty and eternal God,  
you are a strong tower to those who turn to you in trust;  
all things in heaven and earth bow before you;  
be our defense against the forces of evil,  
and help us know and believe that there is no other Name under heaven  
in whom and through whom we may obtain salvation  
except the Name of your Son, Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. Amen.

## **II. God's Grace is Sufficient**

**2 Corinthians 12: 7-10**

**Psalm 130**

### **Prayer**

Help us, Lord God,

To find a meaning in suffering:

let us recognize our need of your strength;

let us learn your ability to bring good out of evil;

let us use our weaknesses to learn patience;

let us wait for you to show us

your constant presence

and your healing love;

let us be content, if need be, with weakness,

knowing your strength.

Grant that this time of physical weakness

May be a time of spiritual renewal and growth.

May your will, not ours, be done. Amen.

## **III. Consolation in Suffering**

**2 Corinthians 1: 3-7**

**Psalm 142**

### **Prayer**

We know, good and gracious God,

that your will for us is to heal us and make us whole;

yet, Lord, we do not know

what healing we need;

and we do not always see

how you can use our weakness

to draw us closer to each other and closer to you,

how you can use our suffering

as you used the suffering of your own Son

to redeem us, to renew us,

and to bring good out of evil.

Use, dear Lord, the prayers we have offered

To accomplish in us and those we love,

the good things you alone can give,

both now and for all eternity. Amen.

## **THIRD HOUR: God's Care and Healing Power**

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you have made known among us  
the healing power of God's love;  
you gave sight to the blind,  
new strength to the lame,  
and lifted up those who were sick  
you never failed to respond to those  
who came to you in faith;  
help us, then, to turn to you  
in that same faith  
and to receive from you  
the healing you know we need. Amen.

### **I. Jesus Knows Our Need**

**Hebrews 2: 10-18; 4: 14-16**

**Psalm 40: 1-8**

#### **Prayer**

You, Lord, have come to us,  
lived among us, and shared our human life;  
you know what it is to be weary, thirsty, and in pain;  
you also have overcome even death  
and ascended to the right hand of God  
to make intercession for us;  
we come to you therefore in confidence  
that you know our need  
and are able to respond  
in love and compassion and power.  
Hear our prayer, O Lord,  
and grant us the gift of perfect trust  
that you are doing for us and for those we care for  
better things than we can either desire or prayer for. Amen.

### **II. God' Care for Us**

**Matthew 6: 25-34**

**Psalm 34: 1-18**

#### **Prayer**

Most holy and loving God:  
you clothe the grass of the field in glory and keep watch over every sparrow;  
yet you came into this world in human flesh  
and have promised to raise our mortal bodies to eternal life;  
grant us, then, the gift of faithful trust in your mercy,  
knowing that now and always your ears are open to our prayer  
and that you are able to work in all things for our good;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **III. Jesus Heals the Sick**

**Mark 1: 21-34**

**Psalm 138**

#### **Prayer**

At evening, Lord Jesus,  
they brought the sick to you, and you healed them;  
day by day, Lord Jesus,  
you reached out to those who were ill, and you healed them;  
throughout your ministry on earth, Lord Jesus,  
you never turned away those who came to you in need,  
but you healed them and gave them new life.  
Hear us now, good Lord,  
as we turn to you in our need;  
be present with us and grant us the gift of healing and wholeness  
that we may rejoice in your love and give you glory. Amen.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Loving and compassionate God,  
you alone are the source of our health and strength;  
you alone enable us to face sickness and danger;  
you alone can provide strength in our weakness;  
you alone hold us up in the hour of our need;  
you alone can give the gift of healing'  
you alone can restore us and make us whole;  
hear us, we pray, as we turn to you in love for *N*.  
grant *N*. your strength is *her/his* weakness;  
grant *her/him* the knowledge of your presence;  
grant *her/him* a sure confidence in your mercy;  
and, if it is your will, restore *her/him*  
to health and strength in your service. Amen.

*Silence.*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you came to our world bringing healing;  
you held out your hand to grasp the sick and raise them up;  
you healed the Centurion's son and the Canaanite woman's daughter at their request;  
you healed the paralyzed man brought to you by his friends;  
you healed the woman who touched the hem of your clothing;  
so hear now our prayer,  
respond to our petitions, answer us in our time of need,  
and let your servant live to give you praise.

*Silence.*

Holy and life-giving Spirit:  
breath of God,  
breath of life;  
breathe life into your church,  
breathe life into all who are sick,  
breathe new life and health into *N*.  
Renew, revive, inspire, heal and strengthen your people with your indwelling power.  
Holy and glorious Trinity, one God,  
hear our prayer. Amen.

*\*adapted from Church Publishing A Book of Vigils*