

ACCOMPANYING THE DYING

With social distancing measures in place as part of tackling COVID-19, the physical presence of a minister or trusted member of a church community at the bedside is often not possible. This short resource takes you through what you can do in the absence of a priest or minister when you are supporting someone who is dying.

No two situations are the same. Please feel free to omit prayers as necessary. If more than one person is present, one or many people can lead these prayers.

PRAYERS AS DEATH APPROACHES

God of love,
give us peace as we pray to you.

Psalm 23 reminds us of God's loving kindness. We/I shall read it now.
*The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.*

*He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and staff they comfort me.*

*You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.*

*Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

Hear the words of Jesus from St John's Gospel
I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.
[John 11.25]

God of mercy,
into whose hands your Son Jesus Christ
commended his spirit at his last hour,
into those same hands
we now commend your servant N.
that death may be for him/her the gate to life
and to eternal fellowship with you;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, we boldly pray

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

*Neither death nor anything else can separate us from the love of God.
[cf Romans 8.38-39]*

PRAYERS AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH (or shortly thereafter)

Go forth, O Christian soul;
depart out of this world,
in the name of God,
the Almighty Father who created you;
in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son who redeemed you;
in the name of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies you.
May flights of angels help and defend you.
May the fellowship of the saints support and befriend you.
May Christ, the Good Shepherd,
embrace and welcome you.
May your rest be with him this day in peace
and your dwelling-place in the paradise of God.

When the person has died, this prayer may be said:

God of life,
We entrust N. to your mercy and loving care.
We thank you for all that was good in his/her life.
We pray for all who will mourn for N.
and for those who watch and wait and care for others,
in their time of need. **Amen.**