

DAILY PRAYER *for*
TIMES OF GRIEF

LISA B. HAMILTON



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Daily Prayer for Times of Grief

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For Scott Lane Hamilton
(1959–1991)

A man of God who pursued righteousness,
godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.

Fight the good fight of the faith;
take hold of the eternal life, to which you
were called and for which you
made the good confession.

I TIMOTHY 6:12 (NRSV)

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INTRODUCTION



Our son was 26 months old the perfect June night he discovered lightning bugs. I can't count the times I've tried to bring back the conversation his Dada and I were having when he interrupted us to pry open his chubby fingers and see the bug glow green, then stop, then glow green again. "Look Dada, see bug light!" Teddy squealed, and with every ounce of his being, Scott helped him into his lap. They took turns holding the last gift Teddy gave his father.

When Scott had cancer, Teddy was forever giving him things—even his precious "yanyee," his much-snuggled blue blanket. When there was nothing on hand, Teddy "made" things. The morning of a chemotherapy treatment, we walked our dog to the park, where Teddy interrupted his climbing long enough to make and feed Scott pretend oatmeal. But nothing anyone could give him cured the cancer. It took death.

Death came the night Teddy discovered lightning bugs. Scott passed out as he tried to climb the stairs in our "starter house," and I dragged him to the bed

crying, "I won't let you fall, I won't let you fall, I won't let you fall." I jabbered and prayed aloud until he opened his eyes and croaked out, "I love you." He even regained enough strength to say Compline with me. We kissed goodnight, and in the morning, we were still holding hands, but his was dead.

Everything was different that morning, including the way God was speaking to me in Psalm 91—the Psalm we always chose at Compline. Psalm 91 was one of the ways God broke through the cancer to teach us to pray together. Psalm 91, with its images of safety under God's wings, of refuge in angels' hands, promised us that there was no terror even in plague. It was the last psalm of Scott's life—and yet God did not "rescue him and bring him to honor." The last verse—"With long life will I satisfy him, and show him to salvation"—had once helped bring us the relief of sleep. Only after a few years of accusing God of betrayal did I come to realize that, for Scott, the psalm's promises are for eternity.

My being changed by the unchanging words of Psalm 91 is a discovery as ancient as the psalms themselves. Indeed, so is being changed by praying at fixed times of day. The psalms are often called "Jesus' prayers" because they were (and are) such an integral part of Jewish worship. Jews were expected to pray at fixed hours, and

it's interesting to note how many important New Testament events occur at these times of prayer, as when Peter and John healed the lame man (Acts 3:1–10) who was lying at the "Beautiful Gate" of the Temple; the apostles were entering for prayer at three in the afternoon.

Apparently it took some centuries for Christians to settle on a schedule of fixed prayer, with early writers advocating prayer three or five or seven times a day. All schedules, however, included prayer at sunrise and sunset. Today's Offices (the term comes from the Latin *opus Dei*, meaning "work of God") place us in communion with the earliest believers, as several elements (including the psalms and the Lord's Prayer) were used from the beginnings of our faith, although scriptural readings were not used in daily prayer, but saved for the Sunday Eucharist and other select occasions. By the mid-sixth century, the Daily Offices included Scripture, and due in large part to St. Benedict, were fixed in a shape that is familiar to Christians today. The seven Benedictine Hours are collapsed in *The Book of Common Prayer* into Morning Prayer, Noontime Prayer, Vespers or Evening Prayer, and Compline, so the ancient structure and content connect not only with the living who pray them, but with the dead who have prayed them as well.

Perhaps grief has brought you to regulated prayer because you may find that structure helps you cope with the day. I did not return to work for some time after Scott's death, and I remember my relief at devising a schedule that ensured Teddy and I would be out of the house for a time every day. On Tuesdays, a plaster handprint recalls, we attended a "Mommy and Me" art class. I made certain that every day, we saw other people, even if they were strangers in the grocery store, and this was important. But the Daily Offices offer a holy connection to an unbroken chain of Christians—and provide us with deeper nourishment than we can devise alone.

When someone we love dies, it is often very painful to move to a new place. I remember the day of the Pittsburgh tag sale a year after Scott died because Teddy and I were moving to New Haven, Connecticut, where I would enter Yale Divinity School. As I saw people carrying away things I'd sold them, I felt as if I were watching our life disappear down the driveway. I've never found it comfortable to move in any way—geographically, professionally, emotionally—and now, without Scott, I feel I am somehow being disloyal in moving. Saying familiar prayers in a familiar form is a security I can take from job to job, from home to home, from feeling to feeling, and the knowledge that Scott and I are

linked in prayer has often brought me the feeling that he is proud of the moving I do.

Prayer is the most lasting way I know to cope with loneliness. In part, grief is lonely because there are so few people able to listen without wanting to "make it all better." One particularly bad day the summer Scott died, the phone rang, and when I said "Hello," I was greeted with, "You sound so much better. It's great that you're happy again." I spent the rest of the forgotten conversation staring at the front porch and wondering how I could sound better, and even happy, when the newspapers were piling up because I didn't have any interest in reading them.

Therapists would call my caller's comments "projection"—projecting onto me an image of what he wanted me to be. Projection is impossible in prayer, because prayer can offer a glimpse of ourselves and our lives through the eyes of God. In my experience, this level of prayer occurs most frequently when I am in the habit of praying so regularly that as the Rev. Suzanne Guthrie describes it, "Your soul becomes alert in anticipation, just as your stomach does if you eat at noon every day."¹ Committing yourself to regulated prayer in grief offers you a nourishing structure in difficult days and clears the way for a more honest knowledge of God, yourself, and your relationships with God and your loved one.

Fixed-time prayer offers us a larger purpose than learning to live with our own pain. As Phyllis Tickle describes it, "Like relay runners passing a lighted torch, those who do the work of fixed-hour prayer do create thereby a continuous cascade of praise before the throne of God."² The eight cancer months Scott and I shared, similar to our pregnancy months, were filled with purpose. The purpose was to poison the cancer, reverse the metastases, and pray a cure, ignoring the odds as stubbornly as we curled in hospital beds together, nursing Teddy as the chemotherapy dripped medical hope through Scott's body.

However difficult it was to realize that the purpose of prayer is to align oneself with God's will rather than hammer away on the merits of one's own desires, praying returned purpose to me. Imperceptibly, I began to pray for those beyond Scott, Teddy, and me. Prayer expands me still, as if I am a bowl being shaped by a potter. I am large enough to pray for a teenage friend in trouble, relatives I do not understand, people in car accidents—even when the accident is making me late for work. Prayer seems to welcome the stranger, so that reports from the morning news often find their way into noontime prayer.

I've worked on *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief* envisioning people silently praying on subways,

because it was on New York's Lexington line that I first prayed intentionally, with the help of *Morning and Evening Prayer with Selected Psalms and Readings for the Church Year*.³ I'm hopeful that *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief* can also be used for praying aloud, in groups of people as well as alone. The good people at Paraclete have designed this book to be small enough to carry with you in purse or pocket, and with the help of the Good Paraclete, I hope it will provide you with a way to live days of grief. Praying at rising, noon, evening, and retiring with the Daily Office links us to other Christians who engage in this common and ancient spiritual practice, and so we are less alone than we may feel. I've chosen readings and prayers for their purpose, variety, and faithfulness, and set them in the security and community of the Daily Offices as found in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Although this book is in no way intended to replace *The Book of Common Prayer*, it is nevertheless comforting to recall that Thomas Cranmer, chief architect of *The Book of Common Prayer*, began his work after losing his wife and their baby in childbirth.

I've selected Morning Prayer readings to help the griever face another day without those who are dead. Noonday readings are a cry of missing the dead, "whom we love but see no longer," as *The Book of Common Prayer* puts it so poignantly in a prayer suggested for burial.⁴ Evening Prayer readings offer

hope for the dead. At Compline, readings commend both oneself and the dead to God. Fridays are focused on God's grief at the crucifixion of Christ.

When used individually, the Office may be said silently or aloud. When used by a group, longer sections are divided so that each person or group takes turns. Lines to be read by the leader are followed by an asterisk (*). Group responses are indented and follow the asterisk.

All texts, including the Psalms, are excerpted from *The Book of Common Prayer* unless otherwise noted. Many of these texts have been adapted for this book. Such texts are indicated by the symbol †.

There is space for journaling at the end of each day, in the hope that your journaling can teach you about your grief—and therefore about yourself. You may want to write letters, to God, to your loved one, or even to yourself. Or perhaps writing prayers will feel more natural to you. At least sometimes, you may find yourself drawing. Whatever form or forms you use, dating your entries or even making an index will make your journaling more helpful to you over time.

Given that grief does not leave within seven days, you may wonder why *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief* provides only one week of Offices. First of all, I want this book to be portable: small enough to

pray within a subway car. Second, I hope this will be a book you use as needed. There may be days or weeks at a time when your prayer feels more honest when you rely on the tried and true *Book of Common Prayer*, or when you utilize another form of prayer. To this end, I've recommended several books to which you may "graduate" or which you may wish to incorporate as supplementary even while using *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief*.

If you're familiar with the Daily Offices, you'll notice immediately that the Confession is missing from those in *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief*. If you feel that saying the Confession is helpful to you, by all means include it—the Rite II Confession from *The Book of Common Prayer* can be found at the end of this book.

My reason for excluding the Confession in *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief* is that Scott's death erupted a fireworks of guilt for me, and I suspect it may be common for a long period of time to need to pass before saying the Confession is helpful. Nevertheless, the Confession I so seldom said for so long was useful to me in bringing me closer to God through anger. Even now the Confession sometimes raises for me the question of whether God causes pain purposelessly. If God is omnipotent, isn't God culpable for cancer and all the pain it unleashes?

Many times, I've said the Confession with my mouth while raging in my heart: "Who should be confessing to whom, God?" I've learned that times when my anger might be judged blasphemous seem to be used particularly well by God to deepen our relationship. As a wise friend of mine notes, "God doesn't cast us off because of our anger." Thank God.

When Scott was very ill, I faced a priest across our backyard picnic table and asked, "Is this happening because God *can't* stop it or because God *won't* stop it?" Two divinity school degrees later, I'm still searching for the reason(s) suffering and God cohabit our lives. The intersection seems to be nowhere other than the cross. When you find yourself at the cross, I pray that *Daily Prayer for Times of Grief* will help you to remember that as lonely as Golgotha is, it is not a place where we are alone. Jesus' arms were nailed in a posture of embrace on the cross, and they are spread for us in fixed welcome. May prayer help you embrace his welcome.



MONDAY

MONDAY MORNING PRAYER



THE INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: *
Lord, hear my voice.

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: *
Come, let us adore him.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

PSALM 86:1–13

Bow down your ear, O LORD, and answer me, * for I
am poor and in misery.

Keep watch over my life, for I am faithful; * save
your servant who puts his trust in you.

Be merciful to me, O LORD, for you are my God; * I
call upon you all the day long.

Gladden the soul of your servant, * for to you, O
LORD, I lift up my soul.

For you, O LORD, are good and forgiving, * and
great is your love toward all who call upon you.

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, * and attend to
the voice of my supplications.

In the time of my trouble I will call upon you, * for
you will answer me.

Among the gods there is none like you, O LORD, *
nor anything like your works.

All nations you have made will come and worship
you, O LORD, * and glorify your Name.

For you are great; you do wondrous things; * and
you alone are God.

Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in
your truth; * knit my heart to you that I may
fear your Name.

I will thank you, O LORD my God, with all my
heart, * and glorify your Name for evermore.

For great is your love toward me; * you have
delivered me from the nethermost Pit.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

THE WORD

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

How blessed are you who are poor:
the kingdom of God is yours.

Blessed are you who are hungry now:
you shall have your fill.

Blessed are you who are weeping now:
you shall laugh.

LUKE 6:20–21 (NJB)

Thanks be to God.

CANTICLE

THE FIRST SONG OF ISAIAH, ISAIAH 12:2-5

Surely, it is God who saves me; * I will trust in him
and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure
defense, * and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, * Give thanks to
the Lord and call upon his Name;

Make his deeds known among the peoples; * see
that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great
things, * and this is known in all the world. †

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of
heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the
Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was
crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE PRAYERS

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

THE PETITIONS

Show us your mercy, O Lord; *

And grant us your salvation.

Clothe your ministers with righteousness; *

Let your people sing with joy.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world; *

For only in you can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under your care; *

And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth; *

Your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten; *

Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God; *

And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

For our *brother/sister N.*, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am Resurrection, and I am Life."

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for *N.*, and dry the tears of those who weep.

Hear us, Lord.

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

Hear us, Lord.

You raised the dead to life; give to our *brother/sister* eternal life.

Hear us, Lord.

You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our *sister/brother* to the joys of heaven.

Hear us, Lord.

Our *brother/sister* was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give *him/her* fellowship with all your saints.

Hear us, Lord.

S/he was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant *her/him* a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

Hear us, Lord.

Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of *N.*; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.†

Silence may follow.

THE COLLECT

Grant, O Lord, to all who are bereaved the spirit of faith and courage, that we may have strength to meet the day to come with steadfastness and patience; not sorrowing without hope, but in

remembrance of your great goodness, and in the expectation of eternal life with those we love. And this we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.†

THE MEDITATION

This may be read aloud by one person and followed by silence, or read by all present silently.

Well blest is he who has a dear one dead;
A friend whose face will never change—
A dear communion that will not grow strange;
The anchor of love is death.⁵

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

Free intercessions and/or reflections may be offered.

THE REFLECTION

*Is there blessing in your loss?
Do you feel your loved one blessing you?*

THE CONCLUSION

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13–14 (NRSV)

MONDAY NOONDAY PRAYER



THE INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Take courage, my children, cry to God. * And he will deliver you from the power and hand of the enemy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills; * from where is my help to come?

My help comes from the LORD, * the maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved * and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel * shall neither slumber nor sleep;

The LORD himself watches over you; * the LORD is your shade at your right hand,

So that the sun shall not strike you by day, * nor the moon by night.

The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; * it is he who shall keep you safe.

The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, * from this time forth for evermore.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

THE WORD

Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

JOHN 13:36 (NIV)

Thanks be to God.

THE MEDITATION

This may be read aloud by one person and followed by silence, or read by all present silently.

According to 2 Samuel chapters 12–18, King David fathered many children. One of his sons, Absalom, killed another son, Amnon, because Amnon had raped their sister, Tamar. Absalom went into hiding, and "the soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom" (13:39). Still, when David's general Joab tricked the king into allowing Absalom to go home to Jerusalem, "the king said, 'Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face.' . . . So Absalom dwelt two

full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face" (14:24, 28). Absalom, treating Joab badly in the process, persisted: "Now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me. . . . And when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom" (14:32–33).

Still, Absalom's anger had festered, and he began to plot the overthrow of his father. Charismatic and handsome, with especially beautiful long, thick hair, Absalom was a talented politician. "Absalom said moreover, 'Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!' And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (15:4–6).

When the battle between the armies of the king and Absalom the usurper began, David said, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard. . . . And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak and he

was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away" (18:5, 9).

As Absalom hung by his hair, imprisoned in the oak's branches, Joab drove three spears into the upstart's chest and ordered that the body be flung into a pit and covered with stones.

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!'" (18:33) (KJV).

THE PRAYERS

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your Name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those
 who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,
 and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

THE COLLECT

O God of grace and glory, *we* remember before you this day *our* brother (sister) *N*. *We* thank you for giving *her/him* to *us*, to know and to love as a companion on *our* earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console *us* who mourn. Give *us* faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence *we* may continue *our* course on earth, until, by your call, *we* are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. †

Free intercessions and/or reflections may be offered.

THE REFLECTION

*In what ways has God responded to you in your loss?
When have you felt God has not responded to your cry?*

THE CONCLUSION

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Rest eternal grant to *N*., O Lord,
And let light perpetual shine upon *him/her*.

MONDAY EVENING PRAYER



THE INVITATION TO WORSHIP

I am the Resurrection and I am the Life, says the Lord, * Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though he die.

For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord, * And if we die, we die in the Lord.

So, then, whether we live or die, * We are the Lord's possession.†

O GRACIOUS LIGHT

O gracious Light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.†

PSALM 107:1–9

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, * and his mercy endures for ever.

Let all those whom the LORD has redeemed
proclaim * that he redeemed them from the
hand of the foe.

He gathered them out of the lands; * from the
east and from the west, from the north and
from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes; * they found no
way to a city where they might dwell.

They were hungry and thirsty; * their spirits
languished within them.

Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, *
and he delivered them from their distress.

He put their feet on a straight path * to go to a
city where they might dwell.

Let them give thanks to the LORD for his mercy *
and the wonders he does for his children.

For he satisfies the thirsty * and fills the hungry
with good things.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

THE WORD

For now we see through a glass, darkly:
but then face to face:
now I know in part;

but then I shall know
 even as also I am known.

I CORINTHIANS 13:12 (KJV)

Thanks be to God.

CANTICLE

THE SONG OF MARY, LUKE 1:46–55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my
 spirit rejoices in God my Savior; * for he has
 looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:
 * the Almighty has done great things for me,
 and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him * in every
 generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, * he has
 scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
 * and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, * and
 the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, * for
 he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, * to Abraham
 and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
 Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
 and will be for ever. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of
heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the
Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was
crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at
the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and
the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic
Church, the communion of saints, the
forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the
body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE PRAYERS

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those
 who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial,
 and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and for ever. Amen.

THE PETITIONS

Show us your mercy, O Lord; *
 And grant us your salvation.
 Clothe your ministers with righteousness; *
 Let your people sing with joy.
 Give peace, O Lord, in all the world; *
 For only in you can we live in safety.
 Lord, keep this nation under your care; *
 And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
 Let your way be known upon earth; *
 Your saving health among all nations.
 Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten; *
 Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
 Create in us clean hearts, O God; *
 And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

THE COLLECT

God of all, *we* pray to you for *N.*, and for all those
 whom *we* love but see no longer. Grant to them

your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.†

THE MEDITATION

This may be read aloud by one person and followed by silence, or read by all present silently.

What is essential is invisible to the eye.⁶

ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

Free intercessions and/or reflections may be offered.

THE REFLECTION

How do you "see" those you've lost? How do you think they see you from the clearer vantage point of heaven?

THE CONCLUSION

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing . . . by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ROMANS 15:13 (NRSV)

MONDAY COMPLINE



THE INVITATION TO WORSHIP

The Lord Almighty grant us a peaceful night and
a perfect end. Amen.

Answer me when I call, O God, defender of my
cause; * you set me free when I am hard-pressed;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

PSALM 74:8–22

There are no signs for us to see; there is no
prophet left; * there is not one among us who
knows how long.

How long, O God, will the adversary scoff? * will
the enemy blaspheme your Name for ever?

Why do you draw back your hand? * why is your
right hand hidden in your bosom?

Yet God is my King from ancient times, *
victorious in the midst of the earth.

You divided the sea by your might * and shattered
the heads of the dragons upon the waters;

You crushed the heads of Leviathan * and gave
him to the people of the desert for food.

You split open spring and torrent; * you dried up
ever-flowing rivers.

Yours is the day, yours also the night; * you estab-
lished the moon and the sun.

You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; * you
made both summer and winter.

Remember, O LORD, how the enemy scoffed, *
how a foolish people despised your Name.

Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild
beasts; * never forget the lives of your poor.

Look upon your covenant; * the dark places of the
earth are haunts of violence.

Let not the oppressed turn away ashamed; * let the
poor and needy praise your Name.

Arise, O God, maintain your cause; * remember
how fools revile you all day long.

Forget not the clamor of your adversaries, * the
unending tumult of those who rise up against you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit: * as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

THE WORD

He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings
deep shadows into the light.

JOB 12:22 (NIV)

Thanks be to God.