

Sunday Prayers. 3.17.2024

Gracious God, we wish to see Jesus. Now and tomorrow. Now and again. Now and forever. Really—Anytime we feel lost and unloved. Anytime we try to make sense of what is happening in the world. Anytime we need to know we are yours. Maybe right now? So, please...Help us see Jesus...in the faces of strangers. Helps us hear Jesus in the words of love that come to us and please let that be more often than we even believe we need it. Last but not least, help us know Jesus in ways that allow us to trust in all the things we cannot yet understand. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Holy Healer, we have young adults—many under 50—dealing with really challenging diagnoses. Seriously? Why can't we all live with great health until we are 150? Or 320? Or 969...like Methuselah? What would the world be like if mentally, physically, and spiritually we all didn't have to worry about cancer or radiation or chemotherapy...or insulin...or the cost of medication...or antidepressants? What would it be like if our bodies did all the things we expected them to for that much time? Yes, there would be issues with food sources and living spaces...but maybe if we didn't worry about health so much...some things would be better? Obviously there are lots of things we do not know or understand...but could you bring healing in really powerful ways to all the people in need of it? We are asking for that, hoping for that...certainly in need of it...in so many ways. Please heal us and all the people who really need it... Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Creator of Everything, the weather is amazing. Spring is rising up all over our yards, our forests, and our hiking trails. It is mid March and we couldn't be more delighted by warmth and sunshine. And, we also know that this isn't really normal. Can you help us better understand the climate needs? Could you help us differentiate between good weather and concerns about the health of the planet? Could you help us find ways forward that make sure our kids and their kids and their kids, too, all have what they need to grow food, to experience clean drinking water, and to have quality fresh air to breathe? We get confused sometimes and we would love your clarity. Please help us understand in ways that we can make a difference. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of Easter, grief is real. We lose so many people and things we love along the way. For example, sometimes aging is a challenge for people—they miss their agility, their hopes for a future, sometimes their dreams. Sometimes it is young people grieving—like single parents who are trying to make a living and provide all the things for their children. Sometimes it is the children disappointed with not making a team...or not earning the A...or not feeling like they fully belong anywhere. Too often we look in the mirror and want something more—a better body, better things...we grieve love and losses in ways that sometimes bring us to despair. So, in the midst of whatever is going on in each of the individual lives here...could you raise us to a fresh sense of hope? A sense of Easter? A sense of rising above the things that make us focus on all that is not alive around us and within us? We pray for all the people grieving...for whatever their grief is about...Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God who loves the world...today is St. Patrick's day. It is a day we remember the Irish and wear green...some wear orange. All of it reminds us that the world lives with division and resolution. Wars and Peace. Good Leaders and Power Hungry Ones. We know that we need the world to live with your love...your grace...your justice...your peace...if everyone is to have the things they need. Could you soften the hearts that have been hardened in all of our divisions? Could you make space for people to critically think about what could be if we all lead with love? Could you possibly turn people to see the world the way you see the world? The way you dream of the

world? Can you turn us...however many degrees we need to be turned...to repent and be renewed and restored to life giving ways of living? Any help you can offer is appreciated...and needed...and well...we are a bit desperate for some wholeness. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of Us All, we celebrate all that is good...we celebrate all the people who are doing their best to love...and we celebrate all the ones serving...and being generous...and doing everything they are able to make the world a better place. We all want to be those people....and mostly we are those people. Keep working in us, through us, and among us...until that is true 100% of the time for everyone. Wow! That would be amazing! Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Into your hands, we commend all for whom we pray. Amen.