

Prayer for National Nursing Home Week, 2021

Call to Prayer

As we celebrate and remember National Nursing Home week, we recall that life is lived and celebrated most fully in community. Let us never forget that whether young or old, we are called to share Christ with each other and to bear with one another.

Opening Prayer

God of all ages, you walk with us in all moments of our life. Grant us the grace to see you in every stage, whether our bodies be young or old.

Console us with the trust that you will be with us not only in our earthly life but that we will one day know the eternal life you promise. Bring life and love into these communities and homes that care for the elders among us, that they may know they are always beloved in your sight.

Reading (Psalm 31: 1- 10, 19 – 24)

Side 1: In you, Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

Side 2: Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge.

Side 1: Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, Lord, my faithful God. I turn away from those who cling to worthless idols; as for me, I trust in the Lord.

Side 2: I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. You have not given me into the hands of the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place.

Side 1: Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and body with grief. My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my

bones grow weak.

Side 2: How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you. In the shelter of your presence you hide them from all human intrigues; you keep them safe in your dwelling.

Side 1: Praise be to the Lord, for he showed me the wonders of his love when I was in a city under siege. In my alarm I said, "I am cut off from your sight!" Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help.

Side 2: Love the Lord, all his faithful people! The Lord preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.

Reflection

How does my work in this ministry work to build the community God calls us to? How am I called to be a Christ-bearer to the residents I care for?

What moments of community life have brought trust in God's providence? When has my relationship with the Divine been my strength? When have I struggled with anguish?

How can I call on God as my strength in moments of anguish, pain, and suffering?

Closing Prayer

Good and loving God, be with us always, and most especially with those whose minds and bodies are in special need of care. Bless the caregivers who watch closely over the oldest in our communities. Bless your children who have come to live together again in the later years of their lives. May this time of their life be ever abundant with grace and joy.

We ask all of this in your name. Amen.