



PRAYERS IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

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Let us draw near the Throne of Grace, humbly beseeching God's mercy for all people in this time of suffering and fear.

A brief period of silence may be kept.

Most holy God, you are the source of all goodness, wisdom, mercy, and life. If we never before knew how much we need those great goods – how much, rather, we need *you* – we know now. This isn't just about our private fears or personal concerns, nor only our church or community or nation. This is about every person on the face of this planet. How vulnerable we all are, gracious Lord! How interconnected we are – and not just by social media, party affiliation, or various identity labels. No, we're bound together by our common humanity and, through that, by the possibility of infection, illness, and death by a virus.

Father, bind us together by something even greater and stronger! Bind us together with "cords that cannot be broken," because they are forged by your Son as he hung on a bitter Cross for the sake of the whole world. Bind us together with him in a fellowship of suffering: suffering with, and suffering for, our sisters and brothers according to the flesh. Bind us together in a fellowship deeper than our differences and stronger than death. Bind us together in Christ, crucified and risen from the dead for the salvation of all.

Lord, in your mercy, *please hear our prayer.*

Bestow your Spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might upon all who take counsel for the nations in this time of crisis. Give them every spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social resource they need to act for the good of the people entrusted to their care. Let them be courageous, competent, collaborative, and compassionate as they ponder what course to take.

Lord, in your mercy, *please hear our prayer.*

Thank you for the brilliant and dedicated scientists who seek to understand the infection's nature, to slow or prevent its spread, and to mitigate the suffering it causes. Thank you for doctors, nurses, and everyone from housekeepers to cooks, from dialysis and inhalation technicians to emergency room personnel, who are truly risking their lives for the sake of us all. Bless and strengthen them. Keep them safe from all harm – and grant them rest when they need it, for their own health's sake.

Lord, in your mercy, *please hear our prayer.*

We plead on behalf of the many people who are quarantined and isolated because of exposure to the virus; for everyone who is already ill; and for those who are at the greatest risk of severe illness or death. Hide them under the shadow of your wings, and grant them healing and hope.

Lord, in your mercy, *please hear our prayer.*

We know that other needs continue to be urgent, dear Father! We ask the Spirit's help in remembering them before you. And, for the sake of your dear Son, we pray that you may heed all our prayers and graciously answer them in accordance with your will, to your glory and for the welfare of your people.

AMEN.

From <http://lutherancore.website/2020/03/19/prayers-in-a-time-of-pandemic/>