

21 PRAYERS REGARDING SERIOUS OR TERMINAL ILLNESS

Please note that some of these texts will be part of a book to be published in 2008/2009 by Dominican Publications:
www.dominicanpublications.com

The new book will offer resource material such as appears here: for those who are terminally ill, and for people who are caring for those loved ones.

The email address of the author of the texts here is Nicholas@prayingeachday.org but, given that he is terminally himself (arising from cancer of the small bowel), it cannot be certain that you will receive a reply if you write to Brother Nicholas, who is a De La Salle Brother (a Catholic religious order – www.lasalle.org) living in England.

A website he established on behalf of the Brothers is www.prayingeachday.org where, under 'Reflect and Pray' is a reflection and prayer specific to each day of the year, usually based on the anniversary of an event, birth, death, discovery, etc. Although designed for use by students in high schools, the set of three books – 'Praying Each Day of the Year' - has appealed to people of all ages, looking as the text does to making the most of our everyday situations.

People are very welcome to use the texts which follow but if anyone wishes to incorporate any in a publication, the usual permission should be sought from the author's email address, and someone will respond to that request.

The 21 prayers are arranged in 4 themes:

- A – Praying for one who is ill
- B – Lord, I know that I am very ill
- C – Closer to dying
- D – Mourning

A - PRAYING FOR ONE WHO IS ILL

(these prayers can readily be adapted in their wording for sick people to recite regarding themselves)

A-1

FRIENDS PRAY FOR SOMEONE WHO IS VERY ILL

(reflecting how friends approached Jesus, carrying their sick friend on a stretcher, lowering him down through a hole in the roof – Mk 2:1-12)

Lord Jesus, we read in the Gospels
that you spoke individually to many people,
changing their lives
as you showed them recognition and acceptance
and as you brought them healing and wholeness.

We read, too, of how some people
were such good friends
of a man who was weak and paralysed,

Mk 2:1-12

that they carried him on his stretcher:
making their way through the crowds,
carrying him on to the roof,
and gently lowering him down,
so that he could be right in front of you.
They must have been such good friends to him,
and others could see
the tenderness of their love and care
as well as their extraordinary faith and trust in you, Lord,
in bringing him into your presence.

And isn't it the very same
that we are doing today, Lord
- those of us who love and care for _____ -
as we bring **him/her**, carry **him/her**, in the strength of our love
into the warmth and light of your presence:
knowing that you, too,
are very fond of **him/her**?

We can all but hear you
calling _____ by **his/her** name
as you are also calling **him/her** your friend,
and we know that your love never fails.

Is 43:1
Jn 15:15
1 Cor 13:8

Lord,
_____ - "the one you love - is ill",
and those of us who join you
in loving **him/her** and caring for **him/her**
ask you to lay your hands on **him/her**
and transform **his/her** life once again,
bringing **him/her** the fullness
of your healing and your life. Amen.

Jn 11:3

Lk 4:40, Mk 5:23

Jn 10:10

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC: pgs 36-39 of 'Lord, Teach us to Pray' (Matthew James Publishing)

A-2 **FOR THOSE WHO ARE CHRONICALLY ILL**

God our Father,
we bring before you today
those who suffer
from chronic illness or disability
- those for whom sickness or disability
profoundly affects their lives.

When they feel diminished,
remind them that you call them by name
and hold them
in the palm of your hand.

Is 43:1

When they feel fragile and broken,
mould them and heal them,
that they may more closely resemble
the image of Jesus,

your Son and our Brother.

When they are reminded
of different times in the past,
lead them to grow in the faith
that you love them today, as they are,
in the reality of their lives this day.

When they feel uncertain about the future,
lead them to that perfect love
which casts out all fear.

1 John 4:18

When situations remind them
- not of what they *can* do,
but of what they *cannot* do -
remind them
that "love never fails",
and that, living in your love,
they will bear your fruit in plenty.

1 Cor 13:8

Jn 15:5.9

May all of us
- whatever our circumstances -
never be so taken up with our own concerns
that we do not see or respond to
the needs of others.
May we live with courage
the different challenges
that each of us faces. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC: 25 September from 'Praying Each Day of the Year (Matthew James Publishing)

A-3

PRAYING FOR HEALING IN BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT

Lord Jesus, we read in the gospel
that you spoke individually to many people
and said:

"Be cured";	Lk 5:13
"Get up and walk";	Lk 5:24
"What do you want me to do for you?";	Mt 20:32
"Of course I want to cure you: be healed";	Mt 8:3
"Let what you want be done for you";	Mt 9:29
"Receive your sight";	Lk 18:42
"Receive back your hearing";	Mk 7:34
"Young man, arise";	Lk 7:15
"Go, your son will live";	Jn 4:50
"Go, your faith has saved you."	Mk 10:52

Knowing that you are present in our midst,
we ask you today

to touch each one of us individually
and bring us your healing
of body, mind and spirit. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC: 28 May from Volume 2 of 'Praying Each Day of the Year (Matthew James Publishing)

A-4 STILL BEING A BLESSING FOR OTHERS

God our Father,
when you look at the smile of _____
you see also the smile of Jesus, your beloved Son,
who lived amongst us, fully God and fully human.

Jn 1:14

May _____ recognise the Risen Lord
who walks beside **him/her**.

Lk 24:32; cf Ps 56:14

May **he/she** relate with him as **his/her** Friend
as he offers **him/her** the power of his Resurrection.

Jn 15:15

Phil 3:10

May **he/she** live as a true image of Jesus,
and be aware that every person is your beloved child.

Rom 8:29

Lk 3:22; Mt 17:5

May **he/she** be a blessing for others
and touch people in such a way
that they may discover for themselves
who Jesus is.

Gen 48:20

Gen 50:21; 1 Sam 10:26

Jn 4:42

And may the Lord Jesus
continue to look steadily at **him/her** with his tender love
and touch **him/her** with his healing power. Amen.

Mk 10:21

cf Mt 20:34; Mk 1:41

Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

A-5 MAY MY SICK FRIEND BE GRATEFUL FOR MANY BLESSINGS

Loving Father, you have created _____
in your own image and likeness.

Gen 1:27

He/she is the work of your hands,
moulded from the clay of the earth
and inspired with the breath of your Spirit.

Job 14:15

He/she is your work of art, your masterpiece,
and is made magnificently,
and I thank you for the wonder of her being.

Gen 2:6-7

Eph 2:10

_____ has grown in wisdom

Ps 139:14

Lk 2:52

and in favour with you, Father, and with your people,
and I ask

that **he/she** may be immensely grateful
for so many blessings.

cf Lk 17:12

Bless **him/her** this day and always,
and may nothing ever separate **him/her**

Rom 8:39

from your love. Amen.

B – LORD, I KNOW THAT I AM VERY ILL

B-6

DRAW GOODNESS, LORD, OUT OF WHAT IS NEGATIVE IN MY LIFE

Lord Jesus, you overpowered
the control that sickness had
by curing people of their illnesses.

Those who were disabled
were freed to walk again.

You calmed the sea
and showed that you had control
even over nature.

You rose to a new way of living
and showed that not even death
had power over you.

With your power in our lives,
everything that happens to us
can be turned to good.

And so I ask you this day
to help me to transform my difficulties
and draw goodness
out of what is negative in my life,
knowing that there is nothing
in life or in death
that can ever separate me
from your love. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson –18 June from 'Praying Each Day of the Year' (Matthew James Publishing)

B-7

A PRAYER OF THE OFFERING OF MYSELF

Lord Jesus,
you told your friends
not to worry about the future.

Mt 6:34

You showed them
how to have the attitude
of simple trust
that young children have,
so that they could place themselves

Mk 10:15

into the caring hands of your Father.
 And so
 I ask for the power of your Spirit
 that I may remain positive
 throughout all that is ordinary
 in my daily life.
 I know that your touch
 can change people and situations,
 and so I ask you
 to join me in offering to our Father
 not only the good things of this day
 but also the suffering and sacrifices
 that I want to offer
 cheerfully and lovingly,
 and in a quiet and hidden way.
 And so may any difficulties
 and frustration and pain of this day
 be transformed in your presence
 for the benefit of other people. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson – 'Praying Each Day', Volume 3 – 1 October (Matthew James Publishing)

B-8

I KNOW THAT JESUS LOOKS STEADILY AT ME AND LOVES ME

When I gaze at the heavens, Father, which your fingers have formed, I see the moon that you have set there and the stars that you call by name - yet my own name is written on the palm of your hands.	Ps 8 Ps 147:4 Is 49:16
I realise how small we are in the magnificence of your creation, yet you treasure each of us above all that you have made: making us only a little less than yourself, crowning us with so many good things.	Ps 8
In our world that you love so much, Father, I see the beauty of the flowers of the field and of the birds of the air, and I know that each of us is worth more than hundreds of sparrows.	Jn 3:16 Lk 12:27 Lk 12:7
Help me to appreciate, Father, that you love all that you have made, and enable me to experience deep within that I am precious to you and am loved for who I am.	Wis 11:24 Is 43:1
Show me how to proclaim in my life every day	

B-10

IN MY REMAINING TIME I REJOICE IN MY HUMANITY AND MY UNIQUENESS

I thank you, Father,
for the touch of your hand
on the clay of the earth
that formed my body,
and for the breath of your Spirit
giving life to my flesh.

I thank you, Father,
that you so loved our world
that you sent your Son
to live fully amongst us:
Jesus, your Word made flesh,
whose image you see
whenever you look at us.

Lead me now to treasure
what is most deeply human,
and grow in my remaining time
as the person
you call me to be.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

B-11

PRAYING TO LIVE FULLY DURING THE TIME REMAINING TO ME

Loving Father,
I appreciate that until my last breath
you will continue creating me as your work of art,
and I know that your fingers can touch nothing
but to mould it into loveliness.

George MacDonald

I ask forgiveness, Father,
for times when I have tarnished
the image and likeness
and have marred the integrity of the blueprint
that you have had in mind
whenever you have thought of me.
Yes, I acknowledge that I have missed the mark,
have fallen short, have sinned.

I ask forgiveness, Father,
for having limited the action of your Holy Spirit,
resulting in my walking in darkness,
looking into a glass, a mirror, darkly,
my diminishing being 'charged with your grandeur',
my failing to live up to the glory, the brilliance,
the transfiguration that you have wanted for me.

1 Cor 13:12

I thank you, Father, for restoring the dignity of us all
in Jesus, your Word made flesh,
whose image you see whenever you look at us.
It means much to appreciate
that he is Risen and walks beside me now,
and my heartfelt prayer
is to know Jesus and the power of his Resurrection,
praying to have the love of Christ overwhelm me.

As children look like their parents,
may I live in such a way, Father,
that others can recognise
that you have given me so much.

I need help to develop those qualities of yours
which I have inherited from you,
and I ask that your Spirit enables me
to live out the qualities of your kingdom:
being kind and honourable and compassionate,
healing the broken-hearted and binding up their wounds,
loving with great generosity,
and having cheerfulness overflow to others.

I have many people in mind, Father,
when I ask you to bless
those who have had good influence on my life:
some are still alive and others have gone ahead of me
into the fullness of salvation,
which I hope to share.

I ask that your peace
may continue through death.

At that time
let me hear you call me by name
and admit me into the fullness of your presence.

I want to make my home with you
and be surrounded there by many loved ones
who have died over the years.

Welcome me into your arms
and embrace me in your healing love
in that Garden which is Paradise.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

B-12

STRENGTHENED WITH THE CROSS

Lord Jesus,
I sign my heart with the sign of the cross,
reminding myself
of your love for each person.
I ask that I may grow in faithfulness
as your friend.

I sign my lips with the sign of the cross,
that I may speak as you would speak.

I sign my hands with the sign of the cross
asking that you enable me
to do your work,
and be your hands
in our world which you love so much.

I sign my eyes with the sign of your cross
that I may really see, Lord,
and be aware
of all that is around me.

I sign my ears with the sign of your cross
that I may listen and really hear
the communication that comes to me
in different ways
- from you
and from the people
you place into my life.

I sign my shoulders, Lord, with your cross,
knowing that you call me
to carry my own cross each day
and support others
in the burdens and difficulties
that they have.

All that I do today
I set out to do
in the name of the Father (+)
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson – 'Praying Each Day of the Year' (September 14) – Matthew James Publishing

C

CLOSER TO DYING

C-13

AWARE OF BEING TERMINALLY ILL, AND BEING 'COMFORTABLE', 'AT EASE' WITH MY CIRCUMSTANCES

God our Father,

as my remaining time grows shorter
- something that can be said for all of us! –
may I be of some help to others to face well
the greatest certainty before us all:
that death is part of life,
and a more complete life follows this one.

1 Cor 7:29

After this life we are called
to fullness of life in your presence.

Considering the flowers of the field
and the birds of the air,
I am very thankful that I continue to have
much joy in my heart,
much life and vitality and enthusiasm in my spirit,
and I do seek to laugh amidst my circumstances
of terminal illness,
because having Christian hope
does make me cheerful.

Mt 6:25-34

cf Rom 5:11

Rom 12:12
2 Cor 8:2

The biblical Book of Proverbs reminds us
that *'a kindly word makes us glad,
and worry makes a person's heart heavy'*.

Prov 12:25

Conscious that you lavish your love upon each of us,
I continue to trust, Father, in your loving care,
praying to be a more faithful friend
to you, Father, and to many who love me
in and through all that happens in my life.

1 Jn 3:1
cf Ps 131

I pray to remain calm and at peace,
at ease with myself,
reconciled with what is happening to me.

Mk 4:39; cf Jn 14:27;
Jn 20:19

I ask that loved ones and friends
be 'comfortable', too,
be as much 'at ease' as possible
with my circumstances of dying.

I am very grateful, Father,
to all who have been supporting me,
loving and encouraging me,
caring for and blessing me.
People have visited, emailed, helped with jobs,
written, prayed, and supported in many other ways.
Faithful friends are life-saving medicine.

Sir 6:16

May my thoughts and choices
remain positive and life-giving.
It was Gandhi who said
that "no sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy:
sacrifice and a long face go ill together,"
and Martin Luther King proclaimed
that "unearned suffering is redemptive".

I unite myself and commit myself

to standing beside so many brothers and sisters
who are suffering at this moment in different ways.
I join many people, Father,
and commit myself in solidarity with them,
whilst praying each day
never to be down-hearted or negative.
The offering of self is important, Father,
because difficulties can be transformed
for the benefit of others.

I can – and often must – ‘fight’ certain things,
but in a different sense from what many people think.
I am undergoing experiences
and am called to benefit, to learn from it all,
to be a better person,
and I pray that those around me, too,
will become even better people
because of their circumstances and mine.
I ‘fight’ in the sense of taking to heart such words as these:
*“Do not fear, greatly beloved; you are safe.
Be strong and courageous.”*

Dan 10:11ff

The broadcaster, Mary Craig,
had two children bearing handicaps, and she wrote:
“Our tragedy is not that we suffer
but that we waste suffering.
We lose the opportunity
to let it grow into compassion”,
and Thomas Merton remarked
that “compassion is not learned
without suffering”.
I reflect, Father, that in coming to live as one of us,
Jesus did not seek to explain suffering
but he did fill it with his presence
and changed people’s lives,
as he has done with mine.

When Jesus was praying to you, Father, in the Garden
he was ‘fighting’ in the sense that he prayed
that you would remove from him
his ‘*cup of suffering*’.

He prayed that the cup would be taken from him:
the cup representing something
that he would otherwise consume
(or, rather, would appear to consume him).

He became reconciled
with what was happening to him
and ultimately it was “resolutely” that Jesus set out
on what he realised would be his last journey
knowing that, in seeing it through,
the outcome would be his torture and death.
Jesus *embraced* what was happening to him.
May I do so with what is happening to me.

Lk 9:51

The practice of ‘*giving thanks in all circumstances*’
arises from the gradual building up
of a positive attitude,
as expressed by Elizabeth Kubler Ross,
who wrote much about dying:

1 Thess 5:18; Eph 5:20

*“I shall be richer all my life for this sorrow.
New insights about life have been born.*

*Life is to be lived
by striking a line through every minus
and turning it into a plus.
If agony must be experienced,
there are those who are ready
to bear some of the burden.
When there is suffering, the gift of courage is given.
Death is not to be feared, any more than is birth.
When the body ceases to be,
the spirit emerges, free and unencumbered."*

And so, after I have breathed my last,
may my eyes open, Father,
in the place where I will see you face-to-face
and hear you welcome me by name.
May I be blessed in hearing you say
that you are very fond of me:
blessed, too, in realising
that I am called to friendship with you.
There in your kingdom
of light, happiness and peace,
may I meet again
those who brought much love into my life.

Jms 2:23

May the loved ones I leave behind on earth
gain some consolation and strength from knowing
that I want my love and care for them
to continue beyond death
since I want to be praying for them, Father,
at your right hand. Amen.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

C-14

“BETWEEN NOW AND THE TIME OF MY DEATH”.

WHEN MY TIME COMES, FATHER, WELCOME ME INTO YOUR ARMS

Loving Father,
I appreciate that until my last breath
you will continue creating me as your work of art,
and I am grateful that your fingers can touch nothing
but to mould it into loveliness.

Eph 2:10

George MacDonald

As children look like their parents,
I pray that, enabled by your Spirit,
I may still grow in your likeness, Father,
in the time that remains to me.
May your Spirit help me to make the best use
of all that I have inherited from you,
and may I resemble you more closely
in developing further

the qualities with which you have graced me.
May I be wondrously 'charged with your grandeur',
and show forth the brilliance, the transfiguration,
that you have wanted for me.

G.M.Hopkins
Lk 9:28-36

At the same time, Father, I ask your forgiveness
for having tarnished the image and likeness
and marred the integrity of the blueprint
that you have had in mind
whenever you have smiled and thought of me.

Gen 1:26

Yes, I acknowledge that I have missed the mark,
have fallen short, have sinned,
but it is liberating to know
that "you cast my sins to the bottom of the sea".

Mic 7:19

I thank you, Father, for restoring the dignity of us all
in Jesus, your Word made flesh.

Jn 1:14

It touches me deeply when I appreciate
that he is Risen and walks beside me now,
and my heartfelt prayer is to know Jesus more fully,
and to experience in my life
the power of his Resurrection.

cf Lk 24

Phil 3:10

I have many people in mind, Father,
when I ask you to bless
those who have been of good influence on me
over the years.

cf Rom 14:7-12

Some I have forgotten or never knew;
many are still alive.

Others have gone ahead of me
and are now close to you, Father,
which is where I pray I will go
when my time comes.

You know that I want to make my home with you
and, when my moment arrives, loving Father,
I ask that you will call me by name
and admit me into the fullness of your presence.

2 Cor 5:9

Is 43:1

Welcome me, then, into your arms, Father,
and embrace me in that Garden
where the leaves of the tree are for healing.

Lk 15:20

Rev 22:2

Without the distractions of ill-health and pain,
it will be good to be able to delight fully
in all that is around me.

In the warmth and light of your company
I will enjoy meeting again many loved ones
who have died over the years.

Ministry for me will continue there, Father,
as I will intercede
for many I will have left behind in this present life.

I will love them still and will be praying for them
for the remainder of their lives.

May knowledge of that intercession
be of support to them in this life.

Meanwhile, Father,

in the time between now and my death, your promise to be with me will strengthen me.	
Keep me grateful for so many blessings to the end of this life and beyond, and keep me ever-cheerful and at peace.	cf Eph 1:3; 5:20
Throughout my own time of waiting, Father, may my sharing of the path of common experience and of compassion lead me to continue to be of help to others in whatever ways I can: supporting and healing the broken-hearted and binding up their wounds, conscious that I am aiming to share with them the comfort and support which you have brought to me.	cf 2 Cor 5:18 Ps 147:3 2 Cor 1:1-11
Creator-Father, you make all things new. May the love of Christ overwhelm me and may I be full of faith and the Holy Spirit. Amen.	Rev 21:1 cf 2 Cor 5:14 Acts 6:1-7

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

C-15

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

I can reflect, Father,
on 'moves' I have made in my life:
changing from primary to secondary school,
moving home,
leaving one place of work for another,
going from one town to another.

As illness progresses for me, Father,
I reflect that my 'biggest move' is yet to come
and grows closer.

I do rejoice, Father, that when I die
your welcome for me
and your care for me
will far exceed
even the greatest examples
of love and care
that people, in their kindness, have had for me.

In the process of dying
I am glad to find myself focussing
on the good and the positive.
There really is no point in thinking, "If only..."!!

I have reflected much about
the uniqueness of individuals,
and I am touched greatly
on seeing the ways in which so many people
make choices and decisions
about their everyday lives.

I am reminded that Jesus said
that unless we become like little children
we will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Father, I give thanks
for all whose lives have touched mine
with your love and compassion.

It is encouraging to appreciate
that so much goodness in people
will be found to be 'writ large'
when they make that move to heaven
and, to take this further, Lord God,
the greatest degree
of the finest qualities in human beings
I will find 'writ very large'
in the Person of you, their Creator.

It is self-evident to me
that so much that we treasure in this life
we will experience fully and abundantly
in the promised life to come.

My 'list' of what I think I will discover
after my death, Father,
could start with these:
light, laughter and goodness,
love, loyalty and enjoyment,
friendship, fulfilment and beauty,
peace, protection and rest,
appreciation, awe and wonder
compassion, kindness and joy.

I look forward in the kingdom of heaven
to enjoy so very much
freedom from pain and illness,
and freedom to be more fully in your presence.

In heaven people are re-united, too, with many people,
have relationships restored and renewed,
and understand much that previously we could see only darkly.

I am sure that many insights will be gained, too,
into many unanswered questions!

Even faith will no longer be needed
because I will relate directly
with you, Father, and your Son and the Holy Spirit.

For my own 'big move', Father,
I ask you to continue to prepare me.

Especially, Father, I ask
that you keep me grateful
for so many blessings

- and keep me ever-cheerful. Amen.

C-16

ADJUSTING TO DYING; BRING PEACE, LORD, IN MY LIFE EACH DAY

Lord Jesus,

I can think of your people down the ages
who have travelled over life's stormy sea
and, in dying, have reached the harbour
of peace, light and happiness.

As you calmed the sea,

I ask you to be with me
and bring peace in my life each day,
because the boat of my own life
is small
and the ocean is very large.

As you have set my course,

I ask you to steer my life
towards the shore of everlasting life.

Brings me, at last,

along with all who are dear to me,
to the quiet rest that I seek,
where you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Nicholas Hutchinson – 'Praying Each Day of the Year' – 3 August (Matthew James Publishing)
Inspired by a prayer of St Augustine and the Breton Fisherman's Prayer*

C-17

I REFLECT THAT I WILL DIE SOON: SOON, FATHER, I WILL BE COMING TO YOU

1.

Soon I will be coming to you, Loving Father,
and I reflect now
on so many blessings
you have given to me over the years.

2.

I am conscious
of so much beauty and so much delight
that I have experienced,
and I thank you
that you have kept my eyes and ears open.
I thank you that your Spirit
has inspired me in many ways.

3.

Soon, Father, I will be coming to you,
and I am conscious
of so much love and affection
that has come my way,
and I am most grateful, Father,
for so many individuals
who have been part of my life.

4.

I rejoice in the many people
who have accompanied me in so many ways
over my lifetime,
and most especially in the last few years
of an even longer time of severe illness.
I ask you to return, Lord, many times over
the warmth and love, the care and affection
that I have been shown.
I am grateful that all of that
has been a reflection, too,
of your own love and compassion for me
and for us all.
With confidence, Father,
I place myself into your hands.

5.

Soon, Father, I will be coming to you.
I look forward to meeting again
many people I have known and loved from the past.
When the time is right,
I look forward to them gathering to welcome me
and then lead me forward to you.
It will be good to smile and walk alongside each other
as we journey together once again
to life in all its richness and abundance
in your presence.

6.

Friends and relatives will be there, too,
as well as others who have touched my life:
many an individual
whose life and death has influenced me,
and they will accompany me still further.

7.

And then it will be Jesus, your Son and my Brother,
who will take my hand in his

– his hand which bears the marks of love.
And in that touch
I know that I will sense in all its fullness
what it is to be redeemed and healed
and made whole.

8.
Then, as Jesus leads me forward the next few steps,
will he introduce me to you, Father,
or will you smile and show me *your* hand
where it will be clear to see
that, there, my name is written?
I look forward so much
to all that it means to be clasped in your arms,
enfolded in your life,
and encompassed, embraced, in your love.

9.
And then I will ask your blessing, Father,
on so many who have enriched my life.
There, too, I trust,
will be those I know
who have plumbed the depths of darkness,
whose burdens
have often come close to crushing them,
and whose lives, I hope,
I might have touched somehow with your love.
I will ask you to bless them and make them whole,
just as others have blessed me
and have prayed
that I might be made whole.

10.
I will remember, too, Father,
those I have wounded
and those who have wounded me,
that all of us may be embraced
in your love and care, your mercy and kindness.
With confidence, Father,
I place myself into your hands.

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

C-18

LIVING, DYING AND GOING HOME

Loving Father, faithful God,
as I remember before you those who have died,
I reflect, as well, upon the time remaining to me.
I ask you to touch my heart and renew my spirit,
so that I may live in such a way
that I express thanks every day

1 Cor 1:9

for so many blessings.

And when I bid farewell to this world
remember, Father, your own tender care of me.
Having guided me since I left my mother's womb
you have called me by name,
declared me precious in your eyes,
and watched each breath I have taken.

Job 31:18
Is 43:1
Is 43:4
Job 10:12

And when I breathe my last,
look not at my sin, Father,
but at the face of Jesus, my Brother and Redeemer.
Hear him say that he called me his friend,
made his home in me,
and walked beside me
through the valley of darkness.

Jn 15:15
Jn 15:4
Ps 23:4

Remember, too, Father, that your Holy Spirit
has dwelt in me and prayed in me,
and helped me in my weakness.
Listen to the Spirit speak on my behalf.

Rom 8:11,26
cf Jn 14:26

Enfold me then in your love, Father,
as I know you embrace me now,
and admit me, I pray,
to your kingdom of light, happiness and peace,
to the place that you have prepared for me,
alongside those I love
and beside many who have gone before me,
marked with the sign of faith:
there to see you face-to-face,
where pain and suffering will be no more.

Mt 25:34
1 Cor 13:12

And when the earth encloses my body, Father,
look then at the faith and compassion
of those who have surrounded me
with their love.
Bring them comfort, Father,
since only those who love can mourn,
and assure them
that I will remember them before you
in your kingdom. Amen.

cf Lk 23:42

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

D - MOURNING

D-19

ON THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

Father,

it was you who created _____
and knit **him/her** together in her mother's womb.

You have written **him/her** name on the palm of your hands
and **he/she** is precious in your eyes.

You called **him/her** to walk in your presence
and live a tale of friendship with you,
and your Spirit enabled **him/her**
to touch people's hearts and enrich their lives.

He/she looked for the best in people
and rejoiced in all that is good and honourable.

He/she worked cheerfully and lived at peace with others.

He/she had a profound respect for everyone
and was, for some,
even closer than a **brother/sister**.

Embrace **him/her** warmly, Father, this day and always,
crowning **him/her** with your love and compassion. Amen.

Ps 139:13

Wis 7:1

Is 49:16

Is 43:4

Ps 56:14

cf Wis 7:27; Jms 2:23

cf Rom 12:10-19

cf Phil 4:4-9

Rom 12:8,18

Rom 12:10

Prov 18:24

cf Lk 15:20

Ps 103:4

Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

D-20

ADDRESSING THE DECEASED IN A 'SONG OF FAREWELL'

ALL

Go forth, _____, upon your final journey.
Go from this world and rest in peace
in the presence of God the Father, who created you;
in the love of Jesus our Lord, who calls you his friend,
and in the warmth of the Holy Spirit,
who has made his home in you.

READER 1

In death your life is now changed, not ended,
and we give you back to our faithful God
who first gave you to us.
On our common pilgrimage
we have accompanied you
as far as we can go together.
Our ways part for now
but, beyond our horizon,
you will be met by Jesus
who is himself the Way.

ALL

May the angels lead you into paradise,
and the saints take you by the hand
and walk with you into the presence of God.
There, face-to-face, you will meet our loving Father.
His hands will be swift to welcome,
and he will hold you close:
his tender love
is that of a mother for her child,
and he has written your name, _____,
on the palm of his hands.

READER 2

You will find rest in Christ, the Good Shepherd,
who carries you and says: "Do not be afraid."
His peace will be yours
in a place where pain and sorrow will be no more.
There in God's kingdom
of light, happiness and peace
the Holy Spirit will heal and renew
and strengthen you.
The end of your pilgrimage will be a new beginning
in the bright dawn of eternal day.

ALL

Go forth, _____, upon your final journey.
Go from this world, and be with God.

Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC

*Permission is hereby given by the author to those who wish to use this text in a liturgy.
The words are based on Scripture, the Liturgy and the Early Church Fathers.*

D-21

**WELCOME HIM/HER INTO YOUR KINGDOM
WHERE PAIN AND SUFFERING ARE NO MORE**

Loving Father, your Son declared
that those who mourn are "blessed",
knowing that only those who love greatly
can mourn.

We believe that all the ties of friendship and affection
which knit us as one throughout our lives
do not unravel with death.

Jesus wept on hearing of the death
of his good friend, Lazarus,
and others remarked

“See how much he loved him”.
Father, we ask you
to strengthen us and bless us this day
as we mourn our **brother/sister**, _____,
whom you love.

Welcome **him/her** into your kingdom
of light, happiness and peace,
where pain and suffering are no more.

Conscious that suffering in your way
means changing for the better
and leaves no regrets,
we proclaim that what we suffer in this life
can never be compared
to the glory which is waiting for us.

2 Cor 7:10

May our **brother/sister**
now know Christ fully
and may he rejoice for ever, Father,
in your presence.

cf Phil 3:10

Nicholas Hutchinson (based partly on some themes in prayers from 'The Roman Missal')

This text was found at the homepage of www.prayingeachday.org

SIX BOOKS **by Nicholas Hutchinson**

To look at the author's six books,
go to the publisher's website at
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'Lord, Teach us to Pray'
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