

Prayer After an Event in Which Many People Died

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her . . .
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
[The Lord] does not faint or grow weary;
[The Lord's] understanding is unsearchable.
[The Lord] gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary;
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew
their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.
(Isaiah 40:1-2a, 28b-31 adapted)

God of heaven and earth,
you know the sound a sparrow makes
when it falls to the ground.
Hear now our voices joined in quiet outrage.
We are thunderstruck, and we cannot find words.
Send your Spirit to speak for us, O God,
to plead our case before you
and release the anguish of our hearts.

God of all consolation,
we cry for peace, and there is none in our hearts.
Send your river of life flowing through us
to cleanse the wounds of our sorrow
and still the turmoil of our minds.

We cry against the flagrant waste of lives,
promises that will not be kept,
friendships lost, the love of family left ungratified.
Our cries protest the deaths
that rob the living and the dead of precious time
and plunge us into depths of grief and pain.
Because we cannot understand
show us your peace that surpasses understanding.

God of life,
your anger sears the mountains
and strikes terror in those who spurn your will:

Open our eyes to your presence and let us see
that death is always counter to your word.
Show us your streams that rush with living water,
your mindful watch in every struggle against death.
Give us grace to know your gift of Jesus,
our companion through death's night,
and our guide to your new day's glory.
Fill us with your Spirit's breath of life
and lift us to you in our need
that we may know your sorrow, deep as our own,
In Jesus' name. Amen.

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