

## A Prayer for Survivors

*In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him.<sup>1</sup>*

Come, Holy Spirit, to rest in our broken hearts and tend to our broken lives.

Bear us up on wings of eagles when our hope lies crushed below the cross of our past. Release us from the shame and grieving that hobble our pursuit of joy in our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Comfort our pain.

Help us trust in Christ's complete victory over evil, so we may endure what we have suffered until that day when all we cannot see and cannot know is finally made clear.

Heal us with a fuller understanding God's grace, so we may be open to sustenance to continue our recovery. Help us discern the sure direction of God's whisper when noise and confusion threaten to send us on mistaken pathways.

Provide us generously with Your counsel, so we may not be lost in a wilderness of sorrow, doubt and despair but, rather, are able to hear over our shoulder which way to go, what way turn to choose, which time to rest and which time to push forward.

We ask in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*The LORD alone led him; He nourished him with honey from the rock, and with oil from the flinty crag.<sup>2</sup>*

Grant us the courage to persevere through deserts of heart, mind and body.

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<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy 32:10 NIV

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 32: 12, 13 NIV

Be there to remind us gently how, each time we reach the end of our own strength and abilities, we may surrender the next step to Jesus, Who will take our cross and stretch us into new levels of faith, hope, love and life in Him.

Help us keep our minds set on our true destiny which trauma, abuse and grief can so easily obscure.

Be our constant companion as we move toward that time when we will witness all of Creation restored and in resplendent adoration of the One True God Who, for love of us, gave His only Son to die on a cross that we would not be abandoned forever to the one who prowls the world seeking our ruin.

Cultivate in us the wisdom to know the difference between weight from carrying the sins of others and from bearing our own sins. Through Your graces help us let God show His great strength in our recovery from the latter and in our redemption from the former.

Unlock psychological defenses against our past and present that can make surrender seem dangerous, so we may be free to receive the peace that surpasses all understanding.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.<sup>3</sup>*

Guide us into a piety born of healthful surrender that completes but does not harm us, that fosters in us humility but does not humiliate us, that releases in us a forgiving spirit neither enabling nor denying the work of evil in our lives or the lives of others.

Shine Your light in our hearts so we are able to fear God with freedom and without fright, with awe but without terror. And, heal our wounds and the wounds of our broken world as the wounds of Christ have been healed, by grace through faith, as visible signs of renewed life.

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<sup>3</sup> John 16:22 NIV

For ourselves, for our fellow survivors of abuse of any kind, for those wounded through their empathy for our wounds and love for us, for those offering us care and seeking to heal wounds in our Church, and for those who have wounded us, we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Luke 9:6 NIV