



Taking time to remember those we love

words and images offering comfort and support
during this time of social isolation

At this time when we may feel or be alone,
separated from those whom we love,
it can be difficult
to put our deepest thoughts
and feelings into words.

Whatever you are going through
at the moment,
we hope that some part this booklet
may be of help to you.

If you wish to spend time remembering those whom you love,
(perhaps you've been unable to attend a funeral,
or you are remembering someone who has died...
or maybe you have been separated by distance or isolation)...
whatever your circumstances,
it may help to sit by a light or to light a candle,
listen to some music for a moment or two
and even have photos nearby.

Some people find these physical things helpful, others don't...
there's no right or wrong.



Do not hurry as you walk with grief
It does not help the journey.

Walk slowly, pausing often.
Do not hurry as you walk with grief.

Be not disturbed by memories
that come unbidden.

Be gentle with yourself.
Walk slowly, pausing often.

Take time. Be gentle as you walk with grief.

Adapted from Celtic writings by George MacDonald



TEARS

**help the body shed stress hormones
and stimulate endorphins**

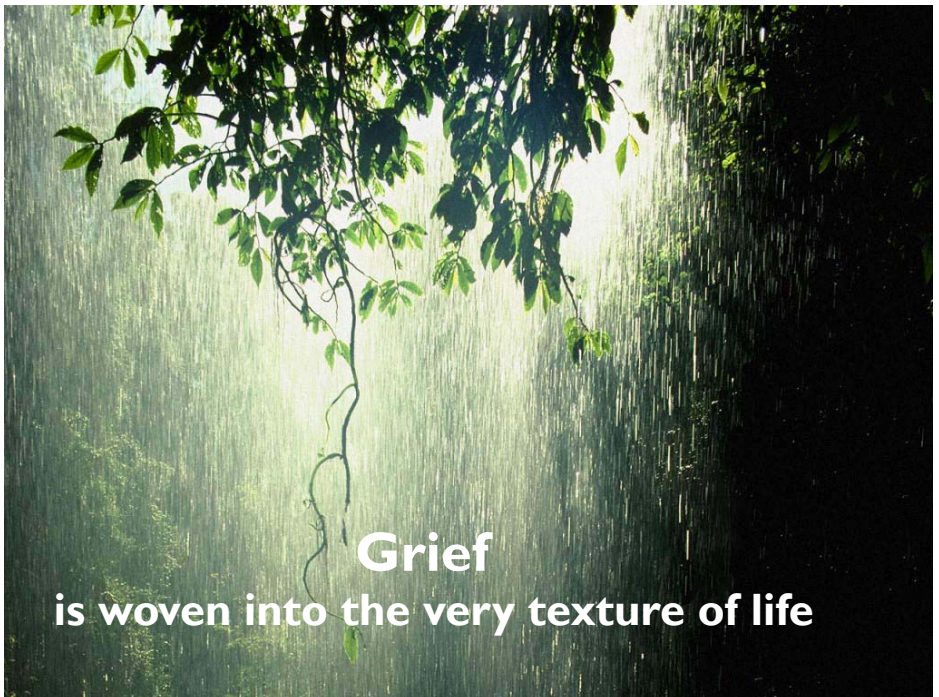
**are therapeutic and healing,
both emotionally and physically**

**are a natural and essential part
of being human**

**keep us on an even keel
through life's inevitable storms**



'The shell of being,' hanging by a thread, shows the fragility of life. It is a detail from a painting by the Renaissance artist Piero della Francesca and was painted in 1465. It is housed in Milan, Italy.





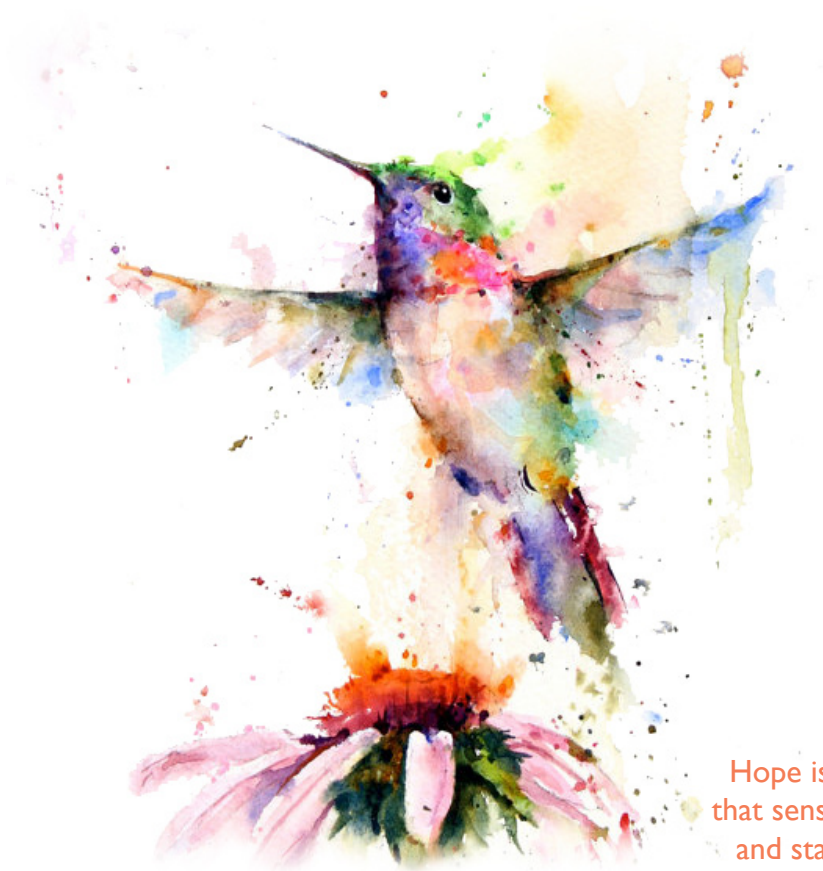
**I believe in the sun
though it is late in rising.
I believe in love
though it is absent.
I believe in God
though He is silent.**
Holocaust Survivor



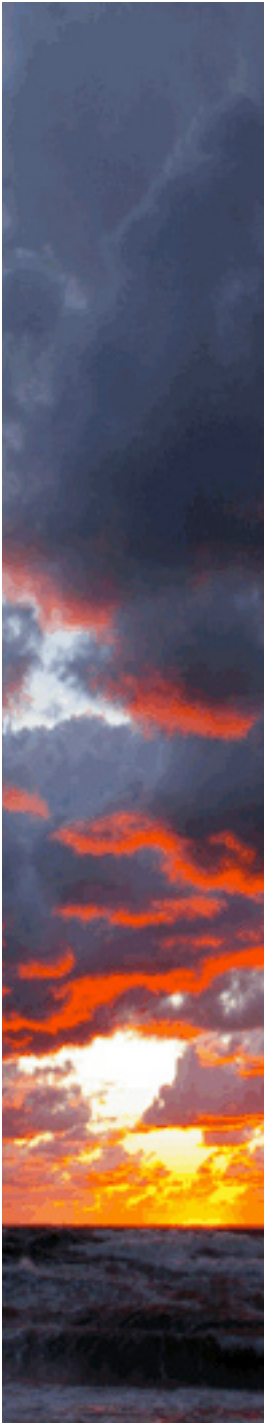
Midway upon the journey of our life
I found myself within a forest dark,
For the straightforward pathway
had been lost.

Ah me! how hard a thing it is to say
What was this forest savage, rough,
and stern,
Which in the very thought
renews the fear.

Dante (1265 - 1321)



Hope is like a bird
that senses the dawn
and starts to sing
while it is still dark.



You would know the secret of death.
But how shall you find it
unless you seek it in the heart of life?

The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day
cannot unveil the mystery of light.
If you would indeed behold the spirit of death,
open your heart wide unto the body of life.
For life and death are one,
even as the river and the sea are one.

In the depth of your hopes and desires
lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;
And like the seeds dreaming beneath the snow
your heart dreams of spring.

Trust the dreams,
for in them is hidden the gate to eternity.
Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd
when he stands before the king whose hand
is to be laid upon him in honour.

Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling,
that he shall wear the mark of the king?
Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?

For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind
and to melt into the sun?
And what is it to cease breathing,
but to free the breath from its restless tides,
that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?

Only when you drink from the river of silence
shall you indeed sing.
And when you have reached the mountain top,
then you shall begin to climb.
And when the earth shall claim your limbs,
then shall you truly dance.

Kahlil Gibran (1883 - 1931)

Like a shadow in the moonlight
Like the whisper of the seas
Like the echoes of a melody
Just beyond our reach
In the shadow of our sorrow
Past the whisper of goodbye
Love shines through eternity
A heartbeat from our eye.

Catherine Turner

Deep peace
of the running wave to you.

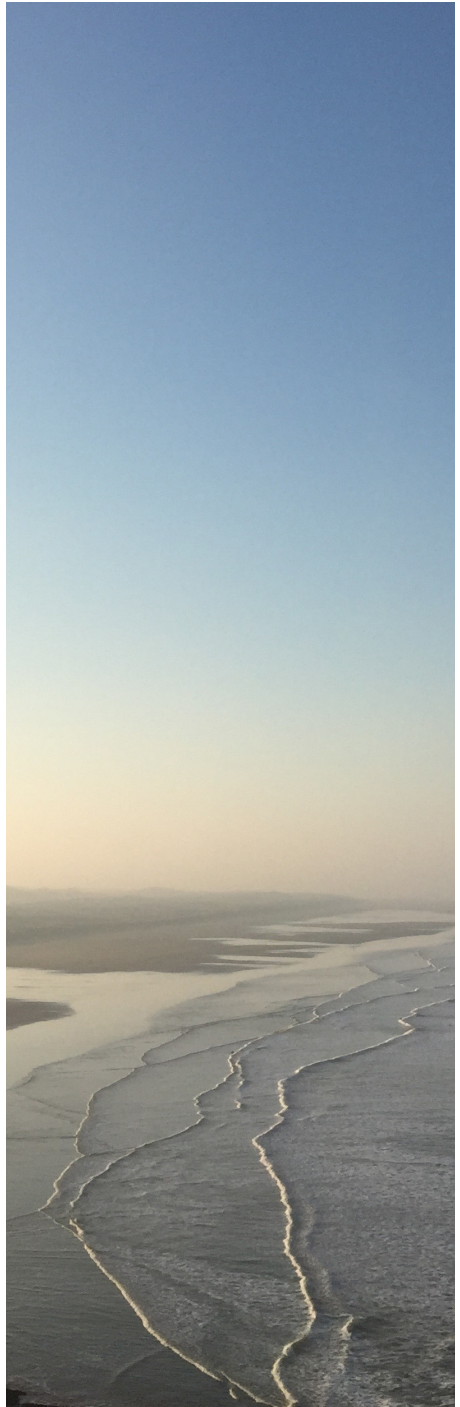
Deep peace
of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace
of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace
of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace
of the infinite peace to you.

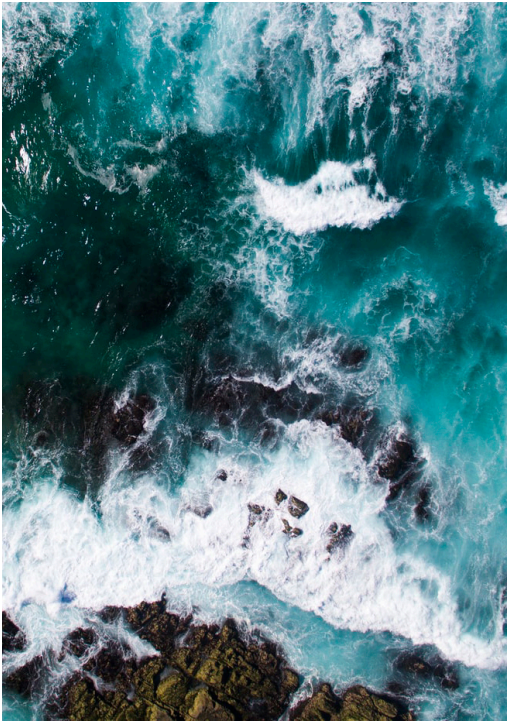
William Sharp (1855 - 1905)





Death be not proud,
though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,
For, those, whom thou think'st,
thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee,
much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance,
kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke;
why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

John Donne (1572-1631)



Love
 Flows like an ocean
 into a world as unyielding
 as any shoreline cliff
 And like the ocean
 which batters
 erodes
 and wears away
 even the hardest stone
 love persists
 finds cracks and inlets
 in hardened hearts
 flows inside and works a miracle.
 Who would think that water
 was more powerful than granite
 love mightier
 than the hardest heart.

Love

from a poem by John Birch (1954 -)

Moments of great calm,
 Kneeling before an altar
 Of wood in a stone church
 In summer, waiting for the God
 To speak; the air a staircase
 For silence; the sun's light
 Ringing me, as though I acted
 A great role.
 And the audiences
 Still; all that close throned
 Of spirits waiting, as I,
 For the message.



Prompt me, God;
 But not yet. When I speak,
 Though it be you who speak
 Through me, something is lost.
 The meaning is in the waiting.

kneeling

R.S. Thomas (1913 - 2000)

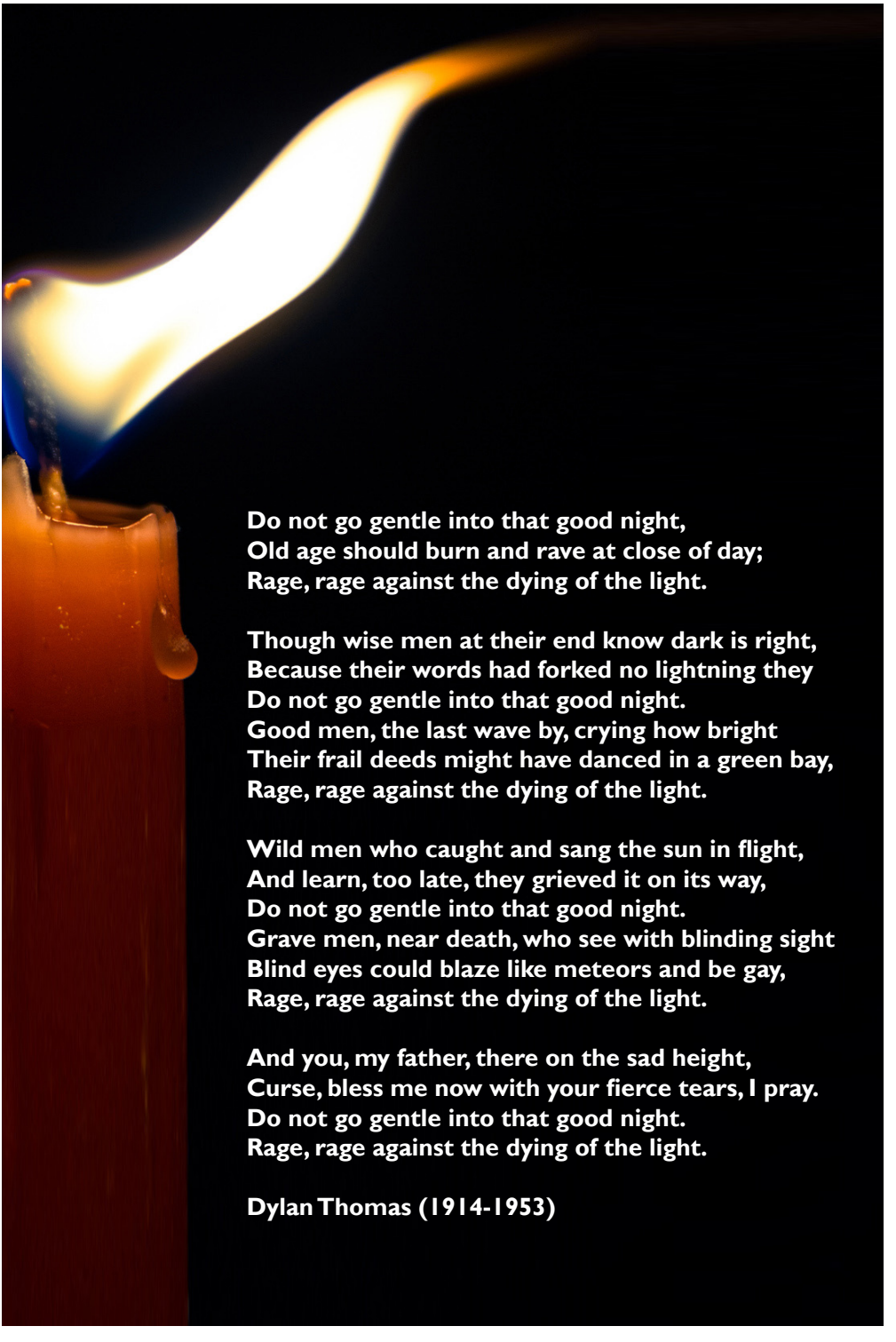


It felt so cold, the snowball which wept in my hands,
and when I rolled it along in the snow, it grew
till I could sit on it, looking back at the house,
where it was cold when I woke in my room, the windows
blind with ice, my breath undressing itself on the air.

Cold, too, embracing the torso of snow which I lifted up
in my arms to build a snowman, my toes, burning, cold
in my winter boots; my mother's voice calling me in
from the cold. And her hands were cold from peeling
then dipping potatoes into a bowl, stopping to cup
her daughter's face, a kiss for both cold cheeks, my cold nose.

But nothing so cold as the February night I opened the door
in the Chapel of Rest where my mother lay, neither young, nor old,
where my lips, returning her kiss to her brow,
knew the meaning of cold.

Carol Ann Duffy
Poet Laureate 2009-2019



Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

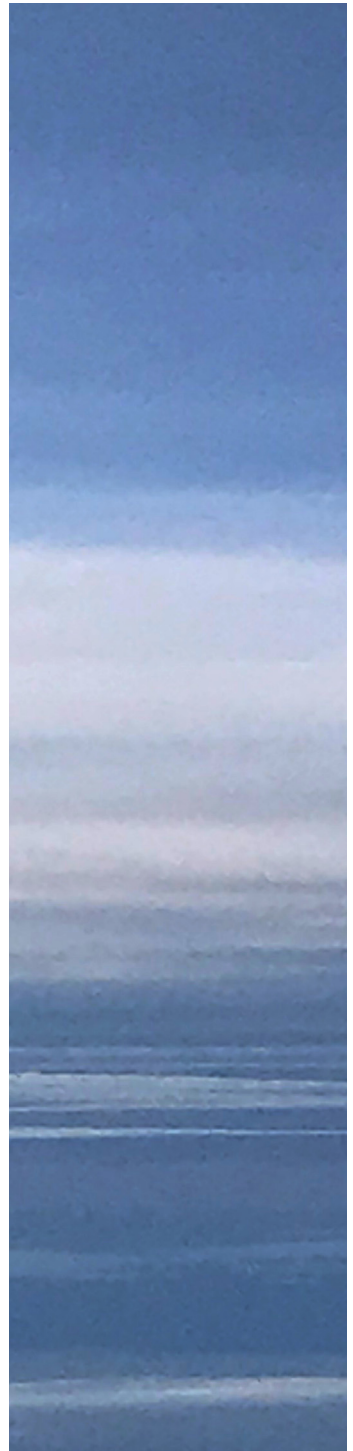
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dylan Thomas (1914-1953)

I am standing by the seashore.
A ship at my side spreads her white sails
to the morning breeze
and starts for the blue ocean.
She is an object of beauty and strength,
and I stand and watch until at last
she hangs like a peck of white cloud
just where the sun and sky come down
to mingle with each other.
Then someone at my side says :
'There she goes! Gone where?
Gone from my sight - that is all.
She is just as large in mast and hull and spar
as she was when she left my side
and just as able to bear
her load of living freight
to the places of destination.
Her diminished size is in me, not in her.
And just at the moment
when someone at my side says:
'There she goes! ',
there are other eyes watching her coming,
and other voices
ready to take up the glad shout:
'Here she comes!'

Henry van Dyke (1852 - 1933)





The words of a trapeze artist

‘As a flyer I must have complete trust in my catcher.

He has to be there for me and grab me out of the air as I come to him. I don’t catch him, he catches me. I stretch out my arms and wait for him.

A flyer must fly and a catcher must catch, and the flyer must trust, with outstretched arms, that his catcher will be there for him.’

Death is not
the extinguishing
of the light,
but the putting
out of the lamp,
because the dawn
has come.

Rabindranath Tagore
(1861 - 1941)



Thoughts and prayers

Eternal wisdom, be the light in our darkness,
be the presence in our loneliness, the strength in our weakness
and the hope in our despair.

And for those whom we remember today,
grant to them eternal rest and let light perpetual shine upon them.

We remember all who suffer today
All who endure pain
All who wrestle with terminal illness.
We remember all who are grieving today
Those whose lives have been torn apart
Who are living each day in perpetual shadow
Crushed by the burden of sorrow or grief.
As we remember them
We recognise our own fears of mortality
The deep grief we ourselves feel
As we remember our own loss and sadness.
May light scatter our shadows
Love lift our burdens
Arms of love encircle and hold us
As we look for the strength to face each day.

I will be truthful. I will suffer no injustice.
I will be free from fear. I will not use force.
I will be of good will to all men.
Mahatma Gandhi (1869 - 1948)

From untruth lead us to Truth.
From darkness lead us to Light.
From death lead us to Immortality.
Om Peace, Peace, Peace.
Ancient Indian Prayer

When it comes time to die, be not like those whose
hearts are filled with the fear of death, so when their
time comes, they weep and pray for a little more time
to live their lives over again in a different way.
Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.
Mohican Chief Aupumut (1757-1830)

Everything is changeable,
everything appears and disappears
there is no blissful peace
until one passes beyond the agony of life and death.
Buddha (563 - 483 BC)

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you
and give you peace.

Oh Lord, support us all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.
Then, in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging,
and a holy rest, and peace at the last.

This life, you must know
as the tiny splash of a raindrop.
A thing of beauty that disappears
as it comes into being.
Therefore, set your goal.
Make use of every day and every night.
Tibetan prayer

When the storm rages around me,
and I can hold on no more,
when the waves of fear engulf me
and I am weary, battered and sore,
take me then and steer me, storm-tossed, broken and afraid,
into the arms of your safe harbour safely home.
Prayer to St Benedict

Be kind
for everyone
you meet
is fighting
a hard battle
Ian Maclaren (1850 - 1907)

Home is the centre of our being, where
we can hear the voice that says, 'You are my beloved'.
That same voice is the never-interrupted voice of love,
speaking from eternity and giving life and love wherever it is heard.
When we hear that voice, we know that we have come home
and we have nothing to fear.
Adapted from Henri Nouwen (1932 - 1996)

Prayers at the time of death

In the darkness and in the light of this moment
May we know the love that is stronger than death

Nothing in death or life,
Nothing in the world as it is
Nothing in the world as it shall be
Nothing can separate us from love.

We trust that beyond absence there is a presence.
That beyond the pain there can be healing.
That beyond the brokenness there can be wholeness.
That beyond the anger there may be peace.
That beyond the hurting there may be forgiveness.
That beyond the silence there may be the word.
That beyond the word there may be understanding.
That through understanding there is love.

Go forth from this world
In the love of God the Father who created you
In the mercy of Jesus Christ who redeemed you
In the power of the Holy Spirit who strengthens you.
May the heavenly host sustain you
And the company of heaven enfold you.
In communion with all the faithful
May you dwell this day in peace.

This body is perishable
But the dweller in this body is eternal
Indestructible and impenetrable

To Allah we belong and to Allah we shall return

Akaal Akaal Akaal
breaks the boundaries, it breaks bondage,
it frees us to reach the One who has brought us here.
The breath of life for the soul gives absolute freedom, eternal peace
and eternal rest.
As the soul came and travelled through time and space and dropped
the body to go unto Infinity,
grant the soul the passage unto Thee, to peace, tranquility and
everlasting rest.
Oh the fortunate one, listen to the Infinite
which has no boundary.

To this sacred place I come, drawn by the eternal ties that bind my soul
to the soul of my beloved. Death has separated us. You are no longer at
my side to share the beauty of the passing moment. I cannot look to you
to lighten my burdens, to lend me your strength, your wisdom, your faith.
And yet what you mean to me does not wither or fade.
For a time we touched hands and hearts, still your voice abides with me,
still your tender glance remains a joy to me. For you are part of me for
ever; something of you has become a deathless song upon my lips.
And so beyond the ache that tells how much I miss you, a deeper thought
compels: we were together. I hold you still in mind, and give thanks for
life and love. The happiness that was, the memories that do not fade, are
a gift that cannot be lost.

You continue to bless my days and years.
I will always give thanks for you.

May all be free from sorrow, and the causes of sorrow,
May all never be separated from the sacred happiness
which is sorrowless.

If you need to talk
to someone
during this difficult time
please contact us
on 01271 347225.



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coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath. We extend our grateful thanks
to all the creative minds who have written such inspirational words.