



Equipes Notre-Dame

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Prayers when a Teams member has died

You might like to use music at some point in this ritual. Some suggestions for suitable songs and hymns are provided at the end of this document.

Leader: We gather together to remember [Name of person], a treasured member of our team. We pray for their family and for us as we mourn their loss but celebrate their life.

Creator God, you watch over us in life and death. You give us life and welcome us into your presence when this life is over. We thank you for the gift of the life of [N] among us. We are sad that he/she is no longer physically with us, but we believe he/she is now with you forever. We ask that you help us and his/her family and friends to remember him/her with happiness and to create a special place for him/her in our heart. We make our prayer through Jesus, our friend and our brother.

All: Amen

Leader: In this time of gathering, we share the stories of our faith through listening to words from Scripture.

Use the following passage, or choose from the selection of Scripture passages at the end of this document.

A reading from the Book of Isaiah (41:10-13)

Do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.
For I, the Lord your God,
hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear,
I will help you.'
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

If appropriate, the Team can share memories and stories of the person who has died.

Prayers of Intercession

Use or adapt the following, or devise your own

Leader: Jesus taught us that God always loves each one of us without conditions attached. We read in the Scriptures that God will never forget us, even if we find it hard to believe in that love.

As we remember today [N's] life and what he/she meant to us and our community, let us turn to the God who loves each one of us.

1. We remember with gratitude the gift that the life of [N] was for us—his/her friendship, joy, smiles, wisdom (etc.). Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

2. We pray for [N's] family: that they will find the courage, strength and hope to rebuild their lives while cherishing his/her memory always. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

3. We pray for God's special presence for the [N's] family, that their belief in God's love for them, together with our support, will help them through their sorrow. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

4. We pray for [N's] special friends who experienced his/her unique personality: that they will always remember the precious gift their friendship was to them. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

5. We pray for ourselves; we who are sad at the loss of [N] from our Teams family, that we will always remember what he/she meant for us and keep his/her memory alive. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

6. Let us pray for our community: that we will always look out for each other and remind each other that each of us is precious and loved. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

7. We remember all who have died or will die today, especially those who die feeling they are unloved or forgotten; that at the moment of their death they will see and know that God has not forgotten them. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Conclusion to the Prayers of Intercession

Leader: Help us, God of love, to believe that there is no pain you cannot heal, no tragedy that is too big to overcome. Be with us in our sadness for the death of [N]. May his/her family know and be comforted by your loving presence and give to us all the faith and hope to believe that he/she has now returned to you, the source of our joy, our peace and our life. We make this prayer in the name of the one who came to tell us the Good News of your love, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us recite the Lord's Prayer together.

All: The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace/Consolation:

The leader invites Team members to give each other a sign of peace.

Before saying the Closing Prayer, the Leader may wish to invite Team members to say together one of the prayers below.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Merciful God. Help us in our sadness for the death of [N], give us hope in knowing that he/she has found peace. May we hold him/her and their family close in our hearts and remember that we are never alone, and you are with us always. We make this prayer in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Leader: We have remembered [N] and prayed for him/her and his/her family. We carry away with us today a blessing and a reminder that we need to look out for each other and remind each other that we are all loved. Let us go now in peace, remembering the gift he/she was to us. We ask our creator God to continue watching over us with love and tenderness. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Selected prayers that can be used before the Closing Prayer:

Lord, a Friend Has Died

Today, Lord, our hearts are heavy because someone we know has died.
We don't understand it fully and find ourselves asking "Why?"
But we know that death is a part of life and not an end in itself.
We know that your promise of everlasting love offers us much help.

Death just seems so final, Lord, and we'll miss the life of ...
We'll miss the times we spent together – times that have come to an end.
Lift up our spirits with words of comfort, remind us of your promises, Lord.
Remind us that peace and joy await ...; that this is your word, Lord.

Help us to celebrate the gift and gift that our friend... has been to us,
To be thankful for the days we were able to share – for the loyalty and trust.
We give our friend ...back to you today even though it is so hard to do; because God, we know that
he/she will be eternally happy with you.
- *From Prayers at Your Fingertips by Barbara Ann Bretherton*

A Prayer of Trust

Do not be afraid – I will save you.
I have called you by name – you are mine.
When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you;
Your troubles will not overwhelm you.
(from *Isaiah 43*)

Hold our hands, Lord

Hold our hands, Lord,
walk us through the loneliness
and the valley of our sorrows.
Hold on to us when we're too afraid
to think about the future.
Let us lean on you, Lord,
when we're too weary to continue.
Hold our hands, Lord, through the night
until we see the light of dawn.
- (*Author unknown*)

The Prisoner's Lantern



Lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts,
our world, our universe.
Amen.

- (*Prayer placed on the peace table in Durham Cathedral during the Gulf War 1990-91*)

The light of God

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me wherever I am

Until we meet again.

God is with us: God's love unites us; God's grace steadies us; God's Spirit comforts us.

Blessed be God forever.

Footprints

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonging to him and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of his life.

This really bothered him, and he questioned the Lord about it. Lord you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me.

The Lord replied, my precious, precious child, I love you and I would never leave you! During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.

- *Carolyn Carty, 1963*

God has not taken them from us.

God has hidden them in our heart

That they may be closer to ours.

- *Unknown*

A Prayer of Reassurance

Let nothing trouble you,

Let nothing frighten you,

Those who seek God

Shall never go wanting,

Let nothing trouble you,

Let nothing frighten you,

God alone fills us.

- *Adapted by the Taizé community from a Prayer by St. Teresa of Avila.*

Selected passages from Scripture for use in this ritual

A reading from Isaiah (43:1-3)

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
When you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
And the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the Lord your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from Ecclesiastes (3:1-10)

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the Book of Psalms (16:1-2, 7-11)

Protect me, Lord God! I run to you for safety, and I have said, "Only you are my Lord! Every good thing I have is a gift from you." I praise you, Lord, for being my guide. Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill my mind. I will always look to you, as you stand beside me and protect me from fear. With all my heart, I will celebrate, and I can safely rest. I am your chosen one. You won't leave me in the grave or let my body decay. You have shown me the path to life, and you make me glad by being near to me. Sitting at your right side, I will always be joyful.
The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the Book of Psalms (136:1-9)

Praise the Lord! He is good. God's love never fails. Praise the God of all gods. God's love never fails. Praise the Lord of lords. God's love never fails. Only God works great miracles. God's love never fails. With wisdom he made the sky. God's love never fails. The Lord stretched the earth over the ocean. God's love never fails. He made the bright lights in the sky. God's love never fails. He lets the sun rule each day. God's love never fails. He lets the moon and the stars rule each night. God's love never fails. The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (11:28-30)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (14:1-6)

‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’.
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (14:16)

Jesus said to his disciples:
Do not be frightened. Trust in God and trust in me. There are many rooms in God’s house—I would have told you if there were not. I am going now to prepare a place for you...I will return to take you with me so where I am going, you may be there too.
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR

A reading from the Letter to the Thessalonians (4:13-18)

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call and with the sound of God’s trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in

Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians (1:3-11)

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the Book of Revelation (14:13)

I John heard a voice from heaven say to me: "Write this down! How fortunate are those who live and die believing in Jesus! Now they can rest forever, because their good deeds go with them to a home in God."

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Suggested songs and hymns

- 'Hands' - Jewel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lk0bKfC8XSE>
- 'Circle of Life' - Elton John
- 'Come Light our Hearts' - Neil Draves - Arpaia
- 'Remember' - Josh Groban: *Music: James Horner, Lyrics: Cynthia Weil, From the film soundtrack: 'Troy'*
- 'Summoned' - Love by Monica Brown and Trish Watts
- 'Let Go, Let God' - Olivia Newton John on 'Grace and Gratitude' 2006. A version can be downloaded at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CZ0XJqWRr4&list=RD6CZ0XJqWRr4>
- 'Gentle as Silence' - Estelle White
- 'Prayer of St Francis' ('Make Me a Channel of Your Peace') - Sebastian Temple
- 'The Galilee Song' - Frank Anderson. A version can be accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ab-gLmGnt7E>
- A variety of songs are available on the CD 'A Special Collection' - Monica Brown
- 'Fields of Gold' – Eva Cassidy (Songbird album) or Sting
- 'Carry you home' – James Blunt
- 'Both sides now' – Joni Mitchell (from the movie soundtrack 'Love Actually')
- 'Calling all angels' – K.D. Lang
- 'Don't dream it's over' – Crowded House
- 'Feels like home' – Edwina Hayes
- 'Let her go' – Passenger
- 'Somewhere over the rainbow'
- '100 years' – Five for Fighting
- Any songs from 'Chris While and Julie Matthews – (Stages album), particularly
 - 'Even the desert bears a seed'
 - 'Starting all over again'
 - 'Steady breathing'
- Any song from 'Taize' – reflective chants based on passages from Scripture.