

A LITANY FOR THE TIMES OF VIRUS

Have mercy O Lord on us, in this time of virus. Teach us O Lord, to learn the lessons it brings.

We have ignored the cries of our common home and plundered it in our greed. We have brought suffering to our world and its poor. We did not suffer, but now suffering has come to us.

Lord have mercy, heal and open our hearts so we may care for our home and restore justice to the poor. R: Lord have mercy.

In our search for easy speed and unlimited production we have built walls of noise behind which we could not hear the call of birds, the soft breath of the winds, see the clear skies or the glorious sweep of the night heavens.

Lord have mercy so we may hear your voice in the silence and discern your presence in the heavens. R: Lord have mercy.

We gave scant attention to those seeking asylum and refuge. They live among us in a climate of hostility in an isolation of our making. We ignored the isolation of the homeless, those without work, all those marginalised by our rush to consume, to enjoy, to be entertained. Lord, isolation has had to come to us.

Lord have mercy that in our turn we may now show mercy towards those we have isolated. R: Lord have mercy.

We too often cocooned ourselves in our churches and ignored the hurts caused by poverty, loneliness, ill health, old age, and dementia. We did not support or reward justly those who work in hospitals and care homes. Now our churches have had to close. In our sickness we rely on all who hold the key to our healing.

Lord in your mercy transform our hearts so we cannot ignore the call for our churches to be emptied as we go out to become a field hospital for all who suffer and are in need.

R: Lord have mercy.

Lord, we did not sufficiently allow our devotion to your real presence in the eucharist to overflow into recognition of it in our neighbour and in the whole of creation. Lord, may our closed churches remind us that the sacred is not confined to them but is present everywhere. Lord have mercy and help us to live and walk reverently on the sacred earth. R: Lord have mercy.

We did not learn the lessons of the eucharistic fast experienced by our brothers and sisters in Amazonia and in other poor and disadvantaged areas of our common home. So Lord, this self-same fast has come to us.

Lord in your mercy help us to live in a generous spirit of solidarity with all the millions who not only are deprived of the food of the eucharist but have no real food and are hungry. R: Lord have mercy.

Lord we ignored your presence in the depths of our hearts and that you are present not in many words or crowds but in the silence of solitude where just two or three are gathered in your name. So the silence and the solitude have come to us.

Father have mercy and open our hearts to contemplate the silent presence of the spirit of your Son. "Lead us into that mysterious silence where your love is revealed to all who call Maranatha - come Lord Jesus come". (WCCM) R: Lord have mercy.

Lord our churches were open, but our hearts often closed. Now our churches are closed. Help us to open our hearts so we can give thanks round the tables of our homes where a place is always set for you. May our homes be open to you in our just celebration of the fruits of the earth and in our children.

Lord have mercy so that we may open our homes, so we find you in our hospitality to the poor and those in any need. R: Lord have mercy.

Lord lastly we give thanks for all those with no distinction, of every nation, creed and colour who recognise the face of love in everyone, in every small and great created thing and who return that gift in every movement of their hearts. Lord help us to see in them an image of that Way, Truth and Life which you gave us in, through and by your Son Jesus Christ.

Lord send us the mercy of your compassionate Spirit. R: Lord have mercy.

David Jackson.

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