

The Light Shines in the Darkness

This litany is based on the stirring words of courage and comfort offered by the Rev. Bill King, an ELCA campus pastor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, at the April 17, 2007 university convocation remembering the students and faculty killed the day before.

L: Compassionate Christ, we bring you our sorrow, grief, and loss.

A: ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can not overcome it.*** (John 1:5)

L: Help us walk forward in the wake of unspeakable tragedy;
help us embrace hope in the shadow of despair.

A: ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can not overcome it.***

L: Comforting Spirit, hear our sighs, too deep for words, and our longing for peace, healing, and understanding. Fill us with the wisdom to embrace that which unifies and to reject the seductive temptation to hate.

A: ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can not overcome it.***

L: Creator God, even in a time when the darkness of evil seems powerful indeed, we know that the light of love cannot be defeated. We affirm the sovereignty of life over death. Amid all our pain, we claim hope in defiance of despair.

A: ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can not overcome it.***

Prayer for Hope

Dr. Kennon Callahan, "Twelve Keys for Living" page 52

Almighty and Enduring God,

Let us live this life with compassion and hope.

Let us love, richly and fully, the persons with whom we share this life.

Let us live a life of confidence and assurance in Your grace.

Let us hope for more beyond the grave.

Receive us into the life to come.

Amen.

Prayer from Service at St. Michael, April 16, 2007
Pastor John Wertz, Jr.

Almighty and enduring God,

 you give us hope when things seem hopeless;
 you give us peace when the storms of life rage;
 you give us the promise of eternal life that nothing can break.

We give you thanks for being with us throughout this difficult day.

 We give you thanks for those who worked to bring safety to our community.
 We give you thanks to the gift of family and friends
 who surround us with your love.

 We give you thanks for the prayers that surround us
 from Lutheran Church in places like:

 Buffalo, NY
 Glen Rock, NJ
 Bluffton, SC
 and Greensboro, NC.

We ask for your guidance, O God,

 as we face the difficult days that lay ahead.

 Comfort us as we mourn the senseless deaths of so many.

 Give us the courage to witness to your love through our words and deeds.

 Walk with us through every step of this process.

 Help us to know

 that you mourn with us in our time of pain.

You know, O God,

 that at times like this we have questions,
 questions that may never have answers.

 Help us to know that questions are ok

 and that you will be with us as we struggle with those questions
 and look for answers.

Be with all those who mourn,

 those who mourn the lose of a family member or friend,
 those who mourn the loss of peace and security,
 and those who mourn the lose of hope.

 Help them to know that they are not alone
 and help them to know
 your presence in their lives.

O God,

 you are our refuge and strength,
 you are our help in times of trouble.

 Let us live this day and everyday

 sure of your grace and presence,

 sure of your ultimate victory over evil and death

and sure that nothing in this world

 will ever be able to separate us from your love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

 Amen.